

**Minutes of the May 25, 2021
Electronic Executive Board Meeting of the
Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tara Damin called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Mary Ann Cummings performed roll call. Board members present were Tara Damin, Mary Ann Cummings, Beverly Schulthise and Jon Craig; electronic were Paul Lorey, John Noblitt, and Tom Hauser; and absent were Bill Breeding, Melanie Barrett, Don Winkler, and Stephen Bartels. A quorum was met. Lisa Gehlhausen, Nathan Held and Cheri Taylor of the Commission and guest Annie Cruz-Porter of Purdue were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

Chair Tara Damin presented the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held April 27, 2021. Paul Lorey made a motion to approve the minutes, Beverly Schulthise seconded, and motion carried. A roll call vote was conducted, passing with six in favor, none opposed.

AGENDA: ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Chair Tara Damin called for additional agenda items. Ms. Gehlhausen asked that Purdue Center for Regional Development (PCRD) AmeriCorps fellow initiative be added to the agenda.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Beverly Schulthise gave the Treasurer's Report. As of May 18th receipts were \$297.00 and disbursements were \$15,069.04. Since the report was printed, additional receipts were \$141.64 and disbursements were \$22,575.46. The actual total cash balance is \$797,241.60. The total aging schedule was \$41,824.76. There are two 12-month CDs totaling \$250,000.00 and an 18-month CD totaling \$150,000.00 for a total investment of \$650,000.00. The restricted savings has a balance of \$4,497.57. Paul Lorey made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Mary Ann Cummings seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, passing with six in favor, none opposed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Chair Tara Damin called for the Director's Report from Executive Director Lisa Gehlhausen. Ms. Gehlhausen reported on projects as follows:

- Annie Cruz-Porter with Purdue Center for Regional Development PCRD gave a presentation to the Executive Board about AmeriCorps fellow program. Discussion was conducted on whether or not to participate in a Digital Inclusion Fellow in the region, co-supervise with PCRD, provide guidance, provide office space, and a computer. The focus would be to advance digital literacy and broadband advocacy in the region. The expected costs are \$50,000 plus a computer for a two-year period (\$25,000 each year). The program was deemed a regional priority in the CEDS. A concern was staff time, tasks, and outcomes. A full Board of Directors meeting would be needed to appropriate the funding since this is not in the current 2021 budget. PCRD would like a decision in early June.
- The Indiana Finance Authority sent information about State Water Infrastructure Fund (SWIG) grants. Federal recovery funds in the amount of \$100 million to provide grant funding to Indiana utilities for wastewater, drinking water and stormwater projects to protect or improve public health or water quality. There is an interest survey to assist the Indiana Finance Authority to allocate funding to appropriate needs. The application for funding, program guidance and additional resources about funding will be available on the State Water Infrastructure Fund website on or around June 4, 2021. More information is available on the Indiana Finance Authority website.

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- An Indiana Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) was launched by IEDC and State legislature has set aside \$500 million. Ten regions in the state of Indiana will be chosen and offered up to \$50 million to promote growth in the region. The \$50 million investment (20%) is expected to leverage local public and private funding (80%). Strategies may include a focus on physical projects, such as infrastructure, workforce housing, revitalization of blighted or vacant properties, cultural amenities, talent attraction, innovation in industry, and small business support. The READI timeline to define a region, develop a strategic plan, evaluation and funding recommendations are online at IndianaREADI.com. Indiana 15 is exploring becoming a READI region and has a few questions pending with IEDC.
- The Perry County Port Authority asked Indiana 15 to develop an application seeking Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program through the US Department of Transportation. This was formerly known as the TIGER and BUILD programs. The Perry County Port Authority wants to make rail improvements along Hoosier Southern Railroad to increase weight capacity by replacing 75# track with 115# track. The application is due July 12th.
- There is a 2021 Port Infrastructure Development Program available through the US DOT. The Tell City River Port intends to seek funds for a Port Cell with applications due July 30th.
- EDA will soon announce their American Rescue Plan notice of funding availability (NOFA). The Commission will submit two applications that were not funded through CARES Act funding.
- Two applications will be submitted to OCRA for a Town of Dale Wastewater project and a City of Cannelton environmental remediation clearance project in June.
- The Regional Resiliency Plan focus group meetings were conducted today with many community members participating.

OLD BUSINESS

- Weyer Electric came to the office on May 21 and 24 to perform the approved replacement of fluorescent bulbs with LED bulbs. Doing so has made the office energy efficient and brighter.

NEW BUSINESS

- Electronic Board meeting policy – House Bill 1437 discussion. House Bill 1437, signed by the Governor on May 11, 2021, outlines adopting a written policy as to how meetings are to be conducted. House Bill 1437 states 50% of members are to be present in person to count as a quorum. The Commission will resume in person meetings. A policy will be drafted and voted on at the next Executive Board meeting.
- Health Insurance discussion. Cheri Taylor presented the preliminary quotes from health insurance companies for current staff. The Board was satisfied with the amount of information on each company, so Cheri will present options that include dental, vision, life and health savings account for the next meeting.

Contracts for Approval

- INDOT Rural Transportation 21-22; up to \$35,831
Jon Craig made a motion to approve the contract and John Noblitt seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, passing with six in favor, none opposed.
- Pike County COVID; sum of \$6,250
Beverly Schulthise made a motion to approve the contract and Mary Ann Cummings seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, passing with six in favor, none opposed.
- Grandview Codification; sum of \$1,700
Jon Craig made a motion to approve the contract and Beverly Schulthise seconded. A roll call vote was conducted passing with six in favor, none opposed.
- Orleans Codification; sum of \$1,400
John Noblitt made a motion to approve the contract and Mary Ann Cummings seconded. A roll call vote was conducted passing with six in favor, none opposed.
- Tell City Park Board LWCF application; sum of \$3,500
Beverly Schulthise made a motion to approve the contract and Jon Craig seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, passing with six in favor, none opposed.

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PCRD AmeriCorps - Additional discussion regarding the PCRD AmeriCorp fellow were revisited. The Board left the decision with Ms. Gehlhausen following answers to additional questions to be ask of Annie Cruz Porter tomorrow.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion or business to come before the Executive Board, Chair Tara Damin called for a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:45 pm. The Executive Board will meet next on Tuesday, June 22, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Ann Cummings, Secretary

MAC/lh