



Minutes

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
FULL COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting held in person at Van Buren ISD Conference Center

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Doroh, Kurt, Chair, Van Buren County Commissioner
Curran, Jim, Vice Chair, Berrien County Commissioner
Sinclair, Kim, Treasurer, Van Buren County Representative
Preston, Linda, Secretary, Cass County Representative
Catherman, Rick, Van Buren County Representative
DeLong, Don, Cass County Representative
Dodd, James, Cass County Representative
Durm-Hiatt, Marge, Berrien County Representative
Fette, Dan, Berrien County Representative
Freehling, Teri Sue, Berrien County Commissioner
Gundersen, Kristen, Alternate Secretary, Berrien County Representative
Hanson, Sandra, Alternate Treasurer, Van Buren County Representative
Leary, Tina, Van Buren County Representative
Marchetti, Roseann, Cass County Commissioner
Pantaleo, Paul, Berrien County Representative
Patterson-Gladney, Gail, Van Buren County Commissioner
Stauffer, Dick, Berrien County Representative
Torzynski, Robert, Pokagon Band Representative
Tyler, Doug, Cass County Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Engle, Roger, Van Buren County Representative
Multhauf, Katie, Van Buren County Economic Development Ex-Officio
Wood, Gary, Berrien County Representative
Wuerfel, Julie, Berrien County Commissioner

OTHERS PRESENT:

Vettraino, Maria, SWMPC Office Manager
Youngstedt, Glen, Lincoln Township Supervisor
Graham Woodhouse Award Winners

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kurt Doroh called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Office Manager, Maria Vettraino, took roll call, and a quorum was present. Dick Stauffer introduced his guest, Glen Youngstedt.

2. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REVISION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Doroh presented the Consent Agenda. Linda Preston moved to **“ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.”** Rick Catherman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. GRAHAM WOODHOUSE AWARD PRESENTATION

SMART PARK

Executive Director, John Egelhaaf, explained the Graham Woodhouse Award, its criteria, and previous winners. The annual intergovernmental effort award was given to the collaborators responsible for the SMART Park. Egelhaaf shared the details of the project, and the collaborators involved. Chair Doroh presented the plaque awards to Abonmarche, Cass County, Cassopolis Area Utilities Authority, Market One, Michigan Department of Transportation, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Midwest Energy & Communications, Penn Township, U.S. Economic Development Administration, and Village of Cassopolis.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Egelhaaf presented the Executive Director’s report. He shared that Associate Planner, Zane Aldrich, has left the organization and his last day was December sixth. Egelhaaf also stated Blossomland can no longer process our payroll and have made a switch to using ADP.

Teri Sue Freehling asked for a report to be added to future Board packets with current projects and their budgets, and grants that are being applied for.

Marge Durm-Hiatt moved to **“ACCEPT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT.”** Gail Patterson-Gladney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

5. 2023 AUDIT - FINAL

Director Egelhaaf presented the final version of the 2023 audit.

Kim Sinclair moved to **“APPROVE 2023 AUDIT.”** Paul Pantaleo seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

6. RESOLUTION 2024-6

Authorization to Submit EDA Partnership Planning Grant

Director Egelhaaf explained Resolution 2024-6 to submit the EDA Partnership Planning Grant.

Roseann Marchetti moved to **“APPROVE RESOLUTION 2024-6.”** Jim Curran seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

7. 2025 HEALTH INSURANCE WAIVER

Annually the Board is asked to consider three options for how SWMPC insurance costs will be shared between staff and the organization. These options were presented by Director Egelhaaf with projected 2025 costs and changes from 2024 to 2025. The three options considered by the board were: a hard cap, an 80/20 split, or an exemption that would allow for the continuation of the previous 98/2 split.

Dan Fette moved to **“APPROVE AN EXEMPTION TO THE 80/20 OR HARD CAP COST SHARE.”** Rick Catherman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

8. 2025 PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE

Chair Doroh presented the 2025 meeting dates, which will continue to be held at the Van Buren ISD Conference Center in Lawrence Michigan.

Marge Durm-Hiatt moved to **“APPROVE 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE.”** Gail Patterson-Gladney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

10. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Director Egelhaaf shared the list of Board members whose terms are ending this year.

Dick Stauffer complimented MDOT on improvements at Exit 23.

Gail Patterson-Gladney spoke on the re-opening of Palisades. Conversation then ensued on the effects of data centers and use of AI.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Roseann Marchetti moved to adjourn the meeting. Sandra Hanson supported the motion. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:28 am.

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. John Egelhaaf', written in a cursive style.

K. John Egelhaaf, AICP

Date: December 17, 2024