

**Minutes of the April 28, 2009
Full Board Meeting of the
Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chester Mathena called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Paul Lake called roll; thirty members were present. One additional member, Jim Ebert arrived after roll call. Also in attendance were Lisa Gehlhausen, Sarah Kinder, Theresa Criss-Hartwig and Michael Cummings of the Commission's staff, and Adam Dickey.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

Chair Mathena presented the Minutes of the February 10, 2009 meeting. With no questions or comments, Mary Gogel made a motion to approve the minutes and seconded by Mike Ellis. Motion carried.

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

None to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Beverly Schulthise reported that as of April 28, 2009, the closing cash balance was \$191,416.73. Treasurer Schulthise stated the closing cash balance included \$50,000.00 in CDs and the outstanding invoices total \$79,661.67. With no further questions or discussion, Jody Fortwendel made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Marvin Boeglin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

SPECIAL SPEAKER

Chair Mathena then turned the floor to Adam Dickey, Field Representative for 9th District Congressman Baron Hill to make a presentation on appropriations and answer any questions the board may have in regards to the appropriations process that had been made and the given economic stimulus money.

Ms. Gehlhausen mentioned that for 2009, the Commission had submitted sixteen appropriations on behalf of the district. Ms. Gehlhausen thanked Congressman Hill for finding funds for two of those appropriations, those being: Spencer County Emergency Operational Center for \$1 million and the Perry County Port for \$280,000. For 2010 appropriations that were due on March 20, eleven appropriations were submitted with five moving on to the next level: 1) Crawford County Fiber Optics for the school systems and industrial park, 2) Beaver Lake Project for the City of Jasper, 3) Flood Mitigation Planning for Orange County, 4) Flood Wall improvements on behalf of Tell City and Cannelton, and 5) Spencer County Rail Overpass. Mr. Dickey then went on to report how appropriations were handled last year and then how they are going to be handled this year in regards to new rules in how the appropriations are going to be handled. Mr. Dickey mentioned that because of the new ways these rules are structured, his office had to make some tough decisions in enacting a system where they would only select one project per county to send forward. While looking at the list of selected projects per individual counties, they tried to work with those items which otherwise did not have funds which were readily available through other funding sources. They also looked at projects with critical needs as well. Ms. Dickey stressed to the members for anyone who submitted a project and it did not push forward to not get discouraged about that project. From their office's standpoint, they will continue to do what they can to identify other funding sources to try and assist in getting those projects into the pipeline and funded.

Mr. Dickey mentioned for the other five projects that *did* move forward, this will mean they are in the game for these items but no guarantee for funding. Even if funded, there is always a chance it may be funded at a lesser amount than what the request was. Their office will keep continuing throughout this year to try and work to get them fully funded and probably will know their status around October.

Mr. Dickey mentioned the economic stimulus bill had passed and funds are flowing to the State and are coming in a couple of different ways. The main way is directly to the State and these included funds that largely identified to go to the State agencies that deal with state programs such as unemployment compensation but also includes monies for roadway projects. Mr. Dickey told the members for the county projects they have in for their roadway projects to keep in contact with the state and he mentioned when they hear things from INDOT or other state agencies, they will feed it back down to people like Lisa to let them know what is happening if they had not heard already. Keeping a good line of communications will be the key to make sure your projects that have been identified continue to flow down.

Other ways these funds are coming to us is through federal programs, like the COPS grant program which have over 8,000 applications at the Department of Justice (DOJ) right now and it is highly competitive and they are working through those application to process quickly. Congress this week reauthorized the COPS program and if that measure is picked up by the Senate and approved and adopted by the President that will add 68 more officer positions to the 9th district by DOJ estimates. This will be a good thing but will come at a later date once passed.

Everyone thanked Mr. Dickey for coming.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Chair Mathena turned the meeting over to Ms. Gehlhausen for the Director's Report.

Michael Cummings. Ms. Gehlhausen was happy to introduce Michael Cummings as the new Flood Recovery Coordinator from now until the end of the year. Ms. Gehlhausen stated he will be writing the flood strategy for Gibson, Pike and Posey counties. He has also been asked to write the Disaster Recovery 1 application on behalf of Pike County. Ms. Gehlhausen stated that due to the work load, we are hoping to keep Mike on board as a permanent position. The Commission received an EDA Flood Recovery grant to fund his salary.

