

**Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission  
Board Meeting  
Wednesday, January 27, 2010  
6:00 p.m. McGowan's Restaurant, Trout Lake, MI**

Members Present:

|                            |                                 |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Don McLean, Chippewa       | Dean Reid, Mackinac             | Jill Maki, Luce           |
| Dick Timmer, Chippewa      | Mike Patrick, Mackinac          | Rita Lemanek, Luce        |
| Greg Zimmerman, LSSU       | Jim Durm, Moran Twp.            | Billie Jo Hermanson, Luce |
| Jim Hendricks, City of SSM | Eric Dodson, City of St. Ignace | Bev Holmes, Newberry      |
| Michelle Hank, Sault Tribe |                                 | Terry Webb, Newberry      |

Guests:

Jesse Knoll, Chippewa  
Bob Haske, Anderson, Tackman, Inc.

Staff:

Jeff Hagan  
Ellen Benoit  
Nathan Fazer

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Vice-Chair Timmer at 6:15 p.m.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Vice-Chairman (VC) Timmer asked if anyone would like to make any changes to the agenda. E. Benoit announced that Clara James, from the Chippewa County Health Department was not present for the Building a Healthier Community presentation and asked that Election of Officer's be added to the agenda. D. McLean asked for time to discuss a small business issue and to have J. Knoll speak regarding the broadband grant proposal. A motion to have those items added to the agenda was made by Commissioner Patrick and supported by Commissioner Lemanek, motion carried unanimously.

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

VC Timmer asked if there was any discussion on the Minutes from the October 28, 2009 EUPRPDC Board meeting that was sent along in the packet. Being no additions or deletions to the minutes, a motion was made by Commissioner McLean to approve the minutes as presented, and was supported by Commissioner Patrick. The motion was unanimously approved.

A few moments were taken to make introductions, as there were a few new faces, as well as a guest speaker.

**NEW BUSINESS -**

Bob Haske the auditor from Anderson-Tackman talked about the findings of the 2009 Financial Statements. Revenues and expenses had decreased slightly from the previous year due to changes in grant programs, but overall the Commission is financially sound and no significant issues were found. A previous issue of not having a space lease agreement was resolved. Minor issues that were found included three (3) "stale" checks that were noted as not yet cleared by the bank in excess of four years old, the cash reconciliation did not balance but was found to be an insignificant amount of less than \$50 and there were no written policies found regarding information technology such as on software change, procedures for resolving technical issues and off-site storage backup. These issues have been

discussed with staff; there is now a better understanding and staff will be working to resolve and correct these issues.

After some discussion a motion to approve the 2009 auditor's report was made by Commissioner Hendricks, it was supported by Commissioner McLean and the motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner McLean talked about a small business that needs assistance in constructing a slaughterhouse for livestock and be a potential USDA inspection site, so that local farmers could sell their meat by the piece and wondered if EUPRP&DC staff could take the lead and be a source to research and find funding. Commissioner Hendricks suggested the County EDC would be a better agency to take a lead role, with EUPRP&DC staff adding support and research. Director Hagan also mentioned that he had done some research into some grants but that because this business did not fall under the "targeted industry" identified by the grant agency it did not meet the criteria for eligibility. Director Hagan has been in contact with Ms. Noel from the County EDC regarding this business and has passed on some information and will continue in the efforts to move forward. It was also suggested to contact the Small Business Advocate for the U.P. to see if they could help. D. McLean made the motion to have EUPRP&DC staff follow through in searching for funding sources and assisting Co. EDC director on this issue. Commissioner Reid seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

J. Knoll discussed the grant opportunity through stimulus money that could provide broadband infrastructure improvements in the region which would vastly improve the broadband accessibility and availability in the rural areas of the EUP. He gave some background on the proposal and updates as to who is involved and what is happening. He is hopeful that Chippewa County government will invest in the opportunity and that Mackinac and Luce will also join into the effort.

Commissioner Reid informed the members of issues that were discussed at the Michigan Association of Regions (MAR) meeting that he had attended by conference call. It is felt that there will be a bigger role of Regional Councils in the future as more governments will be required to show collaboration with neighboring government units in sharing of resources and services and that revenue sharing may possibly be held back or reduced if there are no collaborations. Commissioner Dodson stated that there are already a lot of services that are shared that aren't necessarily recognized by the state. The City of St. Ignace collaborates with Moran and St. Ignace Township in fire and emergency services as well as water and wastewater projects as do many other units of government within the region.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

V. Chair Timmer opened the floor for nominations to the Executive Committee. The present make-up is D. Nelson as Chairperson, D. Timmer as Vice Chairman, BJ Hermanson as Treasurer, D. Reid as Secretary and M. Hank as Minority Representative. Commissioner Patrick made a motion to nominate D. Timmer for Chairperson and BJ Hermanson for Vice Chairperson. R. Lemanek supported the motion. Commissioner McLean moved to close the nomination for a vote at this time. Commissioner Hendricks supported that motion. The motion to close the nomination was unanimously passed. A vote was then taken on the motion to elect D. Timmer and BJ Hermanson as Chair and Vice Chair and it was passed unanimously. D. McLean made a motion to reappoint D. Reid as Secretary and M. Hank and Minority Rep. That motion was supported by J. Maki and the vote was unanimously approved. Commissioner Patrick made a motion to appoint D. Nelson for Treasurer. It was supported by Commissioner Lemanek. The vote was unanimous approval for D. Nelson as Treasurer.

