



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, August 21, 2023

9:00 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Input
4. Motion to approve June 19, 2023 minutes
5. Executive Director report
6. Discussion and recommendation to Commission of amendments to Employee Handbook (Attachments)
7. Other
8. Adjournment



TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

456 Fulton St. Suite 401

Peoria, IL 61602

Don White, CHAIRMAN

(Chuck Nagel, Rita Ali, Russ Crawford, Greg Menold, Autum Jones, Andrew Rand, John Kahl

Monday, June 19, 2023

9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Don White called the meeting to order at 9:00 am

2. Roll Call

Present: Don White, John Kahl, Greg Menold, Autum Jones, and Russ Crawford. Absent: Chuck Nagel, Rita Ali, and Andrew Rand. Also present: Danny Phelan, and Camille Coates. Staff present: Debbie Ulrich, Eric Miller, Ray Lees, and Michael Bruner.

3. Public Input- none

4. Motion to approve May 15, 2023, minutes.

Autum Jones moved to approve the May 15, 2023, minutes and Greg Menold seconded. Motion carried.

5. Executive Director report

Eric Miller updated on the following:

- We are fully staffed with recent hiring of Gavin Hunt
- IDPA- Water Shed Plan – Kickapoo
- Consultant on Brownfield application
- Comprehensive Plans consultants
- Staff is reviewing handbook and updating policies.

6. Motion to recommend to Full Commission the approval for Salary Range of Full-Time and Part-Time employees (Resolution 24-01)

John Kahl moved to recommend to Full Commission the approval for Salary Range of Full-Time and Part-Time employees (Resolution 24-01) and Greg Menold seconded.

- Eric mentioned this is an annual practice and according to CPI there is an increase of 4%
- Greg Menold asked if this would go into effect in July and Eric replied this is for the July 1 timeframe.
- Greg Menold said we need to work to get more competitive to keep staff and to keep up with COLA.
- Autum Jones added it is good to have research of COLA and support of increase.

Motion carried.

7. Motion to recommend to Full Commission the approval for Salary Increases of Full Time and Part-time employees (Resolution 24-02)

John Kahl moved to recommend to Full Commission the approval for Salary Increases of Full Time and Part-Time employees (Resolution 24-02) and Greg Menold seconded.

- Eric Miller updated this 4% increase is for all staff including management. We put 5% in budget, so we are covered.

Motion carried.

8. Review PROTECT grant.

Michael Bruner reviewed on the following:

- PROTECT stands for Promoting Resilient Operation for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost saving Transportation.
- It aims to:
 - Reduce damage and disruption to the transportation system,
 - Improve the safety of the traveling public, and
 - Improve equity by addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities that are often the most vulnerable to hazards.
- The PROTECT program offers 100% funding for Planning Grant projects that address the climate crisis by improving the resilience of the surface transportation system, including:
 - Highways,
 - Public transportation
 - Ports
 - Intercity passenger rail
- Up to \$45 million is available nationwide for PROTECT Planning Grants
 - A minimum grant award of \$100,000 and no maximum award size
- Applications are due August 18, 2023
- Staff Proposed Project
 - TCRPC proposes the creation of a Regional Resiliency Plan (RRP) spanning the Tri-County area.
 - This project would be consultant-led.
 - The proposed project will include:
 - An assessment of vulnerabilities in the tri-county transportation network.
 - Including environmental risks:
 - Stormwater, as it relates to
 - Erosion,
 - Flooding
 - Distribution of green space and recreation access
 - Heat island impacts (through a tree canopy analysis)
 - An Assessment of multimodal transportation access throughout the region

- All assessments will be assessed through an economic resiliency and social justice lenses.
 - The plan would produce:
 - Grant-ready
 - Coordinated but distinct projects and objectives designed to facilitate.
 - Environmental
 - Economic and social resilience
 - Competitively position the region for federal infrastructure funding.
- Next Steps, Staff will be presenting this at Technical Tuesday Wednesday, and will solicit additional input/ideas, along with letters of support.

