

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

**Steering Committee**

East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission  
Municipal Building Council Chambers, New London  
October 12, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 P.M. by Dick Koeppen, Chair.

Committee Members Present:

Dick Koeppen, Chair .....	Waupaca County
Bill Barribeau .....	Calumet County
Clifford Sanderfoot .....	Outagamie County
Marshal Giese .....	Shawano County
Norm Weiss .....	Waushara County
David Albrecht .....	Winnebago County

Committee Members Excused

Bob Hermes .....	Menominee County
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Staff / Guests Present

Eric Fowle, Exec. Dir. ....	ECWRPC Staff
Walt Raith, Assist. Dir.....	ECWRPC Staff
Angie Cottrell, Controller.....	ECWRPC Staff

1. Welcome / Introductions of Members and Guest

Mr. Koeppen welcomed members and noted that no guest or members of the general public were present.

2. Statement of Compliance with Wis. Stats. Sec. 19.84 Regarding Open Meetings Requirements

Mr. Fowle stated that the agenda was mailed and properly posted in accordance with State statutes.

3. Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

4. Approval of the August 24, 2009 Steering Committee Summary of Proceedings

Mr. Barribeau motioned to approve the Summary of Proceedings for the August 24, 2009 meeting, seconded by Mr. Giese, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Informational Reports/Updates

a. Darboy Sanitary District SSA Appeal

Mr. Fowle stated that nothing has changed as of yet, but a meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday. He explained that portions of the two engineering studies conflict and that the consultants are working on the details. He noted that some of the analysis included land that was not in the original study and not part of the dispute. After some discussion Mr. Fowle concluded

that the contested service area would likely end up in court. He noted that staff will keep the Committee informed and that all of the activities are well documented.

b. Status of Commission Governor's Appointments

Mr. Fowle was pleased to receive a letter formally confirming Neal Strehlow from Waushara County as one of the Governor's appointments to the Commission. He noted that only one appointment was outstanding. He did not receive confirmation for Eugene Zeuske from Shawano County, but expected the letter any time now. Mr. Fowle provided a current listing of Commissioners showing terms, appointments and permanent alternates. Some discussion followed regarding the 2010 elections and the potential for turn-over within the Commission.

c. Staffing Updates

Mr. Fowle told the Committee that Ed Kleckner would be retiring from the Commission in November and that the Committee should have a copy of the formal letter. Mr. Kleckner has had a long career in planning and intends to stay involved with a number of projects as time permits. He noted that the Commissioners would be notified about a retirement party that is in the planning stages and would likely be between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

d. 2010 Budget and Work Program Update

Mr. Fowle provided one handout showing the increase in health insurance costs for the upcoming year. He stated that most of the Counties are faced with the same issue as health insurance cost increase. He explained that the top portion of the table shows the existing cost, while the bottom show the two programs, Network and United, that are used by staff. The table shows proposed cost for 2010 with the various plans. If the same distribution in programs continues next year costs will have increased by over 10 percent.

As an example, he said that with the United Family Plan the employee contributes about \$35 per month, while in 2010 that same Plan will be \$135, more than triple. He thought that staff would likely shift to lower cost other programs. The group discussed the Arise Plan that shows a lower cost, but is still double the 2009 premium. While it increases the Commission cost, he noted that the impact on employees is much greater than in previous years. Ms. Cottrell added that the Arise Program was primarily in the Green Bay area, but now serves the Fox Cities through ThedaCare and Appleton Medical Center, and may be an alternative for a number of employees.

Some discussion followed regarding the historic increase in benefits that had been in the 7 to 8 percent range in recent years, compared to double digit today. Mr. Albrecht asked when final numbers would be available. Mr. Fowle described a number of unknowns like state and federal grants that need to be incorporated into the budget. The larger programs include the WisDOT Safe Routes to School Funding and the potential EPA Brownfields grant. Mr. Fowle said that while the programs would likely be funded, other scenarios are being considered if the funding does not materialize.

