

**Minutes of  
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
10:00 a.m., Thursday, January 8, 2015  
Corner Bar and Restaurant, Cumberland, WI**

**Commissioners Present:** Jess Miller, Ken Jost, Travis Turner, Lee McIlquham, Florian Skwierczynski, Mike Goettl; Joe Waichulis, Richard Creaser, Robert Walter, Steve Rasmussen, Kathy Clark, William Johnson, Warren Nelson, Craig Moriak, Larry Weisenbeck

**Commissioners Absent:** Chuck Rueth, Norman Wesenberg, John Frank, Gordy Steinhauer, Agnes Ring, Travis Schachtner

**Staff Present:** Lynn Nelson, Lisa Ruth, Eric Anderson

**Visitors Present:** Jeff French, Barron County Administrator; Tom Mysicka, Mayor of Cumberland; Dan Bauman, DNR; John Gozdziński, DNR; Dave Armstrong, Barron County EDC; Josh Solinger, City of River Falls; Jesse Garza, Congressman Duffy's Office; MaryAnn Lippert, Governor's Northern Office; Scott Bolstad, Senator Ron Johnson's Office

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.
2. **Welcome and Introductions:** Mayor Mysicka welcomed the Commissioners and gave an update on projects going on in the city and places to visit. Mr. French also updated Commissioners on county projects and his history with Barron County. Mr. Garza and Mr. Bolstad both updated Commissioners on activities of Congressman Duffy and Senator Johnson, respectively. Mr. Armstrong further detailed various projects in Barron County.
3. **Presentation by Dan Bauman-Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources:** Mr. Bauman, who covers western Wisconsin, highlighted various projects and priorities of the DNR. He noted that as a DNR Secretary's director his job is to ensure prompt attention to local issues and improved responsiveness to opportunities. Mr. Gozdziński, who covers northern Wisconsin, summarized the DNR vision statement and his role with the DNR. He explained how the DNR works with people on projects, how to use the DNR as a resource, and to help businesses with permitting. Ms. Lippert, from the Governor's Northern Office, noted that she is the eyes and ears of Governor Walker for the north. It is her mission to connect people of the north to the resources of the state.
4. **Staff Presentation – Jennifer Ludwig, Regional Business Fund, Inc.:** Ms. Ludwig noted that she processes downtown façade loans, in addition to her other duties as the Loan Processor for the RBF, Inc. She briefly explained business eligibility, terms and conditions of the program, the application process, and what improvements are eligible. She distributed a map showing 11 downtown façade projects located in the City of Cumberland.
5. **Director's Report:** Ms. Nelson distributed her Director's Report and highlighted/updated Commissioners on activities that have taken place since the last meeting.
6. **Action Items:**  
**Minutes of November 13, 2014 Commission Meeting:** Mr. Johnson moved to accept the minutes as distributed; seconded by Mr. Waichulis; motion carried.

**Approval of Disbursements:** A motion was made by Mr. Rasmussen to approve the disbursements, seconded by Mr. Turner; motion carried.

**Discussion/Action of 2015 Budget and Work Program:** Ms. Nelson explained since being approved in September, there have been no changes. Details on budget numbers are not final, but will be discussed at the March meeting.

**Agreement with Eau Claire County – Eau Claire River Watershed Coalition Action Plan:** Ms. Nelson stated that this agreement is to develop the *Eau Claire River Watershed Coalition Action Plan* that addresses and meets the key elements for watershed-based plans. Mr. Johnson moved to approve the agreement, seconded by Mr. Turner; motion carried.

7. **Northwest American Planning Association Award Ceremony:** Ms. Nelson briefed the Commissioners on the Northwest District APA Award process. The Northwest District annually recognizes outstanding individuals and planning efforts throughout the 26 counties that make up the district. Four projects/persons from our region were nominated for the awards, and all four were selected as award recipients. The awardees were announced at the fall APA Wisconsin, Northwest District annual meeting. Since the winners were not invited to that meeting, WCWRPC wanted to make a special effort as part of this meeting to recognize and congratulate the awards winners for their exemplary efforts.

The first award was to William Johnson IV for “Distinguished Leadership Award: Elected Official” for his tireless dedication to public service. Mr. Johnson’s commitment is evident at all levels of government. He currently serves as President for the Village of Frederic and as Chair for the Polk County Board. He also serves on numerous appointed boards and commissions, including the WCWRPC. He is known for his steady and stable leadership – striving for improvement, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The next award was to the City of River Falls for “Outstanding Public Agency”. This stems from the City’s Sterling Ponds Development project, which is a product of a collaborative effort by the City, its citizens, and other key stakeholders. By incorporating the interests of numerous entities, the City of River Falls has championed economic revitalization in Sterling Ponds. Josh Solinger, City of River Falls, accepted the award on the City’s behalf.

For “Outstanding Media Coverage”, this award went to the Rice Lake Chronotype. Their extensive coverage of a placemaking project in Rice Lake facilitated bringing together residents, business owners, local organizations, and other stakeholders from Rice Lake to take a fresh look at key locations within the community. The news coverage led to a greater diversity of participant perspectives and the participation of many different community organizations. Dave Armstrong from the Barron County Economic Development Corporation accepted the award on behalf of the Rice Lake Chronotype.

Finally, the “Distinguished Leadership Award: Citizen” went to Julie Neuman for her dedication to community involvement. She lives in the City of St. Croix Falls, nicknamed The City of Trails. She has had a vital role in increasing the number of safe opportunities to walk and bike in the community and near the school district K-12 campus. She has also spearheaded other health initiatives to create a healthier and more livable community in partnership with the City, Polk County, UW-Extension, and others. Congratulations went out to all award winners.

As a “thank you” to the all WCWRPC Commissioners for their dedication and commitment to our organization, staff designed and distributed T-shirts displaying the WCWRPC name and all cities and villages in the region.

8. **Next Meeting Date:** Due to a conflict on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, the next meeting will be held on FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2015 in Polk County.
9. **Adjournment:** Mr. Turner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Waichulis; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Prepared by: Lisa K. Ruth