9. Other

Next Full Commission meeting is July 5, 2023

- a. Michael Bruner reported on the following:
 - Staff has five TIP Amendments
 - Two are for the City of Washington, with an August letting.
 - Failure to amend the TIP would result in a delay with the project.
 - Staff will have some technology purchase requests to upgrade a few computers and our remote meeting capabilities.
- b. Russ Crawford recommended to have Ways & Means twice a year (budget and audit) Discussion ensued that there has been difficulty in getting a quorum, and that the report is the same to Ways & Means as it is to Commission.
 - Camille Coates said that we can call a meeting if something comes up.
 - Don White suggested to have quarterly meetings and John Kahl agreed.
 - Don White asked Eric Miller if there would need to be by-law changes and Eric Miller said no.
- c. John Kahl mentioned the struggle in getting quorums for Commission and suggested of having 1 alternate.
 - Eric Miller suggested having an appointment for the person at meeting.
 - Don White said there would need to be by- laws revision and Eric Miller said yes.
- d. Don White wants to suggest having a Performance Review for Eric Miller to give him direction.

10. Adjournment

Russ Crawford moved to adjourn at 9:49 am and John Kahl seconded.

Submitted by:

Eric Miller, Executive Director

Recorded and transcribed by:

Debbie Ulrich, Office Administrator

To: Members of the Commission

From Eric W. Miller, Executive Director

Date August 17, 2023

Subject: Executive Director Report for August 2023

Project	Activity	Status
Administrative		
Headlines	Developing informational session on EV Charging Station Grant	Ongoing
	Renegotiated contract with HIRPD for financial Services	Ongoing
	Submitted application for Federal Protect Grant	Ongoing
	Working on Regional Priority Process	Ongoing
	Monitored Federal Grants NOFO's	Ongoing
	Met with Brownfield EPA grant planning team	Ongoing
	Attended IDOT MPO meeting regarding Carbon Reduction Program	Ongoing
	Signed agreement with FHWA on Safe Streets for All Grant	Ongoing
	Working with Communities, drafting letters of support for State and Federal grant funding programs	ongoing
	Developing transportation dashboard	Ongoing
	Attended Distillery Labs open house meeting	Ongoing
	Continued research on Employee Benefits	Ongoing
		Ongoing
		Ongoing
Personnel	Semi-annual staff reviews ongoing	Ongoing
	IMRF Cost Study underway	Ongoing
Website	Content review of website.	Ongoing
Planning issues		
Illinois River Issues	Continued coordination of Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Pilot project	Ongoing
	Continued coordination and outreach regarding Asian Carp	Ongoing
	Continued coordination with USACE for funding opportunities related to IL river/Peoria lakes	Ongoing
HUD Healthy Homes	Work Ongoing	Ongoing
Village of Germantown Hills Comp Plan	Continued discussion with Village board regarding scope of work	Ongoing
Village of Creve Coeur	Continued discussion with Village board regarding scope of work	Ongoing
Village of Bartonville	Work underway	Ongoing
City of Chillicothe	Continued discussion with Village board regarding scope of work	Ongoing
Village of Brimfield	Continued discussion with Village board regarding scope of work	Ongoing
City of East Peoria	Consultant Selection underway	
Watershed Planning	Received NOSA Contract Development with IEPA regarding Kickapoo Creek Watershed	Ongoing
Hazard Mitigation Plan	Work has Commenced Meeting with Stakeholders	Ongoing
GIS Projects/ Asset Management		
Village of Elmwood	Dunlap	Ongoing
Washburn	Peoria Heights	Ongoing
Minonk	Village of North Pekin	Ongoing
Delavan	Village of Washburn	Ongoing
North Pekin	Peoria Park District	Ongoing
El Paso	Tremont	Ongoing
Hollis Park District	Hanna City	Ongoing
Chillicothe	Creve Coeur	Ongoing
Bartonville	Sidewalk Inventory	Complete
Logan County GIS technical assistance	Technical Assistance as needed	Ongoing
Greater Peoria Sanitary District	Technical Assistance as needed	Ongoing
Germantown Hills Map development		
MPO/Transportation		
Technical Committee	Prepare agenda for and coordination for Technical Meetings	ongoing
Transportation Improvement Program	Development of FY 24 Transportation Improvement Program in Public review	Ongoing
	Creation of web based TIP document application	Ongoing
	Processed FY 23 TIP Amendments	Ongoing
Intelligent Transportation Systems	Continued work on update to regional ITS architecture	on hold
Highway Safety Improvement Program Guardrails	Engineering phase underway	Ongoing
Active Transportation Planning	Work with various Stakeholders, coordination of planning efforts	ongoing
Special Transportation Studies		
FY23		
Chillicothe Active Transportation Plan	Project is underway, coordinating with consultant	Ongoing
City of Peoria Intersection Study	Project is underway, coordinating with consultant	Ongoing
City of Pekin Bike/Ped plan	Project is underway, coordinating with consultant	Ongoing