In a worst case scenario the Commission could hold off on filling vacant positions and the purchase of a new staff car, which would potentially cover the costs. The Work Program is being reviewed by WisDOT and we should have a better idea near the end of October. Mr. Fowle said an update would be provided at the next Steering Committee meeting.

e. AWRPC "Regional Planning Commission Day at the Capitol"

Mr. Fowle noted a letter had been sent to the Chair and Vice Chair inviting them to participate in the Day at the Capitol event. The Association of RPCs has been considering this event for a number of months to raise awareness of RPCs to elected representatives in the respective districts. With excellent assistance from the Counties Association the RPC Day at the Capitol has been scheduled for November 5, 2009. At this point all of the RPC Directors will participate and hopefully all of the Commission Chairman from throughout the state.

Mr. Fowle referred to hand out materials and a poster that will be on display in the rotunda that showcases the role and activities of RPCs. He noted page 5 of that handouts that gets at why we are there and what we would like to achieve. Larger scale regional projects like passenger rail and RTAs are the items important for RPCs. He noted that other initiatives include convincing counties that are not members of RPCs to join and convincing members of the legislature that RPCs should have a stable level of funding in the state budget. The group discussed other ways to raise awareness of RPCs and the activities they are involved in. Mr. Albrecht recommended that they meet with key people from the area and provided several examples.

6. Direct Deposit Authorizations

Ms. Cottrell explained that at the last meeting the group discussed the direct deposit option available to employees and if that option would be appropriate for the Commissioners rather than receiving a check. She provided a sample of the form that would include a voided check with a routing number and account information. She explained that the meeting reimbursement amount would then be direct deposited. She noted that the mileage would still be a separate check because the current financial software is unable to account for that correctly, but it would still significantly reduced the number of paper checks produced. Another reason for this is security and the risk of payroll checks that are not inherent with the direct deposit. Some discussion followed regarding the fact that all of the counties offer direct deposit to their employees. Some discussion followed regarding the details of the process. Mr. Fowle said that the next step would be providing this information to all the Commissioners and discussing it in more detail at the October Commission meeting.

7. Review and Consideration of Associated Bank Proposal for Commission Banking Activities

Mr. Fowle said that in general staff has been considering a number of ways to lower expenses including our banking transactions. Another concern was that the service was a bit slow and unresponsive. A review was conducted to compare the services offered relative to the costs from US Bank with other lending institutions in the Valley. Ms Cottrell explained that US Bank did not provide a proposal to loan money to address the unfunded insurance liability we have discussed in previous meetings. She reminded the Committee that Associated Bank did provide a proposal and offers other services at lower rates. Ms. Cottrell provided a handout and said that Associated Bank representatives came to the office and provided a comprehensive presentation regarding their services. An important item is the amount of fraud protection they offer and the opportunity to have an interest bearing account that would offset the service charges. Mr. Fowle added that Associated Bank also offers a Credit Card program that would be more effective for staff travel and expenses than the current system of one credit card for the agency.

Ms. Cottrell noted that Associated also offers a Maximum Insured Now Account designed for local governments that the State Pool does not offer. She reminded the Committee that the State Pool Program is no longer FDIC insured. Also included in the packet is the income statement from Associated Bank that demonstrates their stability in the market.

Some discussion followed regarding other opportunities such as credit unions. Mr. Fowle said that a change in banking would not occur until 2010, and that staff will look at other options and institutions and bring the information to the next meeting. He thought that a short Steering Committee meeting prior to the Commission meeting might be needed to address this and other issues.

#### 8. Transfer of Reserve Funds to FDIC Maximum Insured NOW

Mr. Fowle explained that this action is not contingent on doing all our banking with Associated Bank, but would take advantage of the FDIC insurance in the short term. Some discussion followed regarding the State Pool and lack of FDIC insurance if something would happen. Ms. Cottrell referred to the handout and explained the rationale for moving portions of the reserve fund into the insured account. Some discussion followed regarding the importance of having these funds insured.

A motion was made by Mr. Albrecht to move the funds into the Maximum Insured Now Account. The motion was seconded by Mr. Weiss and passed unanimously.

