



**MISSISSIPPI RIVER
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**
811 Monitor Street, Suite 201
La Crosse, WI 54603
Phone: (608) 785-9396
Email: plan@mrrpc.com
Website: mrrpc.com

James Kuhn, Cashton, WI
Chairman
Bill E. Schroeder, Hager City, WI
Vice Chairman
Vicki Burke, Holmen, WI
Secretary & Treasurer
Jon Bingol, La Crosse, WI
Executive Director

MINUTES
MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MRRPC)
BIMONTHLY MEETING

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 11, 2025

Altra Federal Credit Union Operations Building, 1700 Oak Forest Drive, Onalaska, WI 54650

Call to Order at 10:00 am

Chairman Kuhn called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked for the roll call. A quorum was present. There were several guests in attendance: Hetti Brown, Executive Director, Couleecap, Katy Glynn, ENGIE, Rebecca Giroux, WHEDA, Roxie Anderson, Monroe County Land Use Planner, Francis Schelfhout, WIDOT, Sherry Quamme, Mississippi River Parkway Commission, Rebecca Gluen, Administrative Coordinator, Trempealeau County, Chen Yuan. The attendance roster is attached.

Minutes of April 9, 2025, Bimonthly Meeting

Chairman Kuhn asked for a motion on the April 9, 2025, bimonthly meeting minutes. Commissioner Twidt made a motion to approve the April 9, 2025, bimonthly meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sorge. Chairman Kuhn asked if there were any questions or comments and hearing none, the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Secretary Burke reported that on April 1, 2025, the balance in all accounts was \$486,013.10 and on May 31, 2025, the ending balance in all accounts was \$479,898.83. She reported the beginning balance on April 1, 2025, in all Revolving Loan Fund accounts was \$1,406,469.87 and the ending balance in all accounts on May 31, 2025, was \$1,433,584.24. Commissioner Borreson made a motion to approve the treasurer's report as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McMillen-Urell. Chairman Kuhn asked if there were any questions or comments, and the Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.

Presentation by Hetti Brown, Executive Director, Couleecap – Affordable Housing

Ms. Brown made a presentation of all the program available through Couleecap, a community action program serving La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon, Crawford Counties. She discussed the achievements of the past year including securing stable housing for hundreds of individuals and families, improving energy efficiency in homes, reducing both costs and environmental impacts, providing access to food and basic needs for those facing hardship, empowering local entrepreneurs through small business support, and offering personalized financial counselling and employment services. She also discussed their latest building project in La Crosse of building affordable housing.

Presentation by Francis Schelfhout, WI DOT – Mississippi River Trail (MRT)

Francis Schelfhout, WI DOT discussed the Mississippi River Trail (MRT). He said the goal for the MRT is to be made a formal designation through the 8 Wisconsin Great River Road Counties with signage along the route. He said that identifying and confirming the route through municipalities is the first step and then the next step is passing a formal resolution to support the local route and Statewide effort and then sign and designate the MRT.

Providing Planning and Economic Development Services to Improve the Environment, Economy and Quality of Life

•Land Use Planning and Zoning Assistance • Transportation Planning • Economic Development Planning • Recreation Planning • Business Lending • Grant Writing • Economic Data Dissemination • Assisting Local Interests in Responding to State, Federal and Private Programs • Advisory Services on Planning and Development Issues • Coordinator for Programs and Activities • Advocate on Issues Affecting the Region

Decision on Resolution in Support of the Mississippi River Trail

Chairman Kuhn asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Schelfhout about the Mississippi River Trail and hearing none, a motion was made by Commissioner McMillan Urell and seconded by Commissioner Chown to approve the MRRPC Resolution in support of the Mississippi River Trail as presented, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Presentation by Katy Glynn of ENGIE North America on Performance Contracting WI Stat. 66.0133

Ms. Glynn of ENGIE North America gave a presentation about how her Energy Service Company assists with private public partnerships to enable these entities to utilize energy more efficiently and economically.

Decision on MRRPC Bylaws

Mr. Bingol reported that the bylaws were sent out to all the commissioners at the end of May to make sure commissioners had them to review 10 days before the meeting. He said that all the suggestions from the Executive Committee were included in the draft sent out to commissioners. He said that at this meeting this was an opportunity for all the commissioners to provide some input and feedback to make changes to the bylaws. After discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Schlesselman to send the MRRPC Bylaws back to the Executive Committee for review regarding meeting attendance and seconded by Commissioner Twidt and the motion was unanimously approved.

Decision on Resolution to Approve Joining the State Income Continuation Insurance Policy

Mr. Bingol reported that the State of Wisconsin offers Income Continuation Insurance which the commission does not currently have, and the program is currently on a premium holiday. To be part of the program, he said that the commission needs to pass a resolution to enroll in the program and currently there is no cost to the commission. After discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Burke to approve the resolution to offer employees of the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission the benefit to enroll in the State of Wisconsin Income Continuation Insurance Policy and seconded by Commissioner McMillan Urell and the motion was unanimously approved.

Update of 8 County USDA RPN and RBDG

Mr. Bingol reported that the eight-county plan is set to be completed by the end of July. All the information that has been collected from the surveys and the public engagement meetings was incorporated into the plan and now the group is homing in on all the trails, community events, hunting and fishing and other outdoor activities as well as water activities and kayaking.