MPO TDM work	Work Completed	Complete
FY24		
Project selection is complete	Developing RFQ's for selected projects	Ongoing
FY 21 State Planning and Research Funding		
Asset Management software	Project is underway, coordinating with consultant	Ongoing
Activity Based Travel Demand Model	Project is underway, coordinating with consultant	Ongoing
FY 23 State Planning and Research Funding		
Heart of Illinois Regional Port District Master Planning	Signed Contract / Attended project Kickoff meeting	Ongoing
Regional Community Planning	Consultant selection / project mobilization underway	Ongoing
FY 24 State Planning and Research Funding	Application Submitted to IDOT, waiting on award decision/letter	Ongoing
HSTP/Transportation		
5310 program Grant	Issued Call for projects	Ongoing
HSTP Plan	Commission Adopted Plan	Ongoing
HSTP meetings		Ongoing



TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

EST. 1958

DATE: August 18, 2023

SUBJECT: Amendments to the Employee Handbook

ACTION NEEDED BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- Discuss proposed amendments to the Employee Handbook
- Make recommendation to Full Commission

BACKGROUND:

Over the past two years, employee attraction and retention has been a priority with the Commission. The Commission has taken considerable steps to make the Commission an employer of choice as it comes to recruitment of professional staff. As a part of the overall employee recruitment and retention strategy, I, in consultation with staff, have reviewed the employee handbook and make the following recommendations to adjust employment policies and benefits of the Commission.

Retirement benefit-One policy that we have discussed at the Executive board level and the Full Commission to a lesser extent is the retirement benefit of the Commission. The Commission's current benefit offers employees a 457b plan to which the Commission makes a defined contribution. The recommendation is to have the commission join the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF). Joining IMRF would set the Commission equal to its peers as well as all Counties and Municipalities in the State of Illinois. This would be of benefit in retention as well as attraction of new employees. There are budget implications which have been considered in the development of the FY 24 budget.

Other policies that I have reviewed and recommend changes include:

- ADA Policy with Reasonable Accommodations (pg. 10)
- Gifts Policy (pg. 16)
- Disability Insurance (pg. 33)
- Flexible Holidays (pg. 47)
- Office Emergency Action Plan (pg. 50-51)
- Work from home policy (pg. 54)
- Business Meal Policy (pg. 55)

All existing and proposed policies can be found in the following document that staff have prepared for your review.

Recommended Employee Handbook Updates August 2023

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Note that anything highlighted in blue represents a suggested change.

ADA Policy with Reasonable Accommodations (pg. 10)

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, activities, programs, and employment opportunities. The Commission complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding disability discrimination and accommodation. To request an accommodation based on a disability, employees can contact the office manager or their immediate supervisor.

Reasonable accommodations are available for qualified employees with known disabilities. For purposes of this policy, a disability is any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. An employee is qualified if they can perform essential job functions with or without reasonable accommodation.

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment of an employee's job or work environment that enables that employee to perform essential job functions or enjoy the same employment benefits and privileges as similarly situated employees without disabilities. Examples of reasonable accommodations include: modifying a workspace to make it wheelchair accessible, providing screen reading software, or adjusting an employee's work schedule to accommodate medical appointments. The Commission does not provide accommodations of a personal nature, such as eyeglasses or hearing aids.

The Commission is committed to providing accommodations so long as accommodations do not place an undue hardship on Commission operations or pose a threat to the health or safety of employees in the workplace.