#### 9. Accumulated Retirement Debt Payoff Options with Winnebago County

The Committee discussed the option with Winnebago County to provide a loan to payoff the unfunded liability premium. Currently the outstanding amount is about \$120,000 and Ms. Cottrell reminded the Committee that at the current rate it would never be paid down, and would likely increase. Winnebago County proposed that as part of a Bond Issue they were considering, the County could loan the funds to the Commission to payoff the liability with a reasonable repayment plan starting in 2010. Some discussion followed regarding the amount of money that could be saved over the ten year period if the action is taken. Ms. Cottrell outlined the repayment schedule that shown the loan would be repaid in about ten years. Mr. Fowle added that the Commission appreciates Winnebago offering to do this.

Mr. Barribeau moved to approve the loan arrangement with Winnebago County. The motion was seconded by Mr. Albrecht and passed unanimously.

Mr. Sanderfoot recommended that the letter read a certain percentage over the rate, not a specific rate so that if it goes down, the payment would go down. After some discussion about the benefit the group agreed to reword the proposal to include a percentage rate. Mr. Fowle said that staff would initiate the process and hoped to have the paper work ready for the January meeting.

#### 10. Review and Action on Annual Audit Services RFP Responses

Mr. Fowle said that the RFPs from a number of Audit Services had been received and should have been included in the packet that shows details of services and costs. The fees vary widely compared across the proposal. The committee reviewed and discussed the various proposals. Ms. Cottrell explained the advantages and disadvantages comparing the firms against each other.

Some discussion followed regarding the length of time the Commission had been with Schenck, and that maybe it was time to try something. Mr. Fowle said that the list is narrowed down to three and if the Committee wants to make a change it would likely be Clifton Gunderson or Kerber-Rose. The question before the Committee is to keep Schenck, or go with Clifton Gunderson or Kerber Rose.

Ms. Cottrell noted the number of local governments that work with the various firms. Mr. Albrecht reminded Ms. Cottrell that she must feel comfortable with the selection. She felt that Kerber-Rose may be the best fit for the agency.

Mr. Weiss made a motion to go with Kerber-Rose. The motion was seconded by Mr. Giese and passed unanimously.

After some discussion the group agreed to a two year contract with Kerber-Rose.

11. Proposed Resolution No. 26-09: **Amending the By-Laws of the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

Mr. Fowle said that the resolution was prepared by Kara Homan to better reflect the requirements of EDA with the Economic Development Committee membership. It was determined that the best way to achieve this might be with a change to the bylaws. He said that the Resolution is attached and the changes to the bylaws are in gray. It illustrates one change that adds a statement to the bylaws that shows the Economic Development Committee and the CEDS Committee and the guidelines to help insure the composition of that Committee meets the federal requirements. Mr. Fowle asked that the Steering Committee approve the bylaws language change based on the assumption that the Economic Development Committee would also approve some form of these guidelines under a separate resolution. He recommended this be done to clarify the language and provide a more formal structure to meet the intent of EDA.

Mr. Sanderfoot motioned for approval of Proposed Resolution No. 26-09, seconded by Mr. Barribeau. Motioned passed unanimously.

12. Future Contract/Grant Opportunities

a. DATCP Working Lands Initiative/Cost Chare of Farmland Preservation Plan Updates

Mr. Fowle said included in your packet is a list of counties that will need to update their Farmland Preservation Plans in the near future. He noted that the agency should get out in front of this and prepare to assist with the work effort. He added that the working lands initiatives meshes very well with the overall mission of the agency.

He outlined areas where the Commission could play a role including grant opportunities Some discussion followed regarding the impact to land owners, relative to property rights issues. Mr. Fowle said that the issue was discussed at a meeting with DATCP and noted that it changes no laws or conditions that are already in place.

b. 2010 Interim Staffing Services to City of Waupaca

Mr. Fowle reviewed and described the current technical assistance/staffing arrangement with the City of Waupaca and noted that a longer term agreement is being considered. Mr. Fowle said, Ms. Homan would be working with the City on a limited basis for the remainder of 2009 and suggested it be provided as a benefit of membership. He said that the City is interested in a contract for 2010 that would pay all costs to the Commission. He explained that the contract would be similar to the technical assistance for Shawano County, but would also include a non-compete clause, whereas the City could not hire the staff person away. He said that City staff and Ms. Homan were in agreement with regard to the no compete clause. Mr. Fowle said, no action is needed at this time, but staff hoped to have it prior to the next Commission meeting.

