

**Minutes**  
**Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission**  
**Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 30, 2008**  
**6:00 p.m. Maple Ridge Restaurant, Eckerman, MI**

Present: William Ferguson, Earl Kay, Rodney Richards-Chairman, Bernard LaJoie, Michelle Hank, Mike Patrick, Dean Reid.

Staff: Jeff Hagan, Ellen Benoit, Nathan Fazer

Meeting called to order by Chairman Richards at 6:10 p.m.

Minutes from the February 27, 2008 EUPRPDC Board meeting were presented. Being no additions or deletions, motion by Commissioner LaJoie to approve the minutes as presented, support by Commissioner Kay. Motion approved unanimously.

Ellen Benoit presented the Board with the current financial report on the various projects and programs underway at the Regional Planning Commission.

Motion to approve the financial report as given by Commissioner Kay, supported by Commissioner Patrick. Motion approved unanimously.

**PROGRAM UPDATES**

MCACA - E. Benoit presented the Board with the funding plans that were awarded for Rounds 1 and 2 in FY 2008. It is that time of year to submit an application for servicing the Minigrant Program in FY 2009 and a request to support the application and allow the Executive Director to sign all necessary documents by resolution was made to the Commission.

Motion to approve a resolution allowing EUPRP&DC to submit an application for the MCACA Minigrant Services Program for FY 09 and name Jeff Hagan, Executive Director as the Authorizing Official was made by Commissioner LaJoie, supported by Commissioner Kay. Motion approved unanimously.

**EDA –**

Information was presented in a packet regarding the EDA reauthorization, which is currently still in process, looking at a 5-year reauthorization, however, Senate and the House are still working to sustain the current level of funding for the Administration of \$279.9 million, as opposed to the \$100 million the President has proposed. This legislation is still moving along, we do not yet know if it will be taken up during this session. I have authored letters to Stupak, Levin and Stabenow regarding the issue.

Projects in the Region:

- Luce County EDC expansion/infrastructure improvements continues to move forward, we assisted the EDC in preparing a project brief and draft pre-application, and I have not heard from Carmen or EDA on the status to date, other than EDA Chicago's need for a another map of the site, which we provided.
- City of Mackinac Island Wastewater Treatment Plan – City is still exploring funding options for the upgrade and capacity enhancements needed for the Island's wastewater

treatment plant, project will be in the \$4-5 million range, previous upgrade was funded through EDA, we are looking at EDA again and the CDBG Tourism related program, if we can display the need Island-wide and obtain commitments from Resorts and other major employers on the Island. Capacity of the current plant is a major concern and development continues to take place.

- CEDS Annual Update – working on the draft of the Annual Update at the present time, approximately 75% completed, hope to meet with the County EDC's in June to review the draft and obtain resolutions of support, will submit on or before June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- EDA Training is scheduled for May 13-15 in Cleveland.
- Currently working with Raber and Whitefish Twp. on Recreation Plan updates and have been advised by the Pickford Twp. Board that they want us to update their Master Plan, beginning July 1, 2008.

## TRANSPORTATION

### **TRANSPORTATION –**

This work program is proceeding as planned, still hoping to complete an update on the road names for the framework map. Staff continues to provide technical assistance to a Safe Routes 2 School group in the Sault, and the Superior Shores Trail group in Brimley.

### **HERITAGE ROUTE –**

We are finalizing our proposal for the Scenic Byways grant, in the amount of \$74,597 that we successfully obtained on behalf of the Tahquamenon Scenic Heritage Route Committee, will be meeting at the sites proposed in the grant to review ADA accessibility issues and to finalize the amenities to be placed at each site (# of benches, picnic tables, kiosks, etc). Also working with the group to place two gateway type signs at the east/west axis of the Route. Committee Chair Lark Ludlow has been talking to Bill Scherr at Newberry H.S., vocational education class to do the construction, installation.

A meeting was held 4/29/08 for the kick-off of the M-134 Heritage Route Corridor Management plan, it is anticipated that Regional Planning will assist the group in the development of the plan and submitting to MDOT for the formal designation of M-134 from I-75 to Drummond Island as a Heritage Route within the next 12 months.

The RP&DC has been approached by the US Forest Service regarding amending the TSHR to include the Curley Lewis highway from M-123 to Brimley. By providing a more in-depth analysis and inventory of the amenities along this stretch of road, it will allow agencies and local units of government to apply for federal discretionary Scenic Byways funding. The Curley Lewis is listed in the current plan but as nothing more than an attraction, this would change to a "linear attraction". The forest service proposes to pay us no more than \$14,000 under a direct contract to provide a management plan for this segment of roadway.