Chair Mathena thanked and welcomed Michael aboard.

Ms. Gehlhausen stated that due to the Stimulus and Disaster Recovery dollars the staff is extremely busy with getting projects out and meeting deadlines. Some deadlines noted were: March 20 for appropriations, March 13 for Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), April 14 for COPS, and April 22 for Rural Law Enforcement. Ms. Gehlhausen referred the board of the project status reports for further project details.

Ms. Gehlhausen briefly reported the following:

Disaster Recovery Funding. Ms. Gehlhausen stated Disaster Recovery I Funding is only for Pike County. Pike County spent \$201,219.00 for cleaning up after the flood disaster of 2008. Twenty-five percent (25%) or \$50,304.75 that the county has spent is allowed to be requested from the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs and apply for \$50,304.75 to recover their cost with the application due in by June 1. Mike Cummings is working on this project.

Disaster Recovery Appropriation II, has \$35 million in water and wastewater, \$10 million in economic development programs, \$20 million in storm drainage, \$2.5 million in emergency services and \$2.5 million in downtown revitalizations. All these funding sources have different due dates ranging from April 17. There are various communities that are on the SRF list or the USDA list. Ms. Gehlhausen stated on April 29, Ellen Harper with the Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs, the liaison for our office will be here at the office to spend the whole day and going through the water and wastewater projects to find out which ones will have a good chance of being funded. Some of the projects on the list include: Huntingburg Wastewater, Rockport Wastewater, And-Tro Water, Springs Valley Water, Winslow Water, Cannelton Wastewater, English Water and Wastewater, Grandview Water and Tell City Wastewater and a couple of USDA projects are: Springs Valley Water project, and Orange County Southeast Patoka Phase VII project. The stimulus money is coming through SRF to funds to projects that are ready. We do not know how much these grants or loans are right now. The only one known is Winslow at this time in receiving \$17,000 of the \$23,000 requested to make improvements to their water intake. Ms. Gehlhausen congratulated Winslow. SRF grants and loans are determined by rates and median household income. If you have a higher rate you get more grant if lower rate you get less grant and more loan. Each community is different. We will be hearing more on these projects in the coming months.

Ms. Gehlhausen stressed to the communities that have water and wastewater projects to make sure they get their preliminary engineering done, their environmental reviews done and make sure they are ready to go in case there are other funding.

Storm drainage applications are due June 12 there is no special list for storm drainage. The communities that have made it known to go after funding are: Troy, Rockport, Dale, Tell City and Cannelton. The staff is working with these communities to apply up to \$1 million with no match required. The community that has their storm water planning grant completed will have a better chance of being competitive.

Emergency services have \$2.5 million with Pike County EMS, Leavenworth Fire Truck and Huntingburg Fire Station has come forward to seek these funds. The environmental reviews and income surveys must be completed and applications must benefit low-to-moderate incomes.

Downtown Revitalization has \$2.5 million in disaster recovery II. The projects going in are: Rockport, Petersburg, and Chrisney. The community can apply for construction or planning grants for downtown revitalization. These applications are due July 31.

Ms. Gehlhausen mentioned that the Office of Community & Rural Affairs may have a third round of community focus funds grant applications submittal in lieu of two rounds as in the past. The community must be low-to-moderate incomes.

Nine code books are currently being updated.

INDOT stimulus money hasn't given any announcements yet on which projects will get funded for the communities that have already submitted their applications.

Transportation enhancement applications are due this fall.

Two fiber optics projects within the district one in Crawford County and one in Dubois County are possibilities.

Brownfields Phase I and II are currently underway. Ms. Gehlhausen stated to the board if they have any perceived Brownfield's, to please bring forward to Tom Mosley.

EDA funding with different matches being developed are Beaver Lake in Jasper, Liberty Green in Crawford County, Regional Revolving Loan Fund and Pike County Industrial Park and possible Springs Valley Water and Dale Water.

Due May 20 is five Assistance to Firefighter's Grant applications going in for Winslow, Spencer County Ambulance, Orange County Rural Fire Department, Dubois Fire Department and Leavenworth Fire Department.

Various income surveys are being prepared at this time also in order to be ready for all types of applications. Ms. Gehlhausen stated the more ready the project is the better chance of getting funded.

