



## **MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

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*James Kuhn, Cashton, WI  
Chairman*  
*Margaret Baecker, Independence, WI  
Vice Chairman*  
*Vicki Burke, Onalaska, WI  
Secretary & Treasurer*  
*Greg Flogstad, Onalaska, WI  
Director*

### **MINUTES**

#### **MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRRPC)**

#### **BIMONTHLY MEETING**

10:00 a.m., December 10, 2014

Best Western Riverfront Hotel, 1835 Rose Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin

#### **Public Hearing Call to Order, Public Comments, and Adjournment**

Chairman Kuhn called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and stated there would be a public hearing on the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan. Chairman Kuhn invited anyone in attendance to speak and asked they first identify themselves. Jeff Hines, area manager of Fairmount Santrol said their industry brings high quality jobs, jobs that families can be supported on. He said the industry is helping the country with energy independence. Mr. Hines added that mining is a well regulated business at federal, state, county and local levels. He compared the impacts from well managed mining operations to logging, farming etc. Mr. Hines said Fairmount has a sustainable development program and works closely with communities. He said this allows for the opportunity to be consistent with the goals of the MRRPC's comprehensive plan providing more opportunity for outdoor recreation etc. Mr. Hines said their mines are underground and once the land is reclaimed it can go back to farming. Charlie Handy, City of La Crosse resident and La Crosse County employee, said he wanted to commend the MRRPC on a document of this magnitude and the public process undertaken. He said the county reviewed the draft and there are really some important things in the plan. Pointing to one specific example he referenced Table 7.2, "MRRPC Regional Land Use Projections", on page 7.5. He said this information is really helpful for the municipalities and counties that don't have the staff that can prepare this type of data analysis and understand what they can expect as far as development in the next 20 years. Mr. Handy discussed the land use projections made for La Crosse County and stated La Crosse County had prepared their own projections and even though two different methodologies were used the results were very close. He said this should give you confidence the MRRPC staff did a wonderful job in drafting this document. Eric McLeod representing Fairmount Santrol made reference to Chapter 9-Implementation, item 7.12(e) that read as follows: "Assist local units of government in evaluating the impacts of frac sand mining on their communities and developing standards and/or ordinances to manage frac sand mining uses". Mr. McLeod said we have seen a lot of activity at the local level in developing local licensing ordinances specifically for industrial sand. He said the ordinances are varied in terms of scope and what they intend to accomplish. He said under item 7.12(e) he wanted to encourage the MRRPC to add Wisconsin DNR along with the other agencies listed in the column entitled "Role". He said many of the local ordinances not only address issues of land use planning and related issues but also in many instances are regulating in environmental issues that are really within the scope of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). He said the DNR should have an important role; they have a lot of important information and data that is relevant to environmental issues. Chairman Kuhn asked if anyone else wished to make any comments. Hearing none, Chairman Kuhn stated the public hearing was closed.

#### **Call To Order**

Chairman Kuhn called the meeting to order. Director Flogstad took roll call. Guests: David Connolly, Director, Crawford County Economic Development Corporation; Eric McLeod, Fairmount Santrol; Jeff Hines, Fairmount Santrol; Bob Hansen, Croell Redi-Mix Inc.; Steve Peterson, Monroe County Economic Development Coordinator; Jeremy Niemeier, Unimin; Dick Lowater, Buffalo White Sand LLC; Tom Faella, LaCrosse Area Planning Committee; Charlie Handy, La Crosse County; Brian McLain, Gerke Excavating; and Lee Shirey, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Mr. Shirey explained he was at the meeting today to conduct a peer review of the MRRPC. He said one of the programs offered by EDA is the funding of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Mr. Shirey said EDA has been a partner with the MRRPC for many years and is here to undertake the three year annual performance review at the conclusion of the meeting.

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***Providing Planning and Economic Development Services to Improve the Region's Environment, Economy, and Quality of Life***

- Land Use Planning ▪ Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances ▪ Transportation Planning ▪ Economic Development Planning
- GIS Mapping ▪ Recreation Planning ▪ Revolving Loan Fund Administration ▪ Grant Writing ▪ Socioeconomic Data Dissemination
- Assist Local Interests in Responding to State and Federal Programs ▪ Advisory Service on Local Planning Issues
- Coordinating Agency for Programs and Activities ▪ Public Advocacy on Issues Affecting Our Region

**Minutes of October 8, 2014 Bimonthly Meeting**

Chairman Kuhn asked for a motion on the October 8, 2014 bimonthly minutes. Commissioner Ehram made a motion to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Ross to accept the October 8, 2014 bimonthly meeting minutes and the motion was carried unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report**

Secretary-Treasurer Burke gave the treasurers report. Ms. Burke said the September 30, 2014 balance in all MRRPC accounts was \$227,317.27 and the October 31, 2014 ending balance was \$204,529.53. She reported the beginning balance in October 31, 2014 was \$204,529.53 and November 30, 2014 balance was \$208,412.55.

Ms. Burke said the Business Capital Fund (BCF) began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$265,683.83. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included loan repayments of \$11,133.38, interest earned of \$82.25, a transfer of \$35,094.01 to the BCF Sequester account, and MRRPC administrative expenses of \$2,275 leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$239,530.45. The BCF Sequester Account began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$333,750.05. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included interest earned of \$130.88, a deposit of \$35,094.01 from BCF I account, and an interest payment of \$94.65 to the U.S. Treasury leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$368,880.29.

