

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

February 23, 2005 Strategic Planning Meeting Minutes

---

MEMBERS PRESENT

WILBUR FRITZ  
ROBERT HAYWARD  
VIRGINIA HEINEMANN  
ERHARD HUETTL  
BRAD KARGER  
DON KLINE  
BEV LONG  
PAUL MILLAN  
BETTYE NALL  
WILBER PETROSKEY  
HERB RIECKMANN  
THOMAS RUDOLPH  
FRANK TRIMMEL  
DOUG WILLIAMS

MEMBERS EXCUSED

GEORGE BORNEMANN  
ROBERT CURRAN  
MAURICE MATHEWS  
HELM MEHUS  
GENE SIMON

MEMBERS UNEXCUSED

FRED CAMACHO  
DON KRAHN  
TOM RICK

OTHERS PRESENT

DEB CLEMENTS, WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
RENE DANIEL, CONGRESSMAN OBEY'S OFFICE  
DAN KUZLIK, ONEIDA COUNTY UWEX

STAFF PRESENT

DENNIS LAWRENCE

## **1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 A.M., and the roll call was as presented.

MR. HUETTL welcomed everyone and then asked the group to stand for a moment of silence for DAVID PELTON who passed away since our last meeting. He mentioned that Dave was the former Mayor of Mauston and was very active in his community. Dave will be missed by all.

## **2. Audience Comment**

The three audience members were asked to introduce themselves. They are listed in the Roll Call.

## **3. Approval, Additions, or Corrections to the Agenda as mailed.**

On the motion of MS. NALL, second by MR. WILLIAMS, the agenda was approved.

## **4. Approval, Additions, or Corrections to the Minutes of the September 29, 2004 Commission Meeting.**

On the motion of MR. RUDOLPH, second by MR. KLINE, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved, with the correction of two typos. The first typo was on page 2 and the second on page 4.

## **5. Discussion:**

### *“ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION”*

MR. LAWRENCE stated that today’s agenda was long and that he did not expect it would be completed. He stated that he wanted to provide a detailed overview of the organization as the starting point for the strategic planning process. The overview would be timely since there have been several new commissioners appointed over the last couple of years.

He asked the group to refer to the packet that was at their tables. The booklet contained two sections. The first was a brief summary of what strategic planning was all about and the rest was an overview of the organization.

MR. LAWRENCE began with an introduction of Strategic Planning. He said that the strategic planning process is a management tool designed to improve the effectiveness of an organization. MR. KARGER added that it should address what success looks like. He also added that Marathon County was soon to

undertake a similar process for the county. MS. Long stated that the strategic planning process needs to focus on the future.

## A. OVERVIEW OF NCWRPC

### Organizational History

MR. LAWRENCE then presented an in-depth review of the organization. He began with an organizational history. Executive Order 58 by then Governor Lucey created the NCWRPC in 1973. We were the last of nine RPCs created in the state. There was some discussion regarding the boundary of the NCWRPC. He then reviewed a timeline for the Commission, beginning with its first office in St. Point.

### RPC Statute

MR. LAWRENCE reviewed statute 66.0309 – the regional planning commission statute. He highlighted several sections. The first was Section 2 – Creation, then Section 3 – Commissioner composition, Section 8 – Functions of RPCs, Section 14 – Budget and service charges, and finally Section 16 – Withdrawal.

He stressed Section 8, subsection 2 that reads...The functions of the regional planning commission shall be solely advisory to the local governments and local government officials compromising the region. There was some discussion regarding this and the relationship to 66.1001, the comprehensive planning law.

### Bylaws

Mr. LAWRENCE highlighted the major sections of the current bylaws. He also provided an overview of the internal accounting and book keeping process.

### Previous Strategic Planning Efforts:

There were three previous efforts highlighted by MR. LAWRENCE. Two efforts took place in 1995 and the last in 1998.

#### *1995 Strategic Plan*

The planning effort was driven by the Program Management Committee (a one-time standing committee) as the result of some negative trends. There were two different groups targeted, one was the Commissioners and the other was “clients”. The effort produced a variety issues and opportunities, as well as several recommendations. Unfortunately, there was no management support to implement the results.

### *Staff Retreat*

Also in 1995, the then current professional staff went through a process to look at the internal operations of the NCWRPC, including office operations, project management and organizational structure. Again, several recommendations were made, but there was no implementation.

### *Peer 500 Process*

This effort occurred just a few months after the Executive Director took over the organization. This process was conducted by a group of three long-term directors of similar type organizations from throughout the nation. They focused on six basic areas covering Project Management, Program Development, Human Resources, Financial Management, General Management and Governance. He highlighted some of the recommendations, including projects contracts and firm schedules and budgets; NCWRPC should facilitate regional concerns/agendas; organization needs to become entrepreneurial, and the balance of local vs. regional projects.

MR. LAWRENCE went on to explain that many of these recommendations were already identified in the earlier efforts and many of those were in the process of being implemented. Other recommendations from the Peer 500 effort were also implemented.

Much of the reorganization revolved around getting the organization in financial shape, reacquainting ourself with our members (outreach) and focusing our services around the five basic areas of economic development, GIS, Intergovernmental Cooperation, land use and transportation. The latest audit, the newsletter and member services brochure are all results of these efforts. He stated that his goal as Executive Director was to provide a quality planning products at the lowest cost to our members.

### Current Operations: Program Areas & Staffing

MR. LAWRENCE provided an overview of the current organizational structure and reviewed the five work areas of the NCWRPC. He then went on to review the current staff and stressed the qualifications of the staff, including four with AICP certification. He added that no other planning organization in the region, public or private, compared to the NCWRPC. Several commissioners also identified staff as a strength of the organization.

### Current Budget & Funding

MR. LAWRENCE briefly reviewed the 2005 NCWRPC budget, mainly looking at the \$670 thousand dollar revenue side. The Levy accounts for just under 30

percent of the budget, continuing grants represent about 24 percent and projects account for about 46 percent of the overall budget. He then highlighted the 2003 audited balance sheet, which shows the organization with retained earnings of \$588 thousand dollars. He stated that his goal was to have about one year of operations or about three years of our levy collection. We are nearing that goal.

Next he reviewed the levy rates assessed by the NCWRPC to its members. In 2001 the rate was 0.00275%, the 2005 rate was set at 0.00185% and the goal for 2006 is 0.00175%. Finally, he presented some benchmark information from 1995. Over the last ten years revenues have increased 57 percent, and expenditures by just 44 percent. He detailed the makeup of the revenues, which showed the levy decreasing from 46 percent of the budget to less than 30 percent. This he added was part of his goal of moving away from the levy toward project funding. This has resulted in a 157 percent increase in project funding over the ten-year period.

### Current Membership

MR. LAWRENCE reviewed the membership map of the NCWRPC, which shows a "hole" in the middle caused by the non-membership of Portage County and the partial membership in Marathon and Wood Counties. Next he presented some information on the region's equalized value by county and some "what if" scenarios if all the counties were members. There was considerable discussion regarding membership.

During the discussion review, three items were identified for discussion at the next meeting. The first was board training, starting with the need to review and revise the dated "Commissioner Job Description". The second was a possible client based "Needs" profile/survey and the third was the creation of an ad hoc committee to address some of the detailed issues related to strategic planning.

As was mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, those items not completed would be added to future meetings of the NCWRPC.

## **6. Adjournment**

On a motion by MR. RUDOLPH, seconded by MS. LONG, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

A Buffet Lunch followed.

---

Minutes Approved this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2005:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Vice-Chair or Secretary-Treasurer/Date