Ms. Gehlhausen stated as you can see there are many programs, many ideas that came forward from all of you and the staff are extremely busy. Hopefully we can be successful in getting some of these projects funded.

Mr. Bill Byrd asked to speak at this time. He stated to the board that there are some that have been here as long as he has, and stated at one time in 2003 that they thought the Commission would be bankrupt. Mr. Byrd referred the board of the Fund Balance Growth in Revenue & Expenditure Report in their 2008 Year-End Documents packet that illustrates the revenue and expenditures of the Commission for the past nine years. Mr. Byrd stated as you can see in on the graph in 2004, when Lisa became Director, and by looking at the project status report, Lisa along with perhaps another member of the staff reported 58 projects in addition to managing this organization. Mr. Byrd in his opinion stated this is not possible. Mr. Byrd stated, "Lisa is very conservative as we all know, she has been around here as long as I have, but there comes a time Lisa when you got to take care of yourself and you got to take care of your staff. My charges would be to you, if I had authority to do this, would be, and get yourself some help. Because if you don't, we will wind up without you, we will wind up without Theresa and we will wind up with nobody that knows anything about this and I don't want to go backwards."

Chair Mathena stated, "We all realize that Lisa is doing a terrific job and her staff are certainly doing the same and being very supportive. I know more help would be appreciated." Lisa replied, "I do appreciate those comments and we all are working hard and it is overwhelming at times when we are out all the time at night. With Mike coming on board, he does have his flood mitigation strategy to complete and I tend to send him in October to be trained in the Community Focus Fund program. We will not see this benefit until next year. We have two interns coming this summer to help with the income surveys but we could use one more full-time staff, there is no doubt about it."

Chair Mathena asked if there is any discussion on this? He then replied, "I would think if the money is available, that we should provide Lisa with another full-time person."

Mike Ellis stated, "Good people are not always hired, their developed. If we don't bring some of the younger people in this program on the bottom end, for Lisa and the others to train, they may be short lived or they may not be the quality that we need to run the organization. I would suggest maybe we authorize her to look at maybe bringing in more interns that could be developed and maybe a year or two they intern a year and their internship on a project the next year, but then you could bring them back and pay them in developed hours." Lisa replied, "We do get high school interns and they do help out a little bit, but they come and go and you can't really develop them. Now with Theresa coming on, Nathan coming on and now Mike coming on, they are all young and energetic, they are a big part of the reason why this organization is successful right now. Having somebody here full-time is how you can develop them." Mr. Byrd asked, "So what are you saying, do you think you need a full-time person rather than an intern?"

Lisa replied, "Right. But we need to ask ourselves is this money short lived or is it going to keep coming, but are we working crazily now. We do have much more work than usual."

John Stutzman stated, "I give Lisa all the credit for everything because we go back along ways, but there were several things besides just the director that caused the financials problem back then, part of it, it was, I admit but there were other things too like the economy kind of went down and grants kind of went down, I think that is what you're thinking about now is that going to be there next year." Lisa stated, "I've been through many peaks and valleys here but right now the work load is much more than a normal work week."

Chair Mathena stated he would like to see a motion to allow Lisa to evaluate this situation and come up with a recommendation for the next meeting.

Bill Byrd stated, "I think even at 3% with the projects at hand we could afford another full-time person. Looking back in 2004 to 2008, we had four years there with steady revenues. You might say okay that is going to peak the valley but I don't think we can live it that environment, I think we've got to address what the problem is today and you know, I hate to say this, but that person is not in here and we may have to lay them off. It's not unheard of. I'd like to make a motion that we permit Lisa to at least bring one more full-time employee on board to relieve Theresa, Lisa and the rest of the staff from some of this work load."

Al Logsdon stated, "You have the Executive Board along with the personnel here that is the Executive Board's job to get this all together and present it to the full board." Bill Byrd remarked, "We have to approve it but we only meet four times a year and that makes it a pretty long space in between there." Al asked, "When is the next meeting?" Lisa replied, "August." Al stated, "Yes that is a long time to wait."

Norman Dillon stated, "You also, have time to know where the federal money as far where it is going by then, by August."

Lisa stated, "We will mail the proposed 2010 budget to you in August and look for adoption in October. We can do budget revisions if required."