Ms. Burke said the Business Capital Fund 2 began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$61,666.17. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included loan repayments of \$953.62, interest earned of \$20.12, a transfer of \$2,626.54 to the BCF 2 Sequester account, and MRRPC administrative expenses of \$230 leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$59,783.37. Ms. Burke said the Business Capital Fund 2 Sequester Account began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$155,254.56. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included interest earned of \$58.52, an interest payment to the U.S. Treasury of \$54.01, and a deposit of \$2,626.54 from the BCF 2 account leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$157,885.61.

Ms. Burke said the CMV Growth Development Fund began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$39,982.55. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included loan repayments of \$518.50 and interest earned of \$6.97 leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$40,508.02. Ms. Burke said the CMV Growth Development Fund Sequester Account began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$164,072.07. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included interest earned of \$28.31 and an interest payment to the U.S. Treasury of \$74.50 leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$164,025.88.

The La Crosse County Business Fund began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$51,817.17. Activity from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included loan repayments of \$1,420, interest earned of \$14.29, and a transfer to the La Crosse County Business Fund Sequester Account of \$6,434.36 leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$46,817.10. Ms. Burke said the La Crosse County Economic Development Fund Sequester Account began with an October 1, 2014 balance of \$74,510.53. Activity in this account from October 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 included interest earned of \$26.59, a deposit of \$6,434.36 from the La Crosse County Business Fund, and a \$62.75 payment to the U.S. Treasury leaving a November 30, 2014 balance of \$80,908.73.

Commissioner Ehram made a motion to approve the treasurer's reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Twidt and approved unanimously.

**Decision on Adoption of Regional Comprehensive Plan – Resolution Number 2014.12.10.01**

Chairman Kuhn asked to a motion to approve Resolution 2014.12.10.01 whereby the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission adopts the Regional Comprehensive Plan titled *Rising as a Region, A Regional Comprehensive Plan for the Mississippi River Region 2014-2034*. Commissioner Schroeder made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2014.12.10.01 and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Purdy. Chairman Kuhn asked if there was any discussion and a motion was made to amend the plan to include the Wisconsin DNR on Page 9-12, Item 7.12(e) under the "Role" column. A motion was then made by Commissioner Schroeder to amend the plan including the proposed change; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Ross, and approved unanimously. Commissioner Savage stated that on Page 5-1 the last paragraph should read Northeastern Monroe County and Eastern Jackson County instead of Northeastern Monroe County and Western Jackson County. Mr. Savage then made a motion to include this amendment; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Purdy, and approved unanimously. Chairman Kuhn asked if there was any further discussion and asked that the plan be approved as amended. There was no further discussion and the plan was unanimously approved as amended.

**Decision on Pepin County Farmland Preservation Plan Contract**

Mr. Bonifas presented a contract between Pepin County and the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission for the purpose of updating Pepin County's Farmland Preservation Plan. Chairman Kuhn asked if there were any questions or discussion on the contract. He then asked for a motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Murray made a motion to approve the contract between Pepin County and the MRRPC; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved unanimously.

**Report on Scenic Mississippi Regional Bus Service, Serving Crawford, Vernon and La Crosse Counties**

Mr. Fletcher reported the Scenic Mississippi Regional Bus Service has been in operation for 2 years and over that time ridership has grown. He said in 2013 the service had 13,000 in ridership and in 2014 the ridership eclipsed 15,000. He said ridership is expected to grow. He also reported that a few weeks ago one of the busses was side swiped by a vehicle but there were no injuries except to the person who struck the bus.

Mr. Fletcher said ridership from Western Technical College and UW-L students has doubled. Commissioner Ehram asked about the finances to keep the service operating. Mr. Fletcher explained the service is operated under a shared ride agreement with the City of Prairie du Chien. He said in 2014 funding from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation was reduced and will be reduced again in 2015. He said we look month to month and keep moving forward. He said in 2014 the service secured a Bremer Grant and also reduced service by 20% while increasing ridership levels. He said the route between Prairie du Chien and La Crosse has increased. He said the service also receives support from area businesses. Commissioner Borreson asked about capital reserves and what happens in case of an accident. Mr. Fletcher explained the service has a contracted provider. Commissioner Carney asked if some service routes were reaching capacity. Mr. Fletcher said one of the morning routes between Viroqua and La Crosse reaches capacity at times but a new bus is coming that may help with this. Commissioner Carney asked if fares remained constant and Mr. Fletcher said the fare has remained at a \$3 one-way fare.

**Old Business, New Business and Adjourn**

Chairman Kuhn asked if there was any old business. He then asked if there was any new business. Commissioner Schroeder said the Trenton Town Board just approved a conditional use permit for Fairmount Minerals to expand and in turn create 70 new jobs. The Town approved the permit and it will move on to the County Board. Mr. Schroeder thanked Fairmount for choosing Hager City. He said they are a good neighbor. Mr. Kuhn asked if their mines were underground. Mr. Schroeder said they were. Commissioner Ross said he wanted to reiterate what Commissioner Schroeder said. He said Fairmount has good land management practices and are very easy to work with. Commissioner Jaekel asked if the proposed multi-million dollar facility in Hager City would be contracted locally. The mining company responded they contract locally as much as they can. Commissioner Jaekel thanked the company for doing that.

Mr. Flogstad said staff brought copies of the final environmental impact statement on the Badger Coulee Transmission line project. Each EIS was addressed to a Commissioner and all were delivered to the MRRPC office. There was then some discussion on this project.

Chairman Kuhn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Schroeder made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Twidt and unanimously approved.

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Vicki Burke, Secretary-Treasurer