

**MINUTES  
OF THE  
NORTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING  
August 24, 2017  
UNIVERSITY CENTER  
GAYLORD, MI**

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments (NEMCOG) Board of Directors was called to order by President Robert Heilman at 10:00 a.m.

A quorum was declared.

**Roll Call**

Governing Board

Members Present: Kathleen Vichunas, John Wallace, Daryl Peterson, LaNita Olsen, Robert Pallarito, Carl Altman, Adam Poll, Robert Heilman, Mary Ann Heidemann, Doug Baum, Dave Post, Bill Wishart, Jeff Lawson and Norm Brecheisen.

Staff Present: Diane Rekowski, Theresa Huff and Karen Cole

**Approval of Minutes**

R. Heilman presented the Minutes of the June 15, 2017 meeting. M. Heidemann moved, supported by J. Lawson to approve the minutes. All ayes, motion carried.

**Financial Report**

R. Heilman welcomed Karen Cole. K. Cole reviewed the July, 2017 financial statements. J. Wallace moved, supported by J. Lawson to receive and file the July 31, 2017 financial report. All ayes, motion carried.

**President's Report**

*Regional Project Review:* President R. Heilman presented (1) Federal Grant projects for regional review from previous month. There were (2) Public Notices and (0) "Other" (0) State Grant Applications. K. Vichunas moved to recommend approval of the regional project, supported by D. Post. All ayes, motion carried.

*MI Association of Regions (MAR):* D. Rekowski provided information from the MAR Annual meeting that was held in Alpena, hosted by NEMCOG.

M. Heidemann brought up the President's Executive Order for a review of NOAA's Sanctuaries. NOAA's Alpena Underwater Marine Sanctuary is one listed for review. The importance this Sanctuary has been to the region's economy has been extraordinary. The Public Comment period she thought was up at day's end. M. Heidemann made a motion to support a letter of support by NEMCOG, supported by C. Altman. 13 ayes, 1 opposed, motion carried.

**Director's Report: D. Rekowski**

D. Rekowski provided an update on the following:

- DEQ State Revolving Fund/Strategic Water Quality Initiatives Fund – Notice of Public Hearing. Will send a copy out to the board.
- Accounting Conversion is going well. K. Cole said the new software is better for grant accounting. It will be more efficient, flows and allocates more efficiently saving time and will allow for a quicker month end closing. Working on a new coding system and will start with payroll first.
- Hiring 1 full-time Community Corrections, 1 part-time Community Corrections and 1 full-time Community/Economic Development staff.

- Grant Proposal FEMA Hazard Mitigation – all counties need to have their 5 year Hazard Mitigation Plans updated. Notice of Intent is due September 1, 2017. M. Heidemann moved to support NEMCOG applying on behalf of counties, supported by K. Vichunas. All ayes, motion carried.
- Submitted a \$90,000 request to MEDC for Region 3's CDC for a Regional Entrepreneurial Initiative
- Received a \$20,000 MEDC contract for NEMCOG to assist communities in the NEMCOG region with Redevelopment Ready Community Certification.
- JLUS Study – Policy Committee meeting is September 13<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. in Atlanta at the DHHS office. The project is moving along well.
- MEDC Site Selector's Workshop will be on Mackinaw Island. Diane will be representing Region 3. The Governor will be there as well.
- MI Association of Planning (MAP) has invited Northeast MI to present at their Annual Conference on Mackinaw Island. The City of Grayling, Briley Township and Alpena will be presenting.
- Provided NEMCOG Program Highlights for January-July 2017 to Board.

### **Committee Reports**

*Finance Committee:* Carl Altman, Chair reported on the meeting held on 8/21/17. The Committee reviewed and discussed the following: FY 2018 Appropriations, Wage Review; FY2018 Budget, FY2016 Audit and Cash Disbursements.

The following recommendations were made to the NEMCOG Board: Appropriations: Maintain the current appropriations for FY 2018; Wage Review: the committee recommended approval of a 2% wage increase for FY 2018; FY 2018 Budget: Recommended approval of the Budget as presented; FY 2016 Audit: Recommended approval of the Audit; Reviewed Cash Disbursements.

Also the committee directed D. Rekowski to look for other possible locations to lower rent costs as well as storage costs. Discussed whether to keep current auditor or seek out a new one. A price proposal for the FY 2017 Audit from the current auditor was requested prior to seeking bids.

M. Heidemann noted that the wages in recent years had gone stagnant and are now going up, generally speaking, approximately 2% and it's important to recognize the staff. R. Heilman noted that we have good staff, and if they are not recognized and compensated appropriately, they won't stick around. C. Altman said they would continue the discussion at the next Finance Committee meeting.