Norman Dillon stated, "I'm good for an employee but also I know we have several other employees that maybe we could get another vehicle that takes off of that budget you have for an employee but also you'll keeping good people and their not having to drive their vehicles to meetings all the time. You know, I've heard the outcome of the vehicle and it's been a great asset. I know it costs for the wear and tear of driving your own car. I know the money is there but we also need to look at if we need to purchase another vehicle."

Lisa stated, "Do we hire a full-time person or do we give bonuses to the ones who are working extra. I think we would all appreciate having another person." Another member stated he would rather see an increase in the mileage rate per mile than purchasing another vehicle.

Al Logdon asked, "Has this matter that Mr. Byrd brought up been discussed thoroughly with the executive committee?" Lisa replied, "No, it has not."

Al Logdon stated, "They meet monthly correct?" Lisa stated, "Correct." Al Logdon stated, "I feel that this matter should be taken up with the executive board at their next monthly meeting, if they see that there is sufficient funds to employ an additional person at that time, they make that decision, and report back to us at our next board meeting, how they plan to pay for it, how it impacts the budget so that we can meet the needs of the Region 15 counties. I make that as a form of a motion if it is so appropriate."

Norman Dillon stated, "We already have a motion on the floor, don't we?" Chair Mathena stated, "Yes, we have." Norman Dillon asked, "Did it get second?" Chair Mathena replied, "No." Chair Mathena stated the first motion died for a lack of second.

Chair Mathena stated, "Now, we have a second motion, do we have a second on that one?" Norman Dillon stated, "I Second." Motion carried. Chair Mathena stated, "Lisa will evaluate the situation and come back at the next Executive Board Meeting and present it to them and then they're in return come back to the full board." Lisa replied, "Thank you."

There being no further questions on the Director's Report, Mark Brescher motioned to approve the Director's Report and Norman Dillon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

None to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolutions for Approval:

- Chair Mathena read Resolution 2009-06 stating approval to enter Mr. Cummings on the Commission's payroll on a full-time basis with an annual salary of \$35,100.00. With no questions, a motion was made by Norman Dillon to approve **Resolution 2009-06** and seconded by Mike Ellis. Motion carried.
- Chair Mathena read Resolution 2009-07 stating approval to hire Elliot Englert and Jennifer Gray on the Commission's payroll for temporary part-time summer positions from May 11 through August 14, 2009 at an hourly rate of \$8.00 for a second year term for Elliot Englert and an hourly rate of \$7.50 for Jennifer Gray for the office and mapping departments. Vice-Chair Vollmer asked, "Lisa, do you get the same interns back or are you training new ones?" Lisa replied, "Elliot Englert is a returnee from last year and he is excellent and we'll happy when they come back a second time. Jennifer Gray is a new intern. That is why you see a difference in their hourly rate." With no further questions, a motion was made by Mike Ellis to approve **Resolution 2009-07** and seconded by Joe Greene. Motion carried.
- Chair Mathena read Resolution 2009-08 to close fiscal year 2008 and approve \$79,050.60 surplus to the fund balance. Ms. Gehlhausen stated the Executive Board recommended approval of this resolution to close 2008 books. With no questions, a motion was made by Al Logsdon and seconded by Bill Byrd to approve **Resolution 2009-08**. Motion carried.

Other:

- Ms. Gehlhausen stated Resolution 2007-10 was passed April 24, 2007 at the full board meeting establishing the per capita fees for the calendar year 2010 in the amount of \$54,832.50 due to the EDA planning grant going on a three year basis. The per capita fees pay for board travel and local matching funds for Indiana 15's EDA planning grant and INDOT grant. Ms. Gehlhausen stated that each county in April ask Indiana 15 to submit a budget depicting how their money will be spent on an annual basis. Ms. Gehlhausen requested that \$3,000 be used for board travel and expenses and \$51,832.50 for match funds to the grants. With no questions, a motion was made by JA Bateman and seconded by Joe Greene to approve the travel and matching funds appropriation budget for the per capita fees for 2010. Motion carried.

Before adjournment, Chair Mathena reminded everyone that the next Full Board would be August 25 at 7:30 p.m. With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. on a motion made by Bill Byrd and seconded by Jim Taylor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul A. Lake, Secretary

PAL/sk