

**NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
FULL COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes**

January 28, 2026

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

REINHARDT BALCERZAK
LORETTA BAUGHAN
ALAN BISHOP
HANS BREITENMOSER
TED CUSHING
JAMI GEBERT
ROCKY GILNER
JASON GRUENEBERG
ROBB JENSEN
JOSHUA KLINGBEIL
DENNIS KREJCI
DAVE LAFONTAINE
DOUG MACHON
BETTY MANSON
PAUL MILLAN
RON NYE
RICK PEASE
LARRY RAIKOWSKI
TERRY TAFT
TOM TALLIER
MICHAEL TAUTGES

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

ANGIE CLOSE
RANDY FIFRICK
JOHN PAVELSKI
RAY RESER
HOLLY TOMLANOVICH

STAFF PRESENT:

FRED HEIDER
DAWN JOHNSON
DARRYL LANDEAU
DENNIS LAWRENCE
ERIC SONNLEITNER
AUSTIN WALDVOGEL
SAM WESSEL

OTHERS PRESENT:

KEITH LANGENHAHN – WISCONSIN
COUNTIES ASSOCIATION

GREGG WAVRUNEK – REGIONAL
REPRESENTATIVE, US SENATOR
TAMMY BALDWIN

1.) CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

MR. MILLAN called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

2.) APPROVAL, ADDITIONS, OR CORRECTIONS TO THE MINUTES OF THE 10/29/25 MEETING:

MR. MILLAN asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes as mailed. Hearing none, MR. LAFONTAINE made a motion to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by MR. MACHON. Motion passed.

3.) BUSINESS & DISCUSSION:

3.1 CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

MR. MILLAN welcomed everyone to the Wausau Business Incubator and introduced MR. TAFT, a new commissioner from Juneau County. MR. TAFT then shared a brief background about himself. MR. WALDVOGEL was introduced as the new GIS Manager.

3.2 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S REPORT

MS. BAUGHAN provided a summary of the discussion items, noting that 26 of the 30 commissioner positions were now filled and that a six-year agreement with Ayres for the Wisconsin Regional Orthoimagery Consortium was approved. Several other policies were reviewed as well.

3.3 FEDERAL AND STATE UPDATES

MR. WAVRUNEK discussed fiscal year 2027 spending will open in the next month or two, allowing units of government or non-profits to apply for funding. The DOT Build Grant program is accepting applications until February 24th, 2026. Fiscal year 2026 budget, 6 appropriation bills have passed and 6 remain, asking to pull out homeland security and move forward with the five remaining that have bipartisan support. Unable to obtain extension for premium tax credits that lower the cost of health insurance for those that purchase coverage through federal or state marketplaces. Patients deserve price tags legislation has been introduced that would require hospitals and health plans to publicly disclose prices in a consumer-friendly way.

MR. LANGENHAHN discussed the association's support to increase the funding for the circuit court system, which counties pay roughly eighty percent of the court

system costs, even though the courts are part of the state judicial system. The annual legislative conference will take place on February 10-11, 2026.

3.4 2025 WORK ACTIVITIES REVIEW & 2026 WORK PREVIEW

Staff provided an overview of 2025 projects completed and the upcoming 2026 projects. The presentation followed the five program areas: Economic Development – MR. SONNLEITNER, Geographical Information Systems – MR. WALDVOGEL, Intergovernmental Coordination – MR. WESSEL, Land Use – MR. HEIDER, and Transportation – MR. LANDEAU.

3.5 REVIEW & ADOPTION OF 2026 NCWRPC WORK PROGRAM

MR. LAWRENCE reviewed the 2026 Work Program. There are over 70 projects identified. He stated that this will be added to during the year. MR. NYE made a motion to adopt the 2026 work program as presented, seconded by MR. TAUTGES. Motion passed.

3.6 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) PRESENTATION

MR. SONNLEITNER discussed the contents of the new CEDS document. He provided an overview of each chapter, which included an introduction, demographics and employment, economic conditions, existing infrastructure, SWOT analysis, economic development resources, and regional strategy. The steering committee had three meetings to develop the document. This plan will provide the framework for our economic development work over the next five years.

3.7 RESOLUTION 2026-1: ADOPTION OF CEDS

MR. LAWRENCE stated that the CEDS is updated every five years and maintains the region's eligibility for EDA grants. Over the last year, the plan has been developed with a steering committee. MR. BALCERZAK moved to adopt the comprehensive economic development strategy. Seconded by MR. TAUTGES. Motion passed.

3.8 RESOLUTION 2026-2: COMMITMENT OF EDA PLANNING GRANT MATCH

MR. LAWRENCE stated that every three years we resubmit an application to the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) to maintain our Economic Development District (EDD) designation for our region. That application is due next month, and the grant requires local match. The resolution before the Commission would commit \$140,000 to secure \$210,000 from EDA to fund our economic development program and maintain our EDD

designation, which we have maintained since 1980. MR. LAFONTAINE made a motion to adopt the resolution. Seconded by MR. BISHOP. Motion passed.

3.9 COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioners were provided with an opportunity to ask questions or share local initiatives in their respective counties. Discussions included school funding and broadband.

3.10 ANNOUNCEMENTS

MR. LAWRENCE announced that the next meeting will take place on April 22nd, 2026, which will include the election of officers. All three of our existing officers have expressed interest in continuing in their respective roles.

4.) ADJOURNMENT

MR. MILLAN adjourned the meeting at 12:13 pm.

The meeting was advertised and open to the public. The meeting was held at the Wausau Business Incubator, 100 N. 72nd Avenue, Wausau, WI.

Minutes Approved on April 22, 2026:
