



TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

EST. 1958

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

456 Fulton St. Suite 401

Peoria, IL 61602

Greg Menold, CHAIRMAN

**(Chuck Nagel, Camille Coates, Russ Crawford, Rita Ali, Autum Jones,
John Kahl, and Danny Phelan)**

Monday, November 18, 2024

9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Greg Menold called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Greg Menold, Chuck Nagel, Russ Crawford, John Kahl, Autum Jones and Danny Phelan. Also present were Eric Miller, Ray Lees, Debbi La Rue, Michael Bruner, Reema Abi-Aker, and Lori Reynolds from TCRPC.

3. Public Input: None

4. Motion to approve July 15, 2024, minutes

Russ Crawford moved to approve the July 15, 2024, minutes and John Kahl seconded.

Motion carried.

5. Executive Director report

- a. Eric Miller presented that he is going to Chicago today with Mayor Ali and Peoria City Manager Patrick Urich to discuss passenger rail service. Before moving to the next phase of the passenger rail project, Tri-County must obtain a passenger rail provider partnership, either with Metra or Amtrak. The service development plan is the next phase, and every project must be listed – every rail crossing, bridge, etc. This could potentially take 10 years. Tri-County received a \$500,000 grant to develop that scope of work, and it is imperative that it is brought under contract hopefully by the end of the year. With the new administration coming in, it is not clear what kind of cuts will be made, so this funding must be locked in.
- b. The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Prioritization Committee has met and developed a recommendation to the Technical Committee who will hear it

this Wednesday, and they will make a subsequent recommendation to the Executive Board at the December meeting. This process involves programming \$11 million of federal funds. Tri-County took four different calls for projects and combined them into one, and staff were able to achieve a lot of efficiencies.

- c. Another project is Water Supply Planning. Tri-County is looking at staffing requirements for that and will probably hire an intern. The project covers a seven-county region that includes Peoria and Woodford counties. This is TCRPC's third contract with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), and it produces a bit of revenue, so Tri-County is happy to do the work.
 - d. A fourth project, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield Assessments, is in the consultant procurement mode, with 11 submissions. Tri-County plans on selecting two consultants and letting them do the work.
6. **Motion to release a Request for Qualifications for professional services to perform FY 25 Financial Audit.**

John Kahl moved to release a Request for Qualifications for professional services to perform FY 25 Financial Audit. Danny Phelan seconded the motion.

Eric Miller presented that although Tri-County is very happy with MH, he recommends putting out an RFQ for other bids, while allowing MH to bid but with a promise that they would change the lead auditor for a fresh pair of eyes.

Motion carried.

7. **Update Regional Transportation Priority List**

Debbi La Rue presented the following report on regional prioritization.

- a. With the last report to the Commission, Tri-County had just begun interviewing municipalities, and staff is happy to say that all are completed but one. Staff will be talking to Pekin tomorrow, after which Tri-County will have an internal conversation to finalize the short list of projects that will come before the Commission.
- b. This has been a difficult two-year process, asking the municipalities what goals they'd like to achieve in the next 25 years. In the last year, staff decided to pair this with the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to conduct a robust regional prioritization process, since Michael was already asking a lot of the same questions for the LRTP.
- c. Tri-County is really going after federal discretionary grants. Staff decided to emphasize projects that are strong candidates and competitive with key themes of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

- d. Staff has been asking the following questions as part of the analysis: Is the project regionally significant, as a stand-alone or as a bundle? Does it have a strong narrative for safety, multi-modality, carbon reduction, environmental justice, environmental resilience, or economic development?
- e. The Regional Prioritization Subcommittee will convene after the Commission meeting on December 4 to go through the proposed list to make sure that the Commission is supportive of it. After that time, staff will submit narratives and other materials to a graphic designer, and they will develop visually appealing two-page layouts that will be incorporated into the LRTP. There will also be stand-alone documents that Commissioners and community partners can give to constituents, public works departments, elected officials, politicians, and anyone who controls budgets.
- f. The final list will go with the Tri-County LRTP in early 2025.

8. Recommendation of Contract with Illinois Department of Natural Resources for Water Supply Planning (Resolution 25-27)

John Kahl moved to approve Recommendation of Contract with Illinois Department of Natural Resources for Water Supply Planning (Resolution 25-27), and Danny Phelan seconded the motion.

Debbi La Rue presented a status update of the Water Supply Planning project with Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR).

- a. Reema Abi-Akar led the last two planning projects, but Debbi will be project manager for this one and will work closely with Else Hayes, Planner I, with a degree in Environmental Science, and Isaish Hageman, GIS Specialist II, with a background in Geospatial Environmental Analysis.
- b. This is a \$72,000 contract to be paid to Tri-County over the course of two years. It will be spread over three fiscal years, to start in January with completion by December 2026.
- c. IDNR requested that staff integrate drought planning, so TCRPC will develop a framework for that. Staff expect this process will lead to other opportunities including grant writing and building out this section of Tri-County's planning capacity.

Motion carried.

9. CY 25 TCRPC Meeting Schedule

Michael Bruner presented the TCRPC meeting schedule for the upcoming calendar year. This schedule will be published in the newspaper per the Open Meeting Act requirements.

10. IDOT FY26 Planning Marks

Michael Bruner presented an update on the IDOT FY26 Planning Marks.

- a. For the federal formula funding program, Tri-County will be receiving \$841,856. IDOT has planned to give provisional amounts to all MPOs for four years because they had unspent funds. Last year was the first of the four years, so this will be year two.
- b. This will mean an additional \$132,249 in provisional federal funds for Tri-County, so that will require the local match to be \$243,526, for a grand MPO budget of \$1,217,632. As TCRPC has done in the past, staff will request that the state help match the \$243,526, then Tri-County will use the local jurisdictions' funding to help match additional grants that Tri-County receives.

11. Other:

- a. Russ Crawford suggested to put out an RFQ for legal services; he feels Tri-County is overpaying. He would like to add this to a future agenda for the Executive Board.
 - i. John Kahl countered that with attorneys charging lower fees, you often end up paying more because they may not work as quickly.
- b. Ray Lees reported that staff have been working on a preliminary salary review of similar organizations in the state. Staff anticipates presenting this information to the Personnel Committee in December. Chairman Greg Menold agreed this would be a good idea for the Personnel Committee rather than the Executive Board.

12. Adjournment

John Kahl moved to adjourn, and Autum Jones seconded. Motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

Submitted by:

Eric Miller, Executive Director

Recorded and transcribed by: Lori Reynolds