Decision on contract for La Crosse County HMP

Mr. Bingol reported that BRIC grants through FEMA and Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) have ended through Executive Order, but La Crosse County has budgeted to complete their Hazard Mitigation Plan Revision without the BRIC grant funds and asked the commission to help with the revision. He said that even though the BRIC funds are not available the plan is still bound by the same requirements set out by FEMA. After discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Burke to enter into a contract between La Crosse County and the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission to complete a Hazardous Mitigation Plan and seconded by Commissioner Seipel and the motion passed unanimously.

Update on HMPs---Ho-Chunk Nation, Monroe, Pierce, Trempealeau, Crawford, and Vernon Counties

Mr. Bingol reported that the Ho-Chunk Nation's final plan has been approved, and Jackson County has decided to complete their Hazardous Mitigation Plan revision on their own, but Mr. Bingol said that we will assist them if they need additional help. He said that the other plans are finishing and the process of getting approved resolutions to adopt their plans from the municipalities in their counties is underway.

Decision on contract for City of Arcadia Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Bingol reported that the City of Arcadia sent out RFPs for a comprehensive plan, outdoor recreation plan, and a historic preservation plan. He said that he had submitted a proposal to the city, and they chose MRRPC to do the comprehensive plan, but the commission could also be potentially chosen to complete an outdoor recreation plan and a historic preservation in the future. After discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Burke to approve a contract between the City of Arcadia and the Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission to complete a comprehensive plan revision and seconded by Commissioner Gulbranson and the motion was unanimously approved.

Discuss open meetings law and records request procedures

Mr. Bingol reported that the MRRPC has received some records requests and that he has been following the state statute in reply to the requests. The process includes recognizing what they are requesting and then evaluating the request and the time to gather the information for the request. All the regional planning commissions in the state have been involved in these requests. He said that he has consulted with the State Department of Justice to interpret the state statute.

Update on Transportation Activities

Mr. Bingol reported that he and Mr. Harwood had just attended the quarterly transportation meeting of the state RPCs and MPOs, and WisDOT in Madison. He said that legislation that had been previously paused, which was called the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act has now been reinstated and renamed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which will allow the previous projects to continue moving forward. Mr. Harwood also reported that the La Crosse MPO is also pursuing a Regional Transit Authority Grant to assist with regional transportation needs including the SMRT Bus and work with the Port Authority continues.

Update on MRRPC Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Bingol reported that work on the MRRPC Region Comprehensive Plan is progressing. He said the existing conditions will be completed soon. He said that 6 commissioners have volunteered to serve on the committee and welcomed any others who would like to be involved in the process. A survey will be created and sent out and public engagement scheduled public engagement hearings in the region once the existing conditions are completed and reviewed.

Reports from Commissioners

Commissioner Schroeder attended the AWRPC meeting and said that the commission was well represented with Kia, Jack, and Ken presenting.

Director's Report

Mr. Bingol reported that Kia has been updating tables in the MRRPC Comprehensive Plan. He then introduced the new interns, Josh Stratman and Michael Jensen. He reported that more work is being completed on the Black River Trail TAP Grant and engineering firms have been contacted with three responding. He said that deadline is August 23rd for proposals from firms. Mr. Bingol also said that he has been in contact with the City of Galesville and they are interested in revising their comprehensive plan. The City of Durand has also expressed some interest in updating their comprehensive plan, outdoor recreation plan, and their zoning code. He also reported that municipalities in the region are contributing to the \$44,000 match dollars for the WEDC SBDG Grant that the MRRPC was awarded and there are some businesses interested.

Adjourn at 11:45 am

Chairman Kuhn asked if there was any other new business. Hearing none, a motion was made to adjourn by Commissioner Twidt and seconded by Commissioner Schroeder. The motion was unanimously approved.

Vicki Burke,
Secretary/ Treasurer

Date

MRRPC Bimonthly Meeting Attendees	
Name	Representing
John Schlesselman	Buffalo County – in person
Mary Anne McMillan Urell	Buffalo County – in person
Craig Anderson	Crawford County - online
Bruce Strnad	Crawford County – in person
Ron Carney	Jackson County - in person
Brad Chown	Jackson County – in person
Tom Cooper	Jackson County - online
Vicki Burke	La Crosse County – in person
James Kuhn	Monroe County – in person
Dennis Treu	Monroe County - online
John Andrews	Pepin County – online
Kim Seipel	Pepin County – in person
Neil Gulbranson	Pierce County – in person
Bill Schroeder	Pierce County – in person
Richard Purdy	Pierce County – online
Patrick Sorge	Trempealeau County – in person
Phil Borreson	Trempealeau County – in person
Charles Jacobson	Vernon County – in person
JoAnn Nickelatti	Vernon County - online
Nancy Jaekel	Vernon County - online
Jon Bingol	MRRPC Staff – in person
Sarah Ofte	MRRPC Staff – in person
Ken Harwood	MRRPC Staff – in person
Josh Stratman	MRRPC Staff – in person
Michael Jensen	MRRPC Staff – in person
Roxie Anderson	Monroe County Land Use Planner - online
Francis Schelfhout	WI DOT – in person
Sherry Quamme	Mississippi River Parkway Commission - online
Rebecca Giroux	WHEDA - online
Rebecca Glewen	Administrative Coordinator – Trempealeau County – online
Hetti Brown	Executive Director – Couleecap - in person
Katy Glynn	ENGIE – in person
Chen Yuen	online