

**Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission**  
**Board Meeting**  
**August 22, 2007**  
**6:30 P.M. Maple Ridge Restaurant, Eckerman, MI**

Present: Rodney Richards, Chair; Dawn Nelson; Renee' Robinson; Bill Ferguson; Earl Kay; Bernie LaJoie

Staff: Jeff Hagan, Interim Director; Ellen Benoit, Asst. Director; Nathan Fazer, Planner

Meeting called to order by Chairman Richards at 6:40 p.m.

Minutes of the April 25, 2007 Board meeting were presented, motion by B. LaJoie to approve the minutes as presented, supported by E. Kay, motion carried unanimously.

**Financial Report – E. Benoit**

E. Benoit presented the following for the Commission, first taking a look at each program individually:

- EDA 06/07 – ended June 30, EDA 07/08 started July 1.
- Transportation – will end September 30, 2007.
- Heritage Route – M-123 – a few hundred left for printing, basically program has been finished.
- Asset Management – will end September 30.
- MCACA – Administration and re-granting money cut by 64%, have over spent on this program due to the cutback.
- CDBG – program runs through December, 2007.
- Non-Motorized Trail Map – program has been accomplished.
- SSM/Soo Twp. Access Mgt. – program currently being worked on and is due to end September, 07.
- OES Resource Inventory – currently underway will try to finish by December, 2007.
- Solid Waste - Republic Waste agreed to contribute 50% of costs up to \$1,000.
- Local Share – used to match EDA grant, and to cover any overages from other programs as well as match for future grant applications.

Secondly, looking at all programs over the fiscal year of October 1, 2007 – September, 30, 2007 the total expenses to date are at \$224,615.

Finally, the budget for FY 2007/08 –

Three months of current CDBG program left; 9 months of current EDA program; MCACA – no word as of yet but estimating on the reduced amount; Resource Inv. 3 months left; SSM/Soo Twp Access Mgt. – renewed at \$12,000; Transportation, still expecting same amount as last year; 2008 CDBG is still an unknown; EDA 08/09 June – Sept 2008 - ¼ estimated.

Total budget is still about 68% short to cover the average of expenses from last 5 years.

If salary's remain unchanged the amount needed to cover payroll and fringe benefits is approximately \$152,000 for 1 year. If salary is increased as discussed by Executive Committee, the amount needed would be approximately \$159,000 for 1 year.

*Motion to approve the financial report as distributed by D. Nelson, supported by B. LaJoie, motion carried unanimously.*

### **MCACA Program – E. Benoit**

After a few months of not knowing, the budget was finally reduced by 64%. This program is treated as a grant for us, so administration funds took a hit although the whole state budget fiasco created a lot more work to be done as all sub-grantees had to be contacted and budgets revised, etc. And, although there is no money they continue to expect us to use our own funds to keep the program going.

The second round grantees took the hit on the budget cuts and all of the grants were reduced accordingly.

For the first round of 2008 only 1 application was received. It has been reviewed and recommended for funding in the amount of \$2,422.00.

B.LaJoie instructed Interim Director Hagan to draft a letter to submit to the MCA informing them that the Regional Commission cannot continue to administer this program at a loss, unless funding is restored to previous level or increased significantly.

### **Regional Critical Asset Resource Inventory – E. Benoit**

We have undertaken the project of taking Inventory of the critical assets for each County of the Region as directed by FEMA. Forms were sent out to each unit of government and we've received a fairly good response. We are now at the point in which I follow up with phone calls to the places that we know have equipment so we can enter it into the database. What will be achieved is a database for OES managers to be able to check for certain types of equipment and a 24 hour contact number. This potentially will save them from having to look numbers up in the phone book or making several calls until the right place is reached, saving time and possibly lives in the event of a disaster. It will also help the U.P. –wide district see where equipment is needed so they can strategically locate certain items in various places.

### **Bike Trail Map Project – E. Benoit**

Just when we were ready for printing of the map the State put a hold on all funds. Staff followed up by talking to our state representative and e-mailing Transportation Department, stating our reasons that we needed this. Someone, in authority, agreed that it was more of a waste of money to not print it so we were approved to go to print.

20,000 copies were printed just in time for distribution throughout the region before the Michigan Municipal League of Bicyclist made their tour through our area. So far we've had good comments.

## **Tahquamenon Scenic Heritage Route – J. Hagan**

Two public input sessions were held in June, one in Paradise, the other in Newberry, as a result of these lightly attended sessions, no changes were made to the Management Plan. At the current time we are preparing the official Application for Designation, which will be sent to Lansing, typical turnaround is 60 days, so we should know by October on approval of the extended route.

## **Asset Management – N.Fazer**

Ratings were performed on Luce County roads in July. We continue to work with Chippewa, Mackinac and the City of Sault Ste. Marie to get road rating completed in the coming months.

## **SSM-Soo Township Access Management – J. Hagan**

We prepared and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Access Management Study in mid-July, the deadline to submit was August 17<sup>th</sup>, we received a total of five proposals, which are currently being reviewed by the Access Management Committee, a vendor will likely be selected at the September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. This project would begin October 1<sup>st</sup>. Also beginning in June we started the data collection portion of the project, which involved collecting various attributes and information within the study area. That should wrap up in September and this information will then be handed over to the consultant for this project. We will continue to perform data collection, administration and assist the Committee during the next fiscal year.

