

MINUTES
SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

3:00 p.m.

Bucyrus Club
1893 Ballroom
1919 12th Avenue
South Milwaukee, WI 53172

Meeting Occurred in Person and Via Video and Telephone Conference

Present:

Excused:

Commissioners:

Charles Colman, Chairperson
Donna Brown-Martin
Michael Crowley
Paul Decker
Katrina Hanson
John Holloway
Brian Holt
Dewayne Johnson
Trevor Jung
Thomas Kramer
Natalia Minkel-Dumit
Joe Messinger
Robert Pitts
Jeffrey Schleif
Chandra Staples for Priscilla Coggs-Jones
Eric Stelter
Donald Trottier

Mary Knipper
Michael Maistelman
Amy Maurer
David Stroik

Staff:

Stephanie Hacker	Executive Director
Benjamin McKay	Deputy Director
Elizabeth Larsen	Director of Administration
Christopher Hiebert	MPO Director
Alina Panasiuk	Accounting/HR Specialist

Guests:

Patrick Brever, City Administrator/Economic Development Director, City of South Milwaukee
Ernie Wunsch, Bucyrus Club Events
Youth Presenters re: a Commission Youth Council

ROLL CALL

Chairperson Colman called the 289th meeting of the Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present. Chairperson Colman indicated for the record that Commissioners Knipper, Maistelman, Maurer, and Stroik had asked to be excused.

Patrick Brever, City Administrator and Economic Development Director for the City of South Milwaukee and Ernie Wunsch, Bucyrus Club Events welcomed attendees to the Bucyrus Club. Mr. Wunsch gave a brief history of Skyline Catering and how the Bucyrus Foundation remodeled the Bucyrus Club as a museum and event venue. Mr. Brever then discussed how the City of South Milwaukee was involved in the Bucyrus Club project.

OFFICIAL SEATING OF OZAUKEE COUNTY COMMISSIONER JOE MESSINGER

Mr. Stelter introduced Mr. Joe Messinger as the Commission's new Ozaukee County Commissioner. Mr. Messinger resides in Cedarburg; he holds a degree from Stanford Business School; and has worked in real estate, banking, and served as president of a small construction firm. He also served on the Wisconsin Professional Baseball Park District Board of Directors in 2004 and 2005 as the Ozaukee County representative.

Mr. Pitts made a motion, seconded by Ms. Minkel-Dumit, and carried unanimously, to formally seat Mr. Messinger as a Commissioner representing Ozaukee County on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

OFFICIAL SEATING OF RACINE COUNTY COMMISSIONER TOM KRAMER

Mr. Jung introduced Mr. Tom Kramer as the Commission's new Racine County Commissioner. Mr. Jung noted Mr. Kramer is the Administrator for the Town of Norway and serves on the Wisconsin Towns Association Town Advocacy Council. He has also served on the Racine County Board of Supervisors since 2018 and is the current County Board Chair. In addition, he serves as an ambassador for the Wisconsin Counties Association.

Mr. Jung made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously to formally seat Mr. Kramer as a Commissioner representing Racine County on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

OFFICIAL SEATING OF RACINE COUNTY COMMISSIONER DONALD TROTTIER

Mr. Jung introduced Mr. Donald Trottier as the Commission's new Racine County Commissioner. Mr. Trottier had been employed with BMO Bank as the Vice President of Mortgage Banking for the Racine, Kenosha, and Milwaukee areas, he is currently a real estate agent with Remax Elite, and he is a Racine County Board Supervisor. He serves as Chairman of the Racine County Board Finance and Human Services Committee and serves on the Racine County Board Executive and County Government Services Committees. In addition, Mr. Trottier serves on the Racine County Board of Health Committee, Racine County Health and Human Services Board, and Racine Heritage Museum Board of Directors. Mr. Trottier holds a bachelor's degree from Marquette University.

Mr. Jung made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kramer, and carried unanimously, to formally seat Mr. Trottier as a Commissioner representing Racine County on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

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OFFICIAL SEATING OF WAUKESHA COUNTY COMMISSIONER PAUL DECKER

Mr. Crowley introduced Mr. Paul Decker as the Commission's new Waukesha County Commissioner. Mr. Decker served on the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors from 2009 to April 2024, serving as the Chair of the County Board from 2012 through his retirement. Mr. Decker also served as an adjunct instructor at Waukesha County Technical College in the small business center. In addition, Mr. Decker served on the Village of Hartland Planning Commission, and the boards of many small business startups ensuring their successful launches. Mr. Decker was also the 2010-2011 District Governor for Rotary District 6270. Mr. Decker continues to foster community development and engagement through service organizations and non-profit boards.