## **OLD BUSINESS - PROGRAM REPORTS**

V. Chairman Timmer asked if everyone had a chance to review the program update report that was included in the mailing of the Board packet and were there any questions and or comments?

Staff reports included updates on the Economic Development Program, Transportation Program, Heritage Route Program, Asset Management Program, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs

Program, USDA Solid Waste Recycling Grant Program, GIS Inventory for Chippewa County, Community Development Block Grant Technical Assistance Program, Dafter and Bay Mills Township Master Plans, Whitefish Township and Luce County Wildfire Protection Plans and Chippewa County Communication Asset inventory project.

E. Benoit asked the Board members to approve a resolution in the support of an application to the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs Minigrant Services Program in the amount of \$4,400 which requires a match of a minimum additional \$4,400 which can be made up of a combination of in-kind and cash and to authorize Director Hagan as the official for signing of necessary paperwork associated with this program. A motion to support application to the MCACA Minigrant Program was made by Commissioner McLean and supported by Commissioner Hermanson. The motion to approve the resolution was passed with unanimous approval.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT -**

E. Benoit explained the current financial status. Two financial reports were passed out – one displaying each program’s expenses from inception to date, as some programs have different start dates and timeframes. The second report detailed the expenses for the fiscal year October 1, 2009 to date.

A motion to approve the financial report as given was made by Commissioner Hermanson, and supported by Commissioner Patrick. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

#### **EDA**

The RPC will be issuing the Region wide call for projects for the 2010 CEDS Five Year Report, which is due on April 30, 2010. If you have projects that you would like listed, we will post the survey form and project submission form on the EUP website by February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Once we have compiled the project submissions, the REDAC will meet during March to review the projects and develop a priority project listing for the Region.

We are still tracking the EDA reauthorization and are hopeful that the EDD Planning Grant increase to \$75,000 will be a part of the reauthorized legislation.

#### **St. Ignace Signature Buildings Project**

The RPC has been working with the City of St. Ignace DDA during the past 3 months on various pieces of paperwork related to their Signature Buildings grant, a program through the MEDC. The City is working with a developer to purchase a currently empty building, which will be rehabilitated, and house a grocery store, as well as some additional retail on adjoining storefronts. The Signature Buildings program provides a grant to the community to assist the developer in acquiring vacant, partially vacant or substantially vacant underutilized buildings located in traditional downtowns. Projects must include a 2:1 ratio – private investment to grant amount. Grants are based upon job creation. For this project the developer will be renovating and rehabilitating the structure significantly, thus meeting the 2:1 ratio of private investment to grant.

#### **SCENIC BYWAYS**

The Tahquamenon Scenic Heritage Route was successful in its’ pursuit of 2009 Scenic Byways funding, with the October 2009 announcement of a \$179,800 grant for the “Developing the Tahquamenon Story” proposal, to market and promote the route, as well as interpret the Native American history along the route, and construction of a traditional “long-house” at the Rivermouth Campground.

We anticipate that the FHWA will announce the opening of the 2010 round for project submissions within the next three weeks. At this time we are considering one proposal for partnering with Northern Initiatives, to provide funding for staff capacity for a “Byway coordinator” for the Scenic Heritage route.

The RPC will be working with MDOT and the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society in an administrative role on their 2008 Scenic Byways grant. The RPC's role will be to ensure that the product, as applied for is delivered in an acceptable format for MDOT and FHWA.

### ***SALARY EVALUATION –***

VC Timmer opened the discussion regarding the annual salary evaluations with the recommendation of the Executive Committee to concur with Director Hagan's proposal for consideration by the Commission Board. This proposal, as presented would allow or a 5.1% percent increase for the GIS Tech/Planner staff position, which would bring this position's annual salary to the average low salary range, in comparison to the 13 Regional Planning Commissions statewide. For the Executive and Assistant Director's positions, the recommendation was for a 2.0% cost-of-living increase, effective April 1, 2010, which essentially is a 1.0% increase for 2010. Director Hagan commended the staff for their hard work on the various projects and programs that have been completed during the past fiscal year and those we are working on currently. In these tough economic times, the Commission continues to identify and successfully pursue funding sources.

The last salary evaluation was done in August 2008, and the Director feels that the staff has done a very good job of maintaining and actually increasing revenues and services provided to our constituents during the past two years, as our operating budget has increased 3.6% versus the average of the past eight (8) years. As local budgets continue to be stretched thin, the RPC will be relied upon more and more to provide assistance and supplement services at the local level.

After some discussion a motion to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation was made by Commissioner Hermanson, with support from Commissioner Hendricks. The motion passed unanimously.

### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

Director Hagan brought to the attention of the Commission a conflict regarding the next quarterly meeting date, of April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The usual meeting location at McGowan's in Trout Lake is not available on this date, the Director proposed either establishing a set alternative location or rotating the meeting around the Region for the April meeting, on an annual basis. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to rotate the April meeting around the Region, staff will work to identify a suitable location for this meeting and notify the Commission in advance.

Meeting dates for 2010: January 27, 2010; April 28, 2010; July 28, 2010, and October 27, 2010.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Timmer asked if there were any public comments at this time. There were none.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Maki with support from Commissioner Holmes. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.