**North Huron Scenic Pathway –** Rowe Engineer has completed the NHSP Corridor study, the consultant is currently making copies for each municipality, and consultant is also in the process of making large scale plots of the panels which will be available for community presentation. Total estimated cost of the route is \$57 million; costs are broken down by segment/municipality. Each community along the route will be conducting more in-depth local meetings to identify exact location for the pathway.

**NON-MOTORIZED INVESTMENT STRATEGY** – E. Benoit reported that a survey for Non-Motorized Travel and Trail development was created for public input. Staff attended the Mackinac County and Sault Spring Shows with a booth promoting the Agency and this program, distributing surveys and maps. The web-page has been created and added to the web-site where a survey can be downloaded and returned by mail and soon to be able to submit on-line. A summit meeting will be planned for September to get more public input, review the results from this survey, and have speakers on various topics of trail development and grant programs.

**SSM/Soo Twp. Access Management Study –**

Wilcox and Associates continues work on the Access Management Study for the City of SSM and Soo Twp., at our March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting the team continued to review the first three chapters of the draft and discuss further conflict points within the study area, land use analysis, project future development areas and potential treatment measures. Next team meeting is scheduled for May 28, 2008.

**CDBG –**

Due to our renewed letter writing campaign regarding the elimination of the CDBG Technical Assistance Program, Reps. McDowell, Lindberg and Prusi have indicated that funding might be secured through the next fiscal year; we will await word to confirm that. As you know, our contract with the MEDC was renewed for 2008 to provide Technical Assistance to communities with eligible Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects, the budget for this program was cut by 3%, and we were informed that this contract will be eliminated in 2009. I have currently been involved in two potential CDBG projects, one at the Industrial Park in Kincheloe with the County EDA and the City of Mackinac Island Wastewater treatment plant upgrades.

**Solid Waste –**

We obtained the required 67% approval at each level of government (county/local) during March. Plan was submitted to DEQ in March, we were informed it is a 30-60 day process to approve the Plan. Once approved we'll schedule a meeting of the Solid Waste Planning Committee and invite Republic Waste Services to come and discuss their short term and long range plans in Mackinac County.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Planning Enabling Act – the Michigan Legislature recently passed the “Planning Enabling Act” which consolidates the County, Township and Municipal Planning Acts into one piece of legislation. There will be a significant public outreach/education effort regarding this legislation, beginning in late May. Within our Region two events will take place, one in St. Ignace on June 11 and the other in Newberry on June 12. I encourage all to attend and learn more about the Act and how it will affect your community or jurisdiction. I have copies of the registration pamphlet if anyone is interested.

We will be losing two members of the Commission – Sharon Brown of Luce County has submitted a letter of resignation, and Mike Porter of the EUP ISD is taking a position out of the region and will no longer be able to serve. Letters will be sent to the County clerks requesting appointments.

Because our overall board meets quarterly, Dir. Hagan asked would those currently appointed to the Executive Committee, have any desire to meet once in between the quarterly meetings as a way of keeping up on activities, projects and programs? Current members of the Executive Committee are as follows: Rodney Richards, Chair; Dawn Nelson, Vice-Chair; Bernie LaJoie, Treasurer; Jim Hendricks, Secretary; Renee' Robinson/Brenda Cooper – Sault Tribe. The Commission concluded that unless meetings were necessary there was no need to establish monthly meetings.

Commissioner Reid indicated that if possible, we should identify the feasibility for establishing a Regional Transfer center for recycling/refuse as a component of the USDA Solid Waste planning grant. Director Hagan will discuss this with the subcommittee prior to issuing the response to USDA on the grant award.

**Other business –**

Commissioner Reid would like to see some type of Regional Alternative Energy study undertaken by the Regional Planning Commission that addresses wind energy, ethanol, switchgrass, algae and various other forms of alternative energy in order to break our historic reliance upon imported and fossil fuels. Director Hagan will research potential funding sources for the August board meeting and provide an update at that time.

Chairman Richards also indicated it would be important to find out what the efficiency is on the wind farms, as a component of the study.

Commissioner Reid further indicated that we will need to involve ATC, Edison Sault, Cloverland, UPPCO and WI energies.

Commissioner LaJoie made a recommendation that “Public Comments” be added in under #3 on the official board agenda from this point forward, as to conform with the Open Meetings Act.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

Asset Management Conference – Marquette May 21-2008

Great Waters Annual Meeting – Whitefish Pt., May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 11am-1pm

DNR – Eastern UP Advisory council meeting – Saturday, May 10, 10am, McMillan Twp. Hall

MTA District Meeting – St. Ignace, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 9am-3:30pm

Planning Enabling Act Workshops – June 11 – St. Ignace, June 12 – Newberry, see handouts

Motion to adjourn this meeting at 7:31 p.m. by Commissioner Kay, supported by Commissioner LaJoie.