The question before the Committee is what about the rest of 2009. Mr. Fowle said he is considering providing the service for the rest of the year as a benefit of membership. He asked the Committee for comments or options such as a small contract for the remainder of the year.

Some discussion followed concerning the cost of the technical assistance relative to the benefit other communities or counties. Mr. Fowle said he would hope to assist any member of the Commission to the extent possible if requested and if the technical assistance aligns with staff capabilities. Mr. Fowle thought that the cost for the remainder of 2009 would be between \$3,000 and \$4,000. The Committee questioned the cost if the assistance already provided is considered. He explained that the technical assistance began in late September and is ongoing through October. If September and October were included with other expenses it would likely be over \$6,000. After some discussion staff was directed to request at least half of the typical rate. Mr. Fowle said he would discuss the proposal with the City and would bring the information back at the next Steering Committee meeting.

The motion would be to work with the City to prepare a contract for the remainder of 2009 that would amount to approximately half of the costs for services provided. Mr. Barribeau moved to recommend a contract for the remainder of 2009. The motion was seconded by Mr. Albrecht and passed unanimously.

c. Sustain our Great Lakes Community Grants Program

Mr. Fowle referred to a copy of the grant proposal provided and explained that staff was recently made aware of this opportunity and needed to respond fairly quickly. The grant application would be submitted to EPA as part of the Great Lakes Program and would fund the preparation of a Green Print Plan for the northern Lake Winnebago watershed primarily in the Town of Harrison. Mr. Fowle said that this project was under consideration before through the Lake Michigan Academy, but the funding got misdirected to Bay-Lake so the project was put on the shelf.

A question was raised wondering if the grant program was part of the federal stimulus program. Mr. Fowle was not aware of the funding being part of the stimulus, but that was possible. He noted that this was informational only and that if the grant was selected specific information would come back to the Committee for evaluation and action. He explained that the program was about \$25,000, of which about \$15,000 would be matched by the Commission.

d. EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant

Mr. Fowle referenced a copy of the draft grant for review and said that Foth is currently working on final edits and that he is pleased with the progress, product and price. He noted that 6 counties had formally adopted a resolution in support and cooperation for the program that provides a commitment from local governments that should make a compelling application for EPA to consider. He said that the application will be submitted soon and that he would update the Committee on a regular basis.

Discussion followed regarding concerns about undo hardship on land owners if contamination is detected on their property. Mr. Fowle explained that current regulations and laws already apply and that the vast majority will from existing list. He added that the purpose of the program is not to find brown field sites, but to direct funding to the highest priority sites based on environmental and socioeconomic factors and local desires. Mr. Fowle said the resolution was supported and passed by all of the County Boards, with one supervisor not supporting the resolution for the same concerns regarding the impact to private property owners. In addition to the Counties' a number of support letters have been received from economic development organizations and communities supporting the application. Mr. Fowle asked for any additional questions, and said he would provide a copy of the final application to the Committee.

e. Grant Administration

Mr. Fowle reminded the Committee that staff is currently administering EDA grants to some communities under the flood recovery program. It may be the case that we would also administer grants awarded as part of the brown fields program and provide that service as a small contract to member communities and the region. As with the EDA program it is very cost effective for the communities if the Commission administers the grant. He asked that Committee consider the grant administration opportunity and added that more information would be provided when it is available.

13. Commission Strategic Planning Activities

Mr. Fowle said the intent when the meeting was scheduled was to devote the entire time to a strategic planning discussion. However, many things came up for the agenda that needed timely attention. He asked if the Committee wanted to go forward with a strategic planning and SWOT workshop or reschedule another meeting. The group discussed the SWOT analysis or Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats identification exercise. Mr. Fowle said that a SWOT analysis is typically conducted as part of a community development plan and the same can be done for the Commission. He asked that the Committee consider the questions and write down any thoughts for the next meeting. The next step might be a survey that would go to all the Commissioners for additional input for developing a strategic plan for the Commission. After some discussion the group concluded it would need to be another meeting.

15. Next Meeting & Agenda

The next meeting will be on October 30, 2009 at 9:15, just prior to the Commission meeting.

16. Adjourn

Mr. Barribeau motioned for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Weiss. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 P.M.