

Minutes of the Sixty First Meeting of the
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

DATE: December 12, 2023
TIME: 5:00 p.m.
PLACE: Walnut Way Conservation Corp., Innovations and Wellness Commons
1609 W. North Avenue, Second Floor Conference Room
Milwaukee, WI 53205 and Virtual Meeting

Members Present

Aloysius Nelson, Chair Sigma Pi Phi (the Boulé)
Huda Alkaff Founder & Director, Wisconsin Green Muslims
Andrea Mendez Barrutia Chapter Director for the new Techqueria Milwaukee Chapter
Donna Brown-Martin Commissioner, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission;
Director, Milwaukee County Department of Transportation;
Liaison to Advisory Committee on Regional Transportation Planning
Annabell Bustillos Bilingual Outreach Advocate, BeLeaf Survivors
Ella Dunbar Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee
Brad Holz Board Member, Independence First
Gina Sanchez Juarez Director of Financial Stability, La Casa de Esperanza
Keith Martin Engineering Specialist – Advanced 2, WisDOT
Theresa Schuerman Walworth County Bilingual Migrant Worker Outreach
GeorgeAnn Stinson President, African American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Racine

Members Excused

Yolanda Adams Board of Education Member, Kenosha Unified School District
N. Lynnette McNeely Legal Redress Chair, Waukesha County NAACP

Members Unexcused

Gina Green-Harris Director, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health Center for
Community Engagement and Health Partnerships in Milwaukee
Jackie Schellinger Indian Community Representative, Retired Judge

Guests and Staff Present

Dennis Grzezinski Law Office of Dennis Grzezinski
Christopher Hiebert Chief Transportation Engineer, SEWRPC
Ryan Hoel Deputy Chief Transportation Engineer, SEWRPC
Eric Lynde Chief Special Projects Planner, SEWRPC
Benjamin McKay Deputy Director, SEWRPC
Samuel Mercier Transportation Planner, SEWRPC
Montre Moore Public Involvement Staff, SEWRPC
Nakeisha Payne Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC
Karyn Rotker Legal Action of Wisconsin
Jennifer Sarnecki Principal Transportation Planner, SEWRPC

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Nelson called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) to order at 5:00 p.m., conducted a brief roll call, and welcomed those in attendance. Mr. Nelson provided a biography for Ms. GeorgAnn Stinson, President of the African American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Racine, and noted that she is new member representing the City of Racine.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS ON JUNE 13, 2023, AND SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

Mr. Nelson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 13, 2023, meeting ([link](#)) and September 12, 2023, meeting ([link](#)), noting that there was not a quorum at the September meeting to approve the June meeting minutes. Ms. Dunbar moved, and Ms. Mendez Barrutia seconded the approval of the meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

REVIEW OF 2024 PRIMARY ORGANIZATIONS LIST

At Mr. Nelson's request, Ms. Payne provided an overview of the draft 2024 Primary Organizations list (available [here](#)), including groups added to the list. The following discussion occurred after Ms. Payne's update:

1. Ms Alkaff asked if RENEW Wisconsin was based in Madison and noted that including organizations based in Madison could expand the list. Ms. Payne responded that Madison is their primary location but their work spreads across the State, including Southeastern Wisconsin. Mr. McKay noted that if a statewide organization is very active in Southeastern Wisconsin, they could be considered as a Primary Organization.
2. Ms. Dunbar approved of the addition of the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation and noted that she is involved with a committee addressing housing and rails-to-trails initiatives to convert abandoned rail lines to trails, in coordination with businesses.
3. Ms. Mendez Barrutia requested the Commission staff consider adding the MKE Fresh Air Collective, which is a new group focused on measuring air quality, as a Primary Organization. Ms. Payne responded that Commission staff would review this organization for inclusion on the contact list and discuss updates at the next EJTF meeting.

[Secretary's note: Commission staff decided to add MKE Fresh Air Collective as a Primary Organization following the meeting. The final list of 2024 Primary Organizational Contacts is available [here](#).]

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF 2024 REVIEW AND UPDATE OF VISION 2050

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Mr. Lynde, Mr. McKay, Mr. Hoel, and Mr. Hiebert provided a presentation on the 2024 Review and Update of VISION 2050 (available [here](#)). VISION 2050 is the Region's long-range land use and transportation plan, and the Commission is required to conduct an interim review and update every four years, with the next major update anticipated to be initiated in 2026. The following discussion occurred during the presentation:

1. Ms. Brown-Martin asked if the timeline would allow the 2024 Update to be completed in time. Mr. Lynde replied that there should be sufficient time to conduct public involvement related to the draft plan update, review public comment and the revised draft plan update with the Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use and Transportation in spring, and bring the update to the Commission to consider for adoption in June 2024.
2. Ms. Brown-Martin indicated that projects currently being studied like the I-794 Lake Interchange and STH 175 could have significant land use and transportation implications. Mr. Hiebert responded that these studies will be completed after the 2024 Update is considered for adoption; however, staff can note that they are underway and will be incorporated into the next major update of the regional plan.
3. Ms. Dunbar asked if the 2024 Update looks at transit needs for workers to be able to access jobs that will be located in the area formerly proposed as the site for a Foxconn manufacturing campus. She referenced recent news that Microsoft plans to purchase land and create jobs in that area. Mr. Lynde responded that the Commission had previously adopted an amendment to VISION 2050 that incorporated land use changes to accommodate additional residents and jobs related to Foxconn, and transportation improvements to serve the Foxconn manufacturing campus area. Although the Foxconn proposal has been scaled back, jobs are expected to be added in that area and Commission staff plans to continue to include transportation improvements from the amendment as part of the 2024 Update.
4. Ms. Brown-Martin asked whether staff is reflecting Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) asset management efforts, noting that WisDOT is focused more on rehabilitation of roadways rather than reconstruction and capacity expansion. Mr. Hiebert indicated that Commission staff has worked with WisDOT staff in staging the roadway improvements and that WisDOT did identify that some planned projects were rehabilitations rather than reconstructions. Some of this may be done through only replacing the roadway surface rather than replacing the surface and the base, which would result in cost reductions. These costs are reflected in the fiscal constraint analysis prepared for the 2024 Update.
5. Mr. Nelson asked if Wisconsin benefits from tolls levied in Illinois. Mr. Hiebert indicated that Wisconsin does not receive funding from Illinois tollways.
6. Ms. Rotker asked if there have been or will be analyses prepared related to whether the impact of the potential revenue sources identified in the financial analysis would disproportionately be borne by people of color and low-income populations. Mr. Lynde responded that there is additional information related to equity considerations included in the currently adopted VISION 2050 plan, noting that Commission staff are presenting these revenue sources as potential options that could aid in addressing the funding gap identified in the financial analysis, and not endorsing or recommending any particular revenue source(s).
7. Ms. Brown-Martin stated that it is important to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are considered, particularly as it relates to providing paratransit service. She asked if there is information regarding access to transit for individuals with disabilities. Mr. Hoel indicated that the travel needs of individuals with disabilities are included and analyzed as part of the equity analysis for the 2024 Update. Ms. Brown-Martin stated that the needs of individuals with disabilities should be emphasized and that Milwaukee County's Paratransit Taxi Task Force, which has been assisted by Commission staff, will continue to request information and analyses.

Mr. McKay indicated staff will ensure that it is clear where recommendations and information regarding access to transit for individuals with disabilities are available in the future.

UPDATE ON U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY CLIMATE POLLUTION REDUCTION GRANT

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Ms. Sarnecki summarized a presentation on the Metropolitan Milwaukee Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program and the initial pollution reduction strategies (available [here](#)). The following discussion occurred during the presentation:

1. Mr. Nelson asked why the grant was limited to the four-county Milwaukee metro area. Ms. Sarnecki explained that the Milwaukee metro area was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as one of the 67 largest metro areas across the country eligible to receive \$1 million non-competitive planning grants as part of the program. She noted that Kenosha County is currently included in the Chicago metro area. Mr. McKay added that the State of Wisconsin obtained a separate grant and is covering the entire State so all areas of the State are at least covered under that effort.

REVIEW OF EJTF ACTION ITEM LIST

At Mr. Nelson's request, Ms. Sarnecki reviewed the current action item list, which was linked within the agenda (available [here](#)).

OVERVIEW OF COMPOSITION OF APPLICANTS FOR RECENTLY FILLED COMMISSION POSITIONS

At Mr. Nelson's request, Mr. McKay provided a summary of recent applicants for three recently filled Commission positions. The Spatial Data Analyst position had 101 applicants and was filled by an African American male. The Survey Assistant position had three applicants and was filled by a white male. The Biologist-Water Resources Specialist position had 45 applicants and was filled by a white female. The following discussion occurred during the review:

1. Ms. Dunbar asked how long positions are typically open. Mr. McKay responded that positions are typically open for a minimum of 3-4 weeks, sometimes longer depending on the number and quality of applications received.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. McKay noted that there is a joint meeting of the Commission's Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use and Transportation Planning, which are guiding the 2024 Update of VISION 2050, at 9:30 a.m. on December 19, 2023.

NEXT MEETING DATES

Mr. Nelson indicated that the next meetings are scheduled in 2024 for March 12, June 11, September 10, and December 10. Mr. Lynde stated that Commission staff will send calendar invites to EJTF members and provide more details closer to each meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nelson adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Lynde
Recording Secretary

BRM/EDL/JBS
EJTF Minutes - Mtg 61 - 12-12-2023 (00272006).DOCX (PDF: #272267)