



REGION 1 PLANNING COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES / Thursday, February 22, 2018 – 1:30p
(Regional Design Center – 315 N. Main Street, Rockford)

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND REPRESENTATION: Meeting was called to order by Chairman Haney, Winnebago County with a quorum present at 1:35 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Frank Haney, Winnebago County; Mr. Ken Terrinoni, Boone County; Mr. Lowell Crow, City of Freeport; Mayor Greg Jury, City of Loves Park; Mr. Todd Cagnoni, City of Rockford; Mayor Steve Johnson, Village of Machesney Park; Ms. Pam Fettes, Growth Dimensions; Dr. Tim Hood, Highland Community College; Mr. David Anthony Pietryla, NICOR; Mr. John Donahue, North Park Water; Mayor Owen Costanza, Village of Poplar Grove; Mr. Nathan Bryant, RAEDC; Mr. Michael Stubbe, RMTD; Mr. Jason Anderson, Rochelle Economic Development; Dr. Doug Jensen, Rock Valley College; Mr. Tim Hanson, RRWRD; Ms. Lisa Bly, The Workforce Connection.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Village of Cherry Valley, Stephenson County, ComEd, NIDA, NIU Rockford, OSF Healthcare, Rockford Airport, Rockford Park District.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Dunn, Thomas Bona, Dana Northcott, Christina Washington, Ben Rohr, Colin Belle, Marlana Dokken, Tretara Flowers, Ivy Hood, Jay Fieser, Michelle Vella, RMAP; Mike Schblaske, Transform Rockford; Steve Gregg, Sarah Stromberg, WinGIS.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

4. ITEMS PRESENTED FOR INFORMATION OR DISCUSSION

A. Workforce Study – Dr. Doug Jensen, Rock Valley College

Dr. Jensen provided a brief presentation regarding the Workforce Study. Dr. Jensen stated this needs to be a Regional Imperative and explained how to design, develop and implement a “Regional Workforce Middle Skills Talent Study” that will give us the specific findings so that we can align our limited resources strategically to address this Middle Skills shortage. Dr. Jensen stated he will be advocating, with RIPC Board support, that a regional study, “Coordinated Workforce Report” be conducted with the support of Region 1 Planning Council staff as back office support to Rock Valley College, The Workforce Connection, Regional Economic Development Councils, Illinois Department of Employment Security and Transform Rockford.

Dr. Jensen stated that he will also be advocating, with RIPC Board support, that we prepare a promotion strategy to communicate the findings of the Study/Report to focus on the recruitment of Talent and economic opportunity, and to communicate to our region that the opportunity exists and we have a plan that differentiates our region competitively from all other regions.

A brief Q&A took place among RIPC Board members and Dr. Jensen.

B. Government Collaboration/Efficiency Priorities – Chairman Frank Haney, Winnebago County
Chairman Haney asked Mr. Dunn to provide a brief summary on what a Council of Government would look like.

Mr. Dunn stated that the next piece to the Regional Council of Government is to establish a 501C organization which is needed to be able to embark on certain grants under the Council of Governments. The second piece is to establish a platform for many jurisdictions to come together and try to pull resources together. A separate organization that is embedded into this group that allows a legislative agenda to be formed and also allows discussions on a regional level. A brief discussion took place among members with support provided by Todd Cagnoni and received consensus from council.

C. Regional Economic Development – Jason Anderson, GREDCO & City of Rochelle

Mr. Jason Anderson stated that he is very passionate about this idea of becoming regional. Mr. Anderson provided some background on himself and stated that throughout the years he's found that municipalities aren't communicating with each other which is key to becoming regional. Mr. Anderson stated that each municipality has limited resources are struggling how to utilize what they have. If we become more regional in our thinking and regional in our approach, then we can maximize what we do have and actually advance in a big way. We just need to figure out how to market it, identify it and brand it.

A brief Q&A took place among RIPC board members and Mr. Anderson.

D. Education Partners Update

Dr. Hood stated he just attended a meeting for a continuing dialogue on how to get a higher percentage of our region with post high school credentials. Some data was presented summarizing their progress and a key factor that was found is regional partnerships. Highland Community College is very excited in partnering with Rock Valley College and the other 3 neighboring colleges. They have secured a grant and are moving forward in strengthening pathways that are already there but hasn't received the exposure that it needs. Dr. Hood stated that Highland Community College is down 10% dependent in state funding and the key is partnerships, grants and investments from businesses and communities who desperately need the services they are able to provide for their pipeline for talent they are going to need.

E. Committee Reports

i. Environmental Committee, (incl. new Blackhawk Hills initiative)

Mr. Rohr provided a brief summary of the creation, implementation and participants of the Environmental Committee. Mr. Rohr stated that the March 22, 2018 Environmental Committee meeting will focus on its 1st project on a partnership with NIU Stem Outreach who received a grant to conduct some smart energy educational events in Rockford and the Environmental Committee will host an event on April 14th which is a family oriented event called "Smart Meter and Green Energy Open House". Mr. Rohr stated that the educational component is a really strong and important piece of pushing the environmental agenda forward.

