

**Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission
Board Meeting
October 24, 2007
6:30 p.m. Maple Ridge Restaurant
Eckerman, MI**

Members Present

Dawn Nelson, Jim Hendricks, Bill Ferguson, Bernie LaJoie, Dean Reid, Mike Patrick, Renee' Robinson, Greg Zimmerman

Staff Jeff Hagan, Ellen Benoit, Nathan Fazer

Meeting called to order by Vice-Chair Dawn Nelson at 6:33 p.m.

Minutes from the August 22, 2007 meeting were presented for approval, motion by Commissioner LaJoie to approve the minutes as presented, supported by Commissioner Ferguson, being no discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report – E. Benoit

E. Benoit presented the Board members with the financial report covering the Agency's total income and expenses as of September 30, 2007 as well as the projected budget for FY 07/08 and the current expenses to date.

Motion by Commissioner Hendricks to accept the financial report as given, supported by Commissioner Patrick, motion carried unanimously.

Program updates:

Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs Minigrant Program

The Agency gets money from the State to re-grant out to local non-profit, art agencies, schools, government units in this program, as well as some funds to administer the program. E. Benoit reported that no word has been received on renewal of this program although it is expected to be renewed. The administration budget was reduced 64% in FY 07 along with the re-granting funds portion. Work includes promoting the program, notification of grant cycles, recruiting review panel members, working with applicants, application review meetings, processing applications, checking up on projects, ensuring sub-grantees submit their final report as well as tabulating statistics from each grantee and reporting back to the State. There are two funding cycles a year. The amount of money received for administration in no way covers the amount needed for the work expected. MCACA requires a local match which can be cash or in-kind.

Resource Inventory

Staff continues to work on taking an inventory of critical assets in each county. Surveys were sent out and we are now following up on the places we know have equipment but did not

return any information. This database will be completed and submitted to each of the County Emergency Managers within the Region.

Economic Development Administration

Staff will begin sending out survey/project submission forms this month in preparation for the 2007 CEDS Annual Update. The format will change after the 2008 report, as we will then begin working on the 3-year plan, which is due April 30, 2010, this new format will include the new requirements that EDA is currently developing. We continue to provide assistance on local economic development projects throughout the region, Director will be attending training at the EDA CRO in November on the updated regulations and requirements for the CEDS.

Transportation

- MDOT elected officials meeting will be held at the KCT Hall on Tuesday, October 30th at 10 a.m., meeting materials were mailed out in early October.
- Working with a trail group out of the Brimley area on a potential non-motorized trail along Lakeshore Drive through Bay Mills.
- Received a project authorization to continue with Heritage Route activities for FY 2008, and will be working with the M-134 group on a management plan for that corridor.

M-123 Heritage Route

Tahquamenon Scenic Heritage Route management plan was completed in late August and submitted to MDOT, formal approval was made late last week, and a formal press release should be made MDOT in the near future. Prior to the end of the program year we made final copies for the committee and stakeholders, which were distributed in late September. MDOT has approved funding for the Heritage Route program for this fiscal year and we will work with the Tahquamenon group on developing a brochure and website for the Heritage Route, assist with sign implementation/coordination and provide technical assistance on a potential multi-use path/trail system for the Tahquamenon area as well as the M-134 group on the development of a management plan for this corridor.

Asset Management

N. Fazer gave some background information on this program for MDOT. Considering the transportation system as an asset, MDOT has developed this program to rate the condition, document surface type and number of lanes of all the Federal Aid Eligible paved roads. This information is used in a software program RoadSoft developed by Michigan Tech. This software provides reports that can be used to determine the best way to invest dollars on the transportation system. It started 4 years ago and was only suppose to last 3 years but now has been expanded to include more information and other State departments are looking at the possibility of rating Park roads.

For each county, one of our staff, a road commission person and an MDOT person go out, ride the roads and rate the condition. N. Fazer reported that a portion of Mackinac and all of Chippewa County needed to get the road ratings finished this year by the November 15 deadline. He currently has Mackinac County scheduled and is trying to work with Chippewa

Co. to meet the deadline. The City of Sault Ste Marie and Luce County were rated earlier in the year.

Maps and reports are placed on the Agency's website www.eup-planning.org under the Transportation link.

Access Management

Wilcox Professional Services, LLC was selected by the Access Mgmt. team to perform the SSM/Soo Township Access Management study, we are continuing to work on data collection, and this information will then be turned over to Wilcox. The consultants held a kick-off meeting on October 17th to review the scope of work, project schedule, deliverables, formalize a date for the official kick-off meeting with the committee and local stakeholders and to obtain contact information for local key contacts on this project. The stakeholder Kick-off meeting will be held on December 5th at Lake Superior State University.

CDBG

Staff continue to work on several local potential projects with the CDBG Technical Assistance program we recently received word from the Western U.P. Region that our T.A. grant will not be renewed for the program year beginning January 1-2008. We collaborated with WUPPDR and CUPPAD to draft letters that were sent to all of the local governments and counties within the Region requesting support and urging MEDC to continue the T.A. program in the Upper Peninsula.

North Huron Scenic Pathway

Rowe, Inc. is currently underway on producing the pre-engineering study for the North Huron Scenic Pathway, a meeting was held on October 12th to review progress to date, at this meeting the consultant had 10 pages of aerial maps that contained preferred and alternative routes, from St. Ignace to Clark Township, they will continue to refine the potential routes with significant input from the committee and local interests, along with MDOT, DNR and the USFS. It is expected that the Chippewa County portion will be completed by mid-November, and then preliminary cost estimates and a phasing schedule for potential construction will be finalized and the draft study available by December some time.

Superior Shore Trail Development Group

Director Hagan attended a meeting last week of a contingent from the Brimley area that is exploring the potential for developing a multi-use path along Lakeshore from the Brimley State Park to Point Iroquois Lighthouse area (9 miles), this group is in the very early stages of determining if this is feasible, we will provide technical assistance where needed for the group as they attempt to move forward.

Solid Waste Amendment

The Solid Waste Management Plan amendment was approved by all three counties in the Region and as a result was then sent to each city, village and township within the EUP for their resolutions of approval. The Plan will be approved at such time as 67% of these units approve

the amendment. To date, we have received 12 resolutions of approval and have verbals from about 3-4 additional townships that indicated they would take this up at their November board meetings. We will continue to request resolutions of support, in hopes that we can have the amended plan submitted to DEQ by December 1st.

Emmet County Drop-Off Center Report – Commissioner Reid

Commission Reid from Mackinac County updated the board on the activities of the Emmet County Drop-Off Center and circulated a report that he developed. This is a very diverse center, which handles both refuse and recycling, their recycling program is very advanced, discussion ensued regarding the programs currently available in the Region and ways the Regional Planning Commission could help to advance recycling in those areas where it is currently not utilized.

Director's Report

Director Hagan updated the Board members on the potential impact of the government shutdown which was narrowly averted at the end of September. The impact to our agency would have been significant, as many of our state contracts with MDOT, while 80% federally funded, are all processed at the state level, we estimated that we could have functioned for roughly 30 days on EDA funds alone. This further underscores the need for us to diversify our funding sources and continue to market and perform work at the local level, via land use/master plan/comp plans, zoning audits, recreation plans, etc. As a result of the continuation budget that was passed, we do not yet know what impact the proposed cuts will have on any of our programs, we have project authorizations with MDOT on several projects, which should be honored as they were issued.

The MAR Policy Conference, held in St. Ignace in September was lightly attended, but our facilitated discussion was encouraging, the state association is embarking on a new path, which is desperately needed, in order to market and raise the profile of the Regional Commissions in Michigan. In the past this group has been very policy oriented, and that will still remain a focus of the group, but the level of time spent on policy stances and issues will be reduced, because we have no lobbyist on behalf of MAR, individual regions take up stances on their own, other than SEMCOG who has a paid lobbyist.

Ballast Water Resolution

Board members were presented the background information on a ballast water resolution, a recent senate bill (S1578) proposes to set rules for the release of ballast water and penalties for improper discharge. This bill would prohibit states from adopting ballast water regulations such as the one in Michigan, according to Attny. Gen. Mike Cox. In effect, the regulations that Michigan has in place are more stringent than those proposed by the Senate. Director Hagan requested the Board's support on the attached resolution to urge the Senate to develop a broad-based approach that meets the current regulations of the Michigan law pertaining to ballast water. Motion by Dean Reid to support the resolution as presented, supported by Mike Patrick. Motion carried unanimously.

Open Meetings Act – Jeff Hagan

Director Hagan updated the board on the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, as it was brought to his attention that as a federal grant recipient, we are, for the most part following the act, however, we have not been setting our meeting dates in advance, he proposed the following schedule for meetings for fiscal year 2008:

Wednesday January 30, 2008

Wednesday April 30, 2008

Wednesday August 27, 2008

Wednesday October 29, 2008

Executive Committee meetings can be called at any time between the aforementioned dates at the request of the Director or any Executive Committee member.

Motion to accept the meeting scheduled as outlined, by Commission Hendricks, Supported by Commissioner LaJoie, no further discussion, motion carried unanimously.

Director Hagan requested the Board adjourn to a closed session to discuss personnel matters.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Hendricks, supported by Commission LaJoie. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.