*RPI Collaborative:* D. Baum, Chair of the RPI Collaborative updated the Board on the recent meeting held in Posen at the Stepanski Farm. Judy MacNeil from Alcona County presented a Farm to Fork event that will be held in Alcona County on 9/30/17, a flyer will be emailed out to board. Contractor, Sara Wycoff-McCauley reported on the Talent Committee's projects that are being implemented: Hot Jobs, Talent Tours, Promotion of Region to college students. Also, the Collaborative amended the Broadband Work-plan to complete a vertical asset inventory.

### **Previous Business**

*FY2016 Audit:* D. Baum moved to receive and file the FY2016 Audit, supported by R. Pallarito. A roll call vote was taken, all ayes, motion approved.

*Other:* D. Baum updated the Board on the USDA Certified Slaughter House to be built in Grayling and would like a letter of support from the Board. More information will be provided to the Board at the next Board meeting.

### **New Business**

*FY 2018 Budget:* C. Altman moved, seconded by D. Rodgers to approve the FY 2018 Budget with the 2% wage increase. Ayes all, motion carried.

## **County Updates:**

**Rogers City:** Reported on property vacancies being bought and new businesses opening. Lantern Work is half way complete.

**Presque Isle Co.:** County Building repairs are in the works. Have had some issues but trying to work them out. No lawsuits.

**City of Alpena:** RPI Collaborative Talent Committee will be hosting a Millennial Focus Group in Alpena. The City received a grant for the Splash Park. An assisted living facility is coming. County Jail Committee is moving forward on a millage and will be on ballot. The new jail location will be on a site near the airport. The City's 2 way street project is off the table, 3 other street modifications are progressing.

**Village of Hillman:** Contracted with Allband Communications to put Wi-Fi in park. Also adding other Wi-Fi in city, a couple miles. \$300 hookup fee then \$30-40 a month to residents. Finishing SAW Grant, due in October.

**Hillman Community Radio:** Working on Dark Skies project.

**Montmorency Co.:** In November, an increase (\$1.50) phone charge for 911 will be on the ballot. Security cameras, costing \$22,000 may be installed in courthouse. The electric car industry is gaining steam. Presque Isle Electric will be installing 2 Electric Car Charging Stations. One will be in Lewiston the other will be in Atlanta at no cost to the customer.

**Cheboygan Co.:** 3 county (Emmet, Cheboygan & Charlevoix) 911 study was completed and now in the process of finding funding for implementation.

**Otsego Co.:** Hired a new Finance Director, Tim Hanley, formally from Miller & Cook and worked at Sun Frog. EMS is requesting a millage, haven't had an increase in 20 years. The County provided a \$150,000 loan to EMS to allow them to continue to operate until the end of the year. The Dial-a-Ride system also has a deficit. Informed the Board on a Washington D.C trip to provide an understanding Federal Programs.

**City of Grayling:** Updated the Board on the Northern Michigan Law Enforcement Group training for all law enforcement. Fire Arms training coming up, using a new approach which includes response to people with mental health conditions. The City is involved with: a community center project; Housing pilot with MSHDA; Approved new zoning ordinance (contracted with NEMCOG- Denise Cline, went great); Northern Market Food Hub: I-75 pedestrian bridge project; issues with an assisted living home. Albert Township: Deficit Fire Ambulance-was looking at a special millage. They brought idea to the special assessment group. No significant opposition. Township can set the rate yearly themselves for what they need, with no millage necessary. Working with D. Cline on the zoning ordinance. Working on boat launch for East Twin Lake. Also having a plug in station for electric cars coming near township hall.

**Oscoda Co.:** Special millage for EMS needs, their budget is short \$170,000 this year. EMS Director quit, however due to lack of funds, they are not looking to fill the position. They'll use the money saved to provide services. County Building is closer to a contract now.

**Cheboygan Co.:** Final design for new jail expansion will have 12 more beds. The project is \$2.2 million and includes security updates in jail and additional storage. Received \$400,000 from Water Ways with \$400,000 match for a Marina project. Received a \$200,000 Blight Limitation grant to remove old building. Retirements are occurring and looking for a new planner.

**Alcona Co.:** County Fair was held last week and seemed to have more participation this year. Reported on two new ambulances recently purchased. Security: Maintenance and IT Director made security changes and there is now a better lock down procedure in place. Caledonia Township granted a Land Use Permit for a Verizon Tower in the Township.

**Village of Mackinaw City:** Reported on the Mackinaw Bridge Walk increased security. The Bridge and certain I-75 Exit Ramps will be closed. A meeting will be held in October to discuss how the security measures worked out. The Belles Fisheries property may be used for a museum with Tribal displays. The Natural Resources Trust Fund Board recently met at the Headlands and toured Mackinaw City. Close to completion of the SAW grant. The Village approved plumbing at the Marina to add diesel as they were losing \$2,000 a month in diesel sales. Taking out finger piers.

## **Public Comment:**

None

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m. The next meeting will be held on September 21, 2017.