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission will actively engage in an interactive process with employees who request accommodations to determine what, if any, accommodation can be provided. The Commission aims to process requests for accommodations in a prompt and efficient manner.

Gifts Policy (pg. 16)

The Commission requires all employees to only use lawful practices involving payments to customers, political parties, officials, candidates or governmental authorities. As a result, kickbacks and bribes offered with the intent of inducing or rewarding specific buying decisions or actions are strictly prohibited. No Commission employee may offer to make direct or indirect payments of value in the form of compensation, gifts or contributions to any of the following:

- Persons or firms employed by or acting on behalf of a customer (private or governmental) for the purpose of rewarding favorable actions in a transaction.
- Any governmental officials, political parties or officials of a party or candidate for political office, for the purpose of rewarding favorable actions or influence of the official, party or candidate.

These restrictions are not applicable to ordinary, reasonable business entertainment expenses and gifts of no substantial value. Management should exercise sound judgment and discretion with regard to controlling and authorizing these business expenses on a regular basis.

According to the [US General Services Administration](#), a **gift** is considered to be anything of monetary value. Examples include gratuities, favors, discounts, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance (forgiveness of a loan), services, training, transportation, travel, meals, lodging, etc.

An employee shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit or accept a gift from a prohibited source or a gift that is offered because of the employee's official position. Under the \$20 rule, an employee may accept an unsolicited gift of \$20 or less per occasion and no more than \$50 in a calendar year from one person. If the market value of a gift offered on any single occasion exceeds \$20, the employee may NOT pay the excess value over \$20 in order to accept the gift.

For example, if Tim was offered a \$55 item by a prohibited source, he could not apply the \$20 rule to the gift and pay the other \$35 to account for the total \$55.

For more information about employees accepting gifts, refer to the [US General Services Administration](#) SmartPay guidance.

Employee Retirement Plan (pg 34)

457 DEFERRED SAVINGS/SALARY REDUCTION PLAN

All full-time employees participate in the Commission sponsored retirement plan administered by Nationwide Retirement Systems. For the first ten years of employment, five percent (5%) of monthly gross earnings will be contributed by the Commission to the account of each full-time employee. After ten years of employment the Commission's contribution will increase to 7%. The ten years employment will be calculated from date of employment and will include all approved leaves of absence. For vesting purposes, you are considered to have completed one (1) year of service upon the completion of 1,000 hours of service at any time during your employment year. The vesting schedule is 1 year of service, 10%, 2 years of service 25%, 3 years of service 45%, 4 years of service 70% and 5 years of service 100%. In addition, all full time employees are eligible to contribute tax deferred income into the retirement plan.

ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT FUND (IMRF)

The Commission provides Retirement, Disability and Death Benefits to all full-time employees through Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF).

The Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) provides employees of local governments and school districts in Illinois with a system to pay retirement annuities and disability and death benefits. These benefits are in addition to any benefits provided by Social Security. By working for the Commission, IMRF law authorizes and directs the Commission, as a condition of employment, to make deductions from the employee's earnings. The Commission also contributes to the IMRF program on the employee's behalf.

Employees are considered an IMRF participating member if their job requires 1000 or more hours in a year and they are less than 70 years of age at the time the employee was initially employed in a position covered by IMRF.

NOTE: This policy is only a general overview of IMRF and does not attempt to explain all of the rules and regulations set forth by IMRF. Anyone who has a question concerning IMRF benefits should see the www.imrf.org website or call IMRF Member Services at 1-800-ASK-IMRF (1-800-275-4673).

All decisions concerning IMRF will be made by IMRF and will be final.

457 DEFERRED SAVINGS PLAN

All employees have the option to enroll in the 457 Plan made available through Nationwide Retirement Solutions. The 457 Plan is similar to a 401K plan in private industry. Employees select the dollar amount they wish to have deducted from their paycheck, pretax and also decide how they would like their funds to be distributed. The Nationwide Retirement Solutions representatives are available to discuss retirement options with employees.

Disability Insurance (pg. 33)

Eligibility: From Date of Full-time Employment the Commission full-time employees are covered, without cost to them, under a loss of time disability insurance plan.

Employees who have a medical certification of a disability which may extend for 30 calendar days or more could be eligible for disability benefits under the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (see IMRF Disability Benefits).

Generally, you are eligible for monthly payments up to 50% of your monthly earnings if you—

1. Have at least 12 consecutive months of service credit,
2. Are disabled for more than 30 days,
3. Are unable to perform duties assigned by your employer because of illness or injury, and
4. are not receiving any earnings from any IMRF employer

IMRF's Member Disability Checklist, available from www.imrf.org, can guide you through the disability application process.

Disability benefits may be payable for any injury or illness whether work-related or not.

If your application for IMRF disability benefits is approved, while you are receiving disability benefits, you:

- Continue to earn IMRF service credit as if working (no cost to you),
- Continue to be covered by IMRF death benefit protection,
- Receive monthly disability benefit payments equal to 50% of your average monthly salary based on your salary for the 12 months prior to the month you became disabled.
- Are assured that your future pension would be based on your full salary, not your reduced disability benefit.

For a complete explanation of your disability benefits, contact IMRF at 1-800-ASK-IMRF (1-800-275-4673) and request a copy of the IMRF Disability Benefits booklet.

Flexible Holidays (pg. 47)

The Commission recognizes eleven paid holidays per year as follows:

New Year's Day

Thanksgiving

President's Day

The day after Thanksgiving

The Friday before Easter

Christmas Eve Day

Memorial Day

Christmas

July 4th

New Year's Eve Day

Labor Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. Those which fall on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. If a holiday occurs during your vacation period, you will be paid for the holiday and will not be charged with a vacation day for the day that the holiday is observed.

Commission employees have the option to flex five out of 11 their holidays at the discretion of their immediate supervisor. The flexible holidays are shown in **bold** above. This means that staff have a choice to work on a Commission holiday and take a different working day off in its place, as a holiday, at a different date. To flex a holiday, a staff member must request permission from their supervisor in advance and use the flexed holiday within the same fiscal year.

Office Emergency Action Plan (pg. 50-51)

In the event of an emergency where staff is no longer safe in the Tri-County office, employees should follow these listed procedures:

Responsible Parties:

- For any emergency evacuation event, the Office Manager is responsible for making sure all individuals in the office are accounted for and understand where to meet after leaving the office. If the Office Manager is not present, the Executive Director is the responsible party; if the Executive Director is not present, the Planning Program Manager is responsible, etc. This will follow the administrative order of Tri-County employees as needed.
- If guests are visiting the Commission offices for a meeting or any other reason, the individual in charge of the meeting is responsible for ensuring that all guests are accounted for and understand where to meet.

Policies and Procedures During Evacuation:

- Individuals should take only their essential belongings with them in the event of an office evacuation.
- Once individuals have left the building in an evacuation, no one should re-enter the building for any reason until emergency personnel, building management personnel, or others in charge of the emergency situation give an all-clear signal and/or verbal command.
- All individuals should take the stairs in an evacuation situation and avoid the elevators. If an individual is unable to take the stairs, ensure that others can assist them in doing so to the best of their ability.
- After all individuals have evacuated the office, everyone should stay together and ensure that the responsible party knows where they are at all times.

Meeting Locations

- In case of fire, all individuals in the office should take the stairs to the first floor, exit the building, and cross the street to meet in front of City Hall.
- In case of tornado, all individuals in the office should take the stairs to the P1 level of the parking deck on the Fulton Street side.

Work from home policy (pg. 54)

Employees are able to work from home if their job duties permit it and at the discretion of their supervisor. It is the employee's responsibility to contact their supervisor to request permission and receive direction prior to the request. Reasons to work from home include but are not limited to family obligations, extreme weather, emergencies, and medical reasons. Other reasons for working from home depend on employees' and managers' judgement.

Business Meal Policy (pg. 55)

Employees will be reimbursed for reasonable and actual expenses for meals incurred while on business trips away from their normal business hours. All original receipts must be included with the employee's travel and expense report. Any employee expense report received without the receipts will be returned to the employee. Reasonable meal expenses are defined in the [US General Services Administration](#).

The guideline for reimbursement of tips on business meals is 20 percent.

Alcohol will not be reimbursed.