

**Minutes of the
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC) Meeting
Friday, March 10, 2017 - 10:00 a.m.
Irvine Park Activity Building, Chippewa Falls, WI**

Commissioners Present: Jess Miller, Ken Jost, Anson Albarado, Jason Bergeron, Steve Gerrish, Joe Waichulis, Chuck Rueth, Norman Wesenberg, Richard Creaser, Robert Walter, John Frank, Kathleen Clark, Gordy Steinhauer, William Johnson, Craig Moriak, Larry Weisenbeck, Tom Coulter

Commissioners Absent: Gary Taxdahl, Tom Quinn, Agnes Ring

Staff Present: Lynn Nelson, Lisa Ruth, Ann Schell, Craig Johnson, Tobi LeMahieu, Jordan Pospishil,

Visitors Present: Greg Hoffman, Mayor, City of Chippewa Falls; Frank Pascarella, Chippewa County Administrator; Jerilyn Sahr & Delora Brei, Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation; Tony Kurtz, Senator Ron Johnson's Office

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. **Welcome and Introductions:** It was noted by Mr. Johnson that Polk County Commissioner Warren Nelson had passed away. He gave a brief history and background on Mr. Nelson and remarked that his obituary will be posted online with a funeral home in Amery. Chair Miller asked for a moment of silence.

Mayor Hoffman and Mr. Pascarella welcomed staff and Commissioners to Chippewa County. Other guests introduced themselves.

3. **Minutes of January 12, 2017 Commission Meeting:** Mr. Walter moved to accept the minutes as distributed; seconded by Mr. Waichulis; motion carried.
4. **Review and Approve Disbursements:** A motion was made by Mr. Johnson to approve the disbursements, seconded by Mr. Weisenbeck; motion carried.
5. **Staff Reports:**
Regional Business Fund, Inc. Update – Ms. LeMahieu and Ms. Pospishil gave an overview of Regional Business Fund loan activities for 2016 and 2017. Changes to the program were also explained pertaining to participation changes for the City of Eau Claire and Pierce County.

Rural Economic & Area Development Initiative (READI) Program – WCWRPC staff recently attended a READI training session. Ms. Nelson described the applications process, requirements, and components.

Osceola Fab Lab Feasibility Study – Mr. Craig Johnson provided information on the background and process used to put together a feasibility study for a fabrication laboratory (fab lab) in the Village of Osceola. Based on the results of the study, staff will soon begin the process of preparing an Economic Development Administration (EDA) application to move the project forward. The Fab Lab could be used to address workforce issues (skills) and test prototypes for market, among many other potential uses.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Planning/Strong Towns Event – Ms. Schell gave a background on the benefits of bicycle/pedestrian planning. She described the various bike/pedestrian plans staff have been or will be working on in the region (including Chippewa-Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area, St. Croix County, and a Regional plan inclusive of Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire Counties). Bike/pedestrian issues are also being addressed in Safe Routes to School Plans and in various Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) applications.

Strong Towns Event – Mr. Duba explained that WCWRPC is hosting a Strong Towns Event on April 20th in Eau Claire. He highlighted the mission and topics of presentations.

6. **Director's Report:** Ms. Nelson updated Commissioners on current project, budget, and staffing activities.
7. **Revolving Loan Fund Administrative Services Agreement with Pierce County:** Ms. LeMahieu noted that Pierce County has requested the RBF, Inc. administer their revolving loan fund program. Mr. Johnson moved to the agreement, seconded by Mr. Jost; motion carried.

8. Contact Extensions:

TEF Fund Sub-Grant Management Agreement with RBF, Inc.
EDA Fund Sub-Grant Management Agreement with RBF, Inc.
Consolidated Fund Management Agreement with RBF, Inc.

Ms. LeMahieu noted that these agreements are yearly extensions to provide management services for the TEF, EDA and Consolidated funds. Ms. Clark moved to approve the contract extensions, seconded by Mr. Waichulis; motion carried.

- 9. Resolution 2017-02 Certifying EDA Revolving Loan Fund Strategy and Plan:** Ms. LeMahieu stated that this is also a yearly submittal provided to EDA certifying that revolving loan fund plans, policies, and procedures are consistent with and supportive of the region and its economy. Mr. Johnson moved to approve and sign the resolution, seconded by Mr. Walter; motion carried.

10. Regional Discussion:

FEMA floodplain mapping inaccuracies – Ms. Nelson noted that staff had contacted the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to discuss identified floodplain mapping issues and summarized those conversations. It was determined that DNR staff would be invited to the next Commission meeting to further talk about options available to the region.

Transporting of mentally or emotionally disturbed residents – Commissioners discussed the issues that their counties are experiencing. It was noted that this subject needs continued examination and possibly a meeting with legislators. It was suggested that a pilot project could possibly be put together for our region. The topic will be put on the next Commission meeting so that concerns can be shared with representatives and/or their staff.

- 11. Chippewa County Update Presentation:** Ms. Sahr gave a brief presentation on the mission of the Chippewa County Economic Development Corporation and current projects. Commissioners viewed a video on the highlights of Chippewa County.
- 12. Next Executive Committee Meeting Date:** The next Executive Committee meeting will be held April 13, 2017 at the RPC offices.
- 13. Next Commission Meeting Date:** The next full Commission will be meeting May 11, 2017 in Barron County.
- 14. Adjournment:** Mr. Waichulis moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Albarado; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.