Mr. Crowley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Johnson, and carried unanimously, to formally seat Mr. Decker as a Commissioner representing Waukesha County on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2024, QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Pitts, seconded by Mr. Schleif, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the September 11, 2024, Quarterly Commission Meeting were approved as published.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE 2025-2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP), (RESOLUTION 2024-18)

Chairperson Colman asked the Commission to consider adoption of the 2025-2028 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Resolution No. 2024-18, noting these materials were provided prior to this meeting. He then called upon Mr. Hiebert to present an overview of the agenda item. Mr. Hiebert presented Resolution 2024-18, which provides for Commission approval and adoption of the 2025-2028 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He explained that the TIP is a federally required listing of all arterial highway, public transit, and other related transportation projects proposed by State and local governments to be implemented with federal funding over the next four years in the seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin Region. He emphasized that all the projects included in the TIP are consistent with VISION 2050, the long range land use and transportation plan for Southeastern Wisconsin, and that both the Plan and TIP must be determined to conform to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources State Implementation Plan for Air Quality Management. He stated that the 2025-2028 TIP was reviewed and unanimously approved by the Commission's Advisory Committees on Transportation System Planning and Programming for the Kenosha, Milwaukee, Racine, Round Lake Beach-Wisconsin, and West Bend urban areas.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Johnson, Mr. Hiebert stated the TIP is no longer distributed via paper copy, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the Advisory Committees all received notice of the new on-line eTIP. State Legislators were not directly notified of the of the eTIP. Mr. Johnson commented that the State Legislators work with the Governor's office to establish the budget for transportation and county and local roads.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Pitts, Mr. McKay stated staff can provide county officials information on how to access the eTIP. Mr. Holt stated that he has received positive feedback on the eTIP's functionality.

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There being no further questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Holloway, and carried by a vote of 15 ayes and 0 nays, Resolution 2024-18 was approved (copy of Resolution No. 2024-18 is attached to the Official Minutes).

REPORT ON NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairperson Colman asked Mr. Schleif, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, to assume the Chair. Mr. Schleif noted that the Nominating Committee, as appointed by the Commission Chairperson in accordance with Commission Bylaws, consisted of Commissioners Robert Pitts of Kenosha County; Michael Maistelman of Milwaukee County; Eric Stelter of Ozaukee County; Trevor Jung of Racine County; Brian Holt of Walworth County; Dewayne Johnson of Waukesha County; and himself as Chairperson and representative of Washington County.

Mr. Schleif reported that the Committee met on November 14, 2024, and acted unanimously to nominate the following individuals for election to the offices indicated for a two-year term:

- Chairperson Charles L. Colman
- Vice-Chairperson..... Donna Brown-Martin
- Secretary..... Michael A. Crowley
- Treasurer David L. Stroik

There being no comments, it was moved by Mr. Pitts, seconded by Mr. Johnson, to approve the Nominating Committee report and to elect Mr. Colman to serve as Chairperson, Ms. Brown-Martin to serve as Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Crowley to serve as Secretary, and Mr. Stroik to serve as Treasurer, as nominated by the Nominating Committee for calendar years 2025 and 2026. Chairperson Colman then resumed the Chair and congratulated the officers on their election.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF COMMISSION SERVICE AGREEMENT FEE SCHEDULE

Chairperson Colman asked the Commission to consider the proposed Service Agreement Fee Schedule. Ms. Hacker reviewed the schedule with the Commissioners stating that it was due for an update and explained the process taken for updating the fee schedule. Ms. Larsen then explained that the hourly rates included in the proposed fee schedule update are an established set rate that is an average of the staff that make up the job titles.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Messinger, Mr. McKay stated most of the fees will be paid by a unit of government. Sanitary sewer service extension reviews will be paid by the requestor, primarily landowners or landowner representatives. Mr. McKay further stated that the Commission already charges a fee for most of the services included in the proposed fee schedule.

In response to an additional inquiry by Mr. Messinger, Ms. Larsen explained the Wisconsin Department of Transportation agreements. She noted these agreements are written for a set dollar amount. When the agreement is depleted of those funds, a new agreement is written. The limit on those agreements is generally \$100,000. Any amount over that would need legislative authorization.

Mr. Decker stated that when Waukesha County works with the Commission on a project, it is reviewed by the County Board of Supervisors for full transparency.

Ms. Brown-Martin recommended noting on the fee schedule that additional fees may be required if a request goes beyond the agreed upon scope of work or is particularly complex.

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Ms. Minkel-Dumit stated that the Executive Committee has had discussions about the Service Agreement Fee Schedule and the Committee is supportive of this fee schedule. Ms. Hacker noted that the Commission Division Heads were involved in establishing the fees. She also noted that the Counties were not directly asked to provide input on the update. Mr. McKay added that the Commission auditors had suggested that increasing the service agreement fees would be a more palatable means of increasing Commission revenue than other means.