Mr. Rohr stated that Blackhawk Hills Regional Council reached out the RIPC regarding conducting a Northwest Regional Water Study for Supply and Demand. They are partnering with IDNR and 11 county radius and Winnebago County falls within that radius. RIPC will be working with Blackhawk Hills Regional Council to contact RIPC's stakeholders within our region working through the Environmental Committee and also serving on that planning process.

ii. **MPO Policy Committee**

Mr. Dunn stated that the MPO is coordinating among a number of units of government a Bike Sharing service that will be installed this spring and the company that is providing the service is called LimeBike. There is a final agreement that every unit of government has agreed on and that could cross jurisdictional lines. Users of the bike sharing services will be held to one set of rules. There's no cost to tax payers, zero government subsidy, and zero-dollar revenue guarantee.

Mr. Dunn stated that RIPC has partnered with Transform Rockford for a Community Conversation on February 28th to provide an update and discuss Bicycle/Pedestrian Planning and its progress and LimeBike will be introduced.

Mr. Dunn stated that the RMAP Mobility Subcommittee will be decommissioned and re-inventing that transit function with the Active Transportation Committee which will look at FTA funding for transit but also looks at other issues that human service transportation plan calls for and part of that is Bike/Ped Planning.

Mr. Dunn announced the following infrastructure funding opportunity regarding Transportation Alternative Programs (TAP):

- Illinois Competitive Freight Program / \$225million dollar fund from the federal government that will be discretionally awarded by IDOT and will focus on four areas in the movement of freight:
 1. Improving bottlenecks
 2. Developing multi-modal solutions
 3. Improving safety
 4. Efficiency through technology

iii. **ICJIA Workshop**

Ms. Dokken stated that RIPC sought funding for a county coordinating council through the Illinois Justice Authority and RIPC was one of five that was awarded funds. This came down from the Governor's office as a way for the state to start working better with its counties. Currently the State of Illinois Department of Corrections doesn't communicate very well with local communities and municipalities and this is a way for us to do that better and to start strategically planning what the State of Illinois Department of Corrections through the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority in Loyola University. Out of that RIPC has the following projects:

- Focus Deterrence Project / A project that RIPC has been working on with the City of Rockford, Winnebago County, residents and local service providers to focus on a very specific population of violent gun offenders. Currently there isn't a process in place to process it through the court system and that's what this process is doing.
- Navigator / the Navigator works as part of a multi-disciplinary team in the community coordinating case plans and resources to ensure that participants are connected to the services they need in a swift and certain manner.
- Opioid Task Force through Winnebago County to address youth violence.

iv. **Program & Funding Development (incl. Land-bank)**

Ms. Northcott provided a brief summary on EDA Grants. EDA Grants are actually four different EDA Grant Programs and what's important about that is; when you have one EDA grant in the community you can also access the other funding streams without them being in competition with

each other. The more we can utilize at once the more money we can bring into the community. All EDA grant applications have a common priority and has to align with one of their strategic priorities which are as follows:

- Collaborative regional innovation
- Public private partnership
- Some national strategic priorities (information/technology infrastructure)
- Working with communities that have been severely impacted by the automotive industry restructuring
- Working with underserved communities

All the grants have in common are the match requirements which is based on funds going to distressed communities such as unemployment. EDA will contribute 50% and the rest has to come from local non-federal funding.

v. **Economic Development Planning (incl. Qualified Sites Program)**

Mr. Bona provided a brief summary on QSP (shovel ready sites) which is a program to set criteria for our version of shovel ready sites because Illinois is the only state in the Mid-West that doesn't have a certified statewide shovel ready program. The program helps the property owner, developer, municipality or county figure out how to get a property up to shovel ready. Part of this is the website component that RIPC and Winnebago County has developed to promote those sites which shows value to the private sector to make those investments. A brief discussion took place among members regarding QSP.

F. **Executive Director's report**

Mr. Dunn stated that RIPC is looking to hire a Metropolitan Planner, Transit Planner and a Grant Writer.

Mr. stated RIPC is looking for the following summer interns:

- Communications/Marketing Intern (paid)
- Data Intern
- Planning Intern

Mr. Dunn stated in the coming months RIPC will be discussing the next FY19 Budget that is set for July 1, 2018. This upcoming FY19 Budget will incorporate a separate fund accounting for WinGIS among the three sub entities. Mr. Dunn is gauging the RIPC Board to see if they would like to set aside a line item in the upcoming budget for the RIPC to start getting in the business of awarding technical assistance grants. These technical assistance grants would be awarded to a Village, unit of government or private entity that is looking for grants and don't have the funds for those services, the RIPC Board could award a line item out of the budget that would cover staff's time to assist that entity to pursue those grants.

Mr. Dunn stated that he, Chairman Haney and Mayor Chamberlain visited the Rockford Register Star Editorial Board last week and briefed the Editorial Board on what the RIPC Board has discussed in their first two meeting since its inception. Mr. Dunn has also been asked to submit an Op Ed and will be doing so by the end of the week.

5. ITEMS PRESENTED FOR ACTION

A. Consensus on Executive Committee Appointments

Chairman Haney stated that the action item today is for the Consensus on Executive Committee Appointments and referred to the handout provided to RIPC Board members.

Chairman Haney asked for a motion to approve the Consensus on Executive Committee Appointments. First motion was made by Rock Valley College, second motion was made by the Village of Machesney Park. Chairman Haney asked for a roll call vote. All "Aye". None opposed. The motion has passed unanimously.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

As there was no further business, Village of Machesney Park made a motion to adjourn, seconded by RAEDC. Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 PM.