

**NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes

July 30, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

LORETTA BAUGHAN
TED CUSHING
ROCKY GILNER
DAVID LAFONTAINE
BETTY MANSON
PAUL MILLAN

STAFF PRESENT

DENNIS LAWRENCE

MEMBERS EXCUSED

RON NYE

OTHERS PRESENT

1.) ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 A.M., and there was a quorum.

2.) APPROVAL, ADDITIONS, OR CORRECTIONS TO THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 29, 2025, MEETING.

On the motion of MR. LAFONTAINE, second by MS. BAUGHAN, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3.) DISCUSSION/BUSINESS

3.1 Executive Director's Report

MR. LAWRENCE reviewed the status of Commissioners. He mentioned Tom Tallier was new Forest County appointment replacing Bill Chaney. One reappointment was made for the Governor's Office for a position in Marathon County - Jami Gebert. There are four other positions still open or needing reappointment. The two open positions are for direct Governor appointments in Adams and Juneau, and two Joint positions in Langlade and Vilas Counties. There are also two county positions needing reappointment. Staff will continue to work with the Governor's Appointment Office to get these positions filled.

Next, he informed the committee that the Annual Meeting of the Association of Regional Planning Commissions (AWRPC) was held in Eau Claire on June 6th. The meeting focused on discussions with WEDC related to more communication and working together, especially in the rural areas of Wisconsin. He then provided an update on the flurry of public record requests made by the Sunlight Report over the last few months. Over a dozen very extensive requests were made of us as well as the other regional planning commissions and then counties, school districts, and others. Then state agencies and the FBI became involved and advised all agencies to cease contact with them for fear of cybersecurity issues. The Sunlight Report, which had developed an extensive website, went silent. The website disappeared and all emails bounced.

3.2 Current Financial Report

MR. LAWRENCE referred to the Financial Report. The report identifies about \$2,429,000 in cash and deposits, and about \$136,000 in outstanding receivables, for a total of \$2,566,293 Payables total about \$63,000, which leaves a current financial position of \$2,503,293. At the previous meeting, the financial position was \$2,512,723. Overall, the organization continues to be in a good financial position.

On the motion of MR. CUSHING, second by MS. MANSON, the financial report was accepted and placed on file. All were in favor.

3.3 Programs, Grants & Agreements Update

MR. LAWRENCE reviewed the handout in the meeting packet. First, he discussed the current EDA and DOT planning programs underway for the region. He then reviewed an EDA Technical Assistance grant application under review at the federal level. Finally, he mentioned some small local work agreements for various communities, including comprehensive and outdoor recreation plans.

3.4 Preview 2026 Budget & Recommendations for 2026 Levy/Caps

MR. LAWRENCE distributed a worksheet with the already identified 2026 budget revenues to date. So far, nearly \$960,000 has been identified and over the next three months we will add to that as other projects are secured as we build out the budget. Expenditures should be roughly the same as the prior year.

To accomplish the anticipated work program for members, about \$420,000 is needed. With EDA and DOT funding providing about \$150,000, a gap of about \$270,000 needs to be collected via the levy. He reviewed the levy proposal showing both the recommended levy rate and cap rates for 2026. Years ago, because of the wide range of county real estate valuations, a cap rate was established. To better distribute membership costs another cap level is proposed. Basically, the cap for any county over \$15 billion in valuation will be \$41,000 and those above \$9 billion will be \$39,000. With those caps, it is recommended to set the levy rate not to exceed 0.0004449%. With this levy rate and the county caps at \$41,000 and \$39,000 the work program will be funded. Overall, the cost of membership will be reduced by about \$20,000. All counties will see either a freeze or decrease in membership costs.

On the motion of MR. LAFONTAINE, second by MR. GILNER, a recommendation was made to set the "Not to Exceed" rate at 0.00004449% and establish a cap of \$41,000 for counties with real estate valuation over \$15 billion and at \$39,000 for counties over \$9 billion. All were in favor.

3.5 GIS Manager Job Description & Recruitment Timeline

MR. LAWRENCE reviewed the job description with the edits from the last meeting. He then outlined the timeline and process for filling the position. The goal is get the notice out in mid-August, with interviews in September/October, and someone on board prior to the end of the year.

3.6 Assistant Director Update

MR. LAWRENCE stated at the last meeting the Executive Committee approved creating a Senior Planner/Assistant Director position. Since then, each Senior Planner was provided with a copy of the approved job description. One expressed interest and was interviewed. The goal behind this position is to have some organizational leadership succession in place. Sam Wessel has been selected to add these additional duties beginning August 1. As Senior Planner/Assistant Director he will be involved in various management level duties along with the Executive Director and will also fill in when the Executive Director is out of the office. He would also be a possible candidate to replace the Executive Director at some point in the future.

3.7 Convene into Closed Session

A motion was made by MR. CUSHING, seconded by MR. LAFONTIANE, for the Committee to go into Closed Session per Wisconsin Statute 19.85. All were in favor by a roll call vote.

3.8 Reconvene into Open Session

The Executive Committee reconvened into open session on a motion by MR. CUSHING, second by MR. LAFONTAINE. All were in favor.

On a motion by MR. CUSHING, second by MR. GILNER, select staff salaries were approved, as recommended. Motion passed.

3.9 Announcements

MR. LAWRENCE stated that the next Executive Committee meeting will be held on October 29th, 2025.

4.) ADJOURNMENT

The Executive Committee Meeting was adjourned at 10:20 A.M.

The meeting was held at the Wausau Business Incubator,
advertised, and open to the public.

Minutes Approved on October 29, 2025