There being no further discussion, on a motion by Ms. Minkel-Dumit, seconded by Mr. Holt, the Service Agreement Fee Schedule was approved with one nay vote.

REVIEW OF TAX LEVY SCENARIOS

Mr. Colman asked Ms. Hacker to review the tax levy scenarios that could form the basis for the Commission's 2026 tax levy request. She began by reviewing the tax levy tables that were included in the meeting materials.

Ms. Larsen stated there are two significant reasons why the tax levy has been able to remain at or below the current level since 2006. She noted that as the Commission does own its office building outright and thus there is no rent or mortgage payment. In addition, the agency benefited from savings due to Act 10, which changed the pension contribution cost share to 50 percent for the agency and 50 percent for the employee.

Mr. Johnson noted that he voted against the Service Agreement Fee Schedule update because he wanted to have a discussion on the tax levy prior to approving the fee schedule update.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Messinger, Ms. Larsen stated that staffing levels were as high as 120 staff and is currently at 65 staff. She further stated that staff fluctuates between 63 to 68 employees. Ms. Larsen did note that the Commission has eliminated some positions, such as clerical and geographic information systems staff, due to advances in technology.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Holloway, Ms. Hacker stated that each County is a little different with respect to how the Commission's tax levy operates with their budget. Mr. Holloway stated that if the Commission's levy request to the Counties causes a County to bump up against their levy limit, or erodes services the County is able to provide, it would be prudent to have the finance staff of the County meet with the Commission Executive Director and Commissioners from the County to determine how to move forward with a request for a tax levy increase. Ms. Hacker noted that she intends to meet with County staff for discussions about the potential tax levy increase request.

Mr. Schleif stated that Ms. Hacker should be prepared to explain how the tax levy supports the receipt of Federal planning funds to the Commission.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Schleif, Ms. Larsen stated when the levy rate was set in 2006, that amount was set for the needs of the Commission at that time. It was not anticipated that the Commission would hold the tax levy steady for the next 19 years.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Messinger, Ms. Larsen stated the budget document contains a table that shows the funding sources by line items. The Treasurer's Report does not show revenues or expenditures by line, rather expenditures by program area and is a snapshot of a particular date. Mr. Johnson requested that a budget column be added to the Treasurer's Report for a comparison against the expenditures.

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In response to an inquiry by Mr. Trottier, Ms. Larsen stated the reserves have fluctuated, primarily due to the work efforts the Commission undertakes. In addition, the work that is requested of the Commission fluctuates. Ms. Larsen stated in 2022 the Commission approved a new reserves policy that outlines how Commission funds may be spent. This policy was developed with recommendations from the Commission's auditor, CliftonLarsonAllen.

In response to a second inquiry by Mr. Trottier, Ms. Larsen stated the Commission's budget for 2024 was \$9.6 million, and the budget for 2025 is \$8.9 million. The difference is due to projects such as the Regional Orthophotography Program that occur in even number years, the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant is \$150,000 less in 2025 than in 2024, and the MARK Rail study is \$290,000 less in 2025 than in 2024. These are normal occurrences based on project schedules. She stated the budget is balanced, there are staffing expenses budgeted against these revenues.

Mr. Decker commented that based on his experience on the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors, there is never too much information for the County Board and there can always be more interaction. He further stated the Commissioners should have a working relationship with their County administrative staff and the County Board. These individuals should have an understanding of the Commission and what the Commission provides to the Counties.

Mr. Holt stated that he views himself as the liaison between the Commission and the County Administrator. He and the County Administrator have standing meetings to discuss the Commission's work.

Ms. Minkel-Dumit commented that while the intent is to have additional communication with the Counties on this, the newer Commissioners should be informed of what has already been communicated and continue to build upon that communication.

Mr. Crowley noted that this item will be brought to the next meeting of the Executive Committee for further discussion with an update to the full Commission at the March quarterly meeting.

Mr. Crowley also noted that while this was a discussion item, with no motion needed, the record should indicate that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Schleif were in favor of moving this topic forward for discussion with the Counties.

PRESENTATION ON COMMISSION YOUTH COUNCIL

Ms. Hacker introduced the idea of a Commission Youth Council and explained that local governmental units throughout the Region have formulated youth councils to inform policy and operations. The Commission then received a presentation on forming a Regional Youth Commission as presented by four students from "The Eco Club" of a public middle school in Milwaukee County.

Mr. Jung stated the club is a wonderful project and the Commission and Commissioners would help to support the work of the youth and to keep the planet green.

Mr. Messinger asked if the group was incorporated and noted it as a good way to reach out and get other youth to join similar projects.

Ms. Brown-Martin stated Milwaukee County has a Youth Commission that is tied to the County Board, that has been active for three years and is tied to policymaking at the County Board level. This Commission provided comments on the County Budget and generated ideas that were incorporated into the budget.

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Ms. Brown-Martin further stated that having exposure to other Youth Commissions would be good for the group and would show the breadth of involvement by other young people as well as high school students who are planning to move on into college and do something similar in terms of public policy.

Ms. Brown-Martin commented that it would be ideal if the Commission Youth Council was made up of students from different grades and from all the Counties in the Region for the mingling of information and discussions.

Mr. Johnson thanked the group for their fabulous presentation, noting that the Region needs people involved as planners and engineers in public policy providing exposure to youth. He then thanked the group for their leadership.

Mr. Trottier congratulated the group for coming to the meeting and talking to strangers. He then noted that Racine County does have a youth and governance program.

Chairperson Colman thanked the group for attending and presenting at the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Chairperson Colman presented the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Colman noted that a copy of the Treasurer's Report had been provided to all Commissioners for review prior to the meeting and called attention to the following items:

1. Based upon disbursements through October 20, 2024, it is projected that total disbursements for the year will approximate \$9.97 million. Revenues are projected at about \$9.80 million, exclusive of interest income and miscellaneous revenues.
2. The Commission's Reserves Policy indicates a minimum reserve amount of \$5,092,110, with a maximum reserve amount of \$10,058,220. The audited cash and cash equivalents at end of year 2023 are \$6,053,254.
3. As of October 20, 2024, the Commission had in investments and cash on hand approximately \$4.02 million. Just over \$3.25 million were invested in the State of Wisconsin Local Government Investment Pool. As of October 20, 2024, that fund was yielding 4.93 percent interest. Other funds are held in savings, checking, and certificate of deposit accounts at several banks.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Schleif, Ms. Larsen stated that the difference in cash on hand between 2023 and 2024 is due to receivables primarily from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Crowley, seconded by Mr. Schleif, and carried unanimously, the Treasurer's Report for the period ending October 20, 2024, was approved (copy of the Treasurer's Report is attached to the Official Minutes).

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Research Committee

Chairperson Colman asked Mr. Crowley to present the Planning and Research Committee report. Mr. Crowley noted that the report had been provided to all Commissioners prior to the meeting. He noted that

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the Planning and Research Committee had met once since the Commission's Quarterly meeting on September 11, 2024.

On November 5, 2024, the Committee took the following action:

1. Received an update on the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant.

Executive Committee Report

Chairperson Colman noted that the Executive Committee report had been provided to all Commissioners prior to the meeting. He also noted that the Executive Committee met twice, on October 17, 2024, and November 14, 2024, since the previous Commission Meeting.

At one of the meetings, the Committee:

1. Reviewed and approved proposed contracts for planning work. Two contracts were approved in October. The details of those contracts are attached to this report.

At both meetings, the Committee:

2. Received a report outlining progress on key planning efforts being undertaken by the Commission in 2024.

At the October meeting, the Committee also took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments
2. Reviewed and approved an amendment to the 2024 Overall Work Program
3. Reviewed and approved outside facilitators for the 2024 Strategy
4. Reviewed and approved the Auditor for Calendar Year 2025
5. Reviewed a Report on 2025 Commission Health Insurance
6. Discussed the Commission revenue sources
7. Approved a Summer Hours Policy
8. Reviewed and approved the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for reporting period No. 19, 2024
9. Reviewed and approved disbursements for four financial periods: year 2024 Nos. 16, 17, 18 and 19 for the period July 29, 2024, to September 22, 2024

At the November meeting, the Committee also took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments
2. Reviewed and approved the 2025 Service Agreement Fee Schedule

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3. Discussed regional tax levy scenarios
4. Reviewed and approved the 2025 Commissioner per diem
5. Received a Report of 2025 Commission Health Insurance Enrollment
6. Reviewed and approved vacation leave accrual rates
7. Reviewed and approved the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for reporting period No. 21, 2024
8. Reviewed and approved disbursements for two financial periods: year 2024 Nos. 20 and 21 for the period September 23, 2024, to October 20, 2024

In response to a comment from Mr. Messinger, Mr. Colman stated that the Executive Committee has been discussing the Regional Chloride Impact Study and working toward completion of the study.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Larsen noted the passing of former Commissioner Gustav Wirth. He served as Commissioner from 1999 through 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, on a motion by Mr. Schleif, seconded by Mr. Decker, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Hacker
Deputy Secretary