## **North Huron Scenic Pathway – J. Hagan**

J. Hagan reported that since the last Regional Planning Commission meeting we terminated the contract with the Northwest Design Group due to failure to perform, this was a lengthy process which involved quite a bit of posturing on the part of NDG. During May we held a meeting with members of the Chippewa County Board, DeTour Village, City of St. Ignace and Drummond Island regarding the recommendations that John Campbell had made at our last board meeting in April. These recommendations were shared with the NHSP Steering Committee as well. At the current time the Steering Committee is moving forward with the Pre-Engineering Study, in the process of determining what type of authority should be established for long term administration and maintenance of the pathway and attempting to begin the process of designating M-134 as a Heritage Route.

We also drafted a Memorandum of Understanding with the North Huron Scenic Pathway Steering Committee which clearly defines our role in this project and the expectations of both parties (EUP and NHSPSC). The EUP Regional Planning Commission's Executive Board met in late July to review the MOU and the contract with Rowe, Inc. the consultant engineer that will now be developing the Pre-Engineering Study.

A kick-off meeting for this project will be held on Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Clark Twp. Community Center, which is located on M-134 east of the blinker light at M-129 on the north side of the road. Anyone interested in this project is welcome to attend.

## **Economic Development – J. Hagan**

Mr. Hagan updated the Commission on recent economic development related activities within the Region, including the announcement of Mascoma Corporation that they are looking for a place to develop a cellulosic ethanol manufacturing plant, they are targeting northern lower Michigan and the Upper Peninsula. Interim Director Hagan met with the Save, Grow and Restore Newberry committee in early August to discuss the programs and projects the RPC is currently involved in, Chairman Richards requested assistance in setting up a meeting with Dave Glenn, formerly of MSU Extension to come up and talk to a contingent in Luce County about establishing a co-gen biofuel energy production unit within the County's Industrial Park.

## **Director's Report – J. Hagan**

As of tonight's meeting we know the following with regard to fiscal 2008:

MDOT \$36,000 – transportation planning  
EDA \$67,700 – economic development  
CDBG \$3,000 – economic development (potential for \$12,000 for Jan-Dec'08)  
Access Mgmt \$12,000 – MDOT study  
Local Match – EDA match (counties)

There are several potential projects that, if we were to obtain funding for them would certainly eliminate our potential shortfall, however, many are reliant upon state funds, which, as we experienced this past year, are volatile and subject to the State's budgetary situation. We are also exploring potential funding through private foundations for regionally scoped projects. Any ideas that you may have or projects in your communities that EUPRPDC could assist on, please let us know.

### **Potentials:**

Wildlife Action Plan - \$10,000 October '07  
Chippewa County Address Mapping - \$10-\$15,000 Oct- Nov '07  
Whitefish Township Marina Study - \$???  
Local Land Use Plans/Rec plans/Mapping - \$10,000 Year Round  
Heritage Route (M-134) - \$24,000 unknown  
Scenic Byways - \$8,000 (March 2008 if granted)  
Solid Waste Planning - \$50,000 (USDA, application due 12-31-07)  
Tahquamenon Multi-Use Trail Inventory - ???  
Planning component of the bike map project (MDOT) – \$???

## **Purchase Order review language**

This past winter, our auditor Sue Bowlby requested that the Commission put into the operations policy language pertaining to the periodic review of purchase orders. I have developed the following, for your review and approval:

*The Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission confers authority upon the Executive Director to make expenditures within the amounts and scope of the accounts allotted to them in the budget and in accordance with Commission policy and procedures.*

*The Regional Planning Commission Board shall review, on a quarterly basis, the status of all contracts and purchase orders over \$1,000 awarded by the Commission. The report shall include the name of the expenditure, the amount and a description of the purpose of the order.*

I would now ask that the board formally act to adopt this language so that we have it in place prior to this year's audit. *Motion by B. LaJoie to accept this wording as presented, supported by D. Nelson. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **Solid Waste Plan Amendment Update:**

The Solid Waste Plan was approved for amendment by the EUP Solid Waste Planning Committee, and the Draft was sent out to all local government units for a 90-day review and comment period, which ends August 24<sup>th</sup>. To date only one set of comments was received, from DEQ, regarding minor technical changes in the Plan. A public hearing was conducted on Monday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at LSSU.

At this point the plan is awaiting approval, the next step is to request resolutions of approval from each county; once that is accomplished, we will then request resolutions of approval from the Cities, Townships and Villages. We'll enclose an executive summary of the changes with the sample resolution for approval. After the Plan is approved by 67% of the local government units in EACH County, it is then submitted to DEQ for their Director's approval.

### **Upcoming Events:**

- North Huron Scenic Pathway Kickoff Meeting – August 30<sup>th</sup>, Clark Twp. Community Center, 7 p.m.
- September 20-21<sup>st</sup> – Kewadin Shores Casino, St. Ignace, Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) Policy conference, Matt Chase from NADO is the featured speaker, will discuss how to strengthen Michigan's regions. Beginning about 8:30 and wrapping up by 2-2:30. All board members are welcome to attend, no charge to attend, if you want to spend the night there is a block of rooms available, for \$72.95 plus tax (roll of tokens included). Informal dinner on September 20<sup>th</sup> at the Mackinac Grille (on your own).

Being no further business presented by those in attendance, motion to adjourn by B. LaJoie, supported by E. Kay. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.