



**MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES
April 15th, 2025**

Meeting Attendance: Randy Fifrick – Chair, Michael Wodalski, Sydney Turner, Arran Hersey, Aaron Anklam, Laurie Miskimins, Morgan Arnold, Gaylene Rhoden – Vice Chair, Brad Lenz, Darryl Landeau, Dave Meurett, Jeff Gates, Andy Lynch, Ryan VanDeWalle, Mark Thuot, Dave Baker, Dave Faucet (From Domtar), Stephanie Jaecks, Jared Grande

1. Call to Order: In the presence of a quorum, with the agenda being properly signed and posted, the meeting was called to order by Chairperson Fifrick at 2:00 p.m. in the Wolf Room, 1000 Lake View Drive, Wausau, WI 54403 and virtually via WebEx.
2. Public Comment
Discussion: No Public Comment
3. Approve Minutes – February 11, 2025, Commission Meeting
Action: Motion/Second by / Rhoden/Lenz to approve the February 11th, 2025, Minutes. Motion carried by voice vote, no dissent.
4. Policy Issues Discussion and Commission Determination
Discussion: Wausau MPO Bike/Ped Subcommittee.
 - Anklam stated that the committee hasn't met since August of 2023. Now that the MPO receives SATO funds, staff believes it would be a good idea to continue the subcommittee.
 - Example Projects: Safe Streets for All Grant, Major Bike Map update, TAP projects, BFC Award, Regional Projects.
 - Staff would like to see a member from each community that could be a part of the subcommittee.
 - How often would we have this Subcommittee Meet?
 - We would establish a regular meeting schedule over the next year or two. Meetings likely to occur every other month.
 - Establish a time and day of the week so that the designated person can make those meetings.
 - Fifrick mentioned reconvening at the June meeting and for each municipality to designate a member for the Bike/Ped Subcommittee.
 - Staff will follow up with the group to establish a first meeting date (in June) and to set a future meeting schedule to include regular meeting dates and times.
 - **Action: Motion/Second by / Thuot/Rhoden to re-establish the Wausau MPO Bike/Ped subcommittee. Motion carried by voice vote, no dissent.**
5. Educational Presentations and Commission Discussions
 - Introduction of New MPO Commission Members
 - Introductions from: Randy Fifrick, Morgan Arnold, Laurie Miskimins, Aaron Anklam, David Baker, Arran Hersey, Andrew Lynch, Mark Thuot, Gaylene Rhoden, Darryl Landeau, Brad Lenz, Michael Wodalski, Shad Harvey, Jared Grande, Dave Meurett, Sydney Turner, Stephanie Jakes, Jeff Gates
 - Domtar Dam Presentation
 - Dave Faucet, General Manager, Domtar Mill - Rothchild
 - Community Assets for North Central Wisconsin
 - Papermaking in Wisconsin
 - Forest products industry

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- One of the top ten industries in WI
 - Accounts for 11% of the state's total manufacturing jobs
- Rothschild and Nekoosa
 - Nekoosa Mill: Established 1883
 - Rothschild Mill: Established 1910
 - About an hour apart
- The Rothschild Dam and Lake Wausau
 - The Dam provided the mills early operations with hydroelectric power
 - Created Lake Wausau, a key recreational and economic asset to the area
- Challenges Facing the Rothschild Dam
 - Timber Crib Spillway Last replaced in 1964
 - Rothschild Mill has invested \$12M in maintenance and repair efforts over the past two decades to extend its life
- Domtar's Commitment
 - The modernization project is estimated to cost \$84M
 - Domtar seeks a solution to fund this project via cost-sharing funding opportunities at the local, regional, state, and federal levels
 - Domtar will continue to maintain the dam as part of its ongoing commitment to Wisconsin
 - Nekoosa Mill is 142 Years Old
 - Rothschild Mill is 115 Years Old
- Community Benefits of Modernization
 - Recreational enhancements
 - Property Value Stability
 - Flood Control
 - Preserves Lake Wausau
- Future Investments: North Central Wisconsin
 - Domtar will commit to investing \$100 Million in Rothschild and Nekoosa manufacturing operations over the next three years.
- Domtar is looking for letters of support from groups like the MPO. They are also looking for minor local contributions for this project. Rhoden questioned how much funding Domtar is looking for from each municipality.
- Staff will draft a letter of support for the Domtar Dam Modernization project and bring it to the May MPO meeting for review and further discussion.

2:42 meeting moved from Rock room to the Michigan Room.

- Safe Streets for all (SS4A) Funding Opportunity
 - Anklam went through the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant opportunity -
 - Staff believes the grant would be beneficial to the MPO to establish a Safety Action Plan which would then set up the MPO with projects that are ready for implementation grants.
 - The plan would look at crash data and help make recommendations on roadway safety and improvements.
 - Multiple MPO's within Wisconsin have been awarded this and are working on a Safety Action Plan.
 - The deadline to apply is June 26th, 2025
 - Staff are attending a webinar to learn more about the grant and learn how to apply.

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- Local match Component of 20%
 - Can be staff time (not MPO staff time), doesn't need to be cash match.
 - Staff will follow up during the May MPO meeting with additional detailed information including scope of work, and further details on the grant.
 - 2024 Federally Obligated Project List
 - Anklam reviewed the list of Obligated Federal Highway Projects & Funds for 2024
 - STP-Urban & TAP Update
 - Anklam stated that both grants should open in early June and close in October.
 - WisDOT Reroute of Bus 51 / WIS 52
 - Meurett went over the Bus 51 / Wis 52 reroute. WisDOT expects the new route signs to be completed sometime next week. Once that occurs the changes are official.
6. Next Meeting Date & Time, Announcements, and Agenda Items for Next Meeting Date – TBD
Discussion: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday May 13th, 2025, held at 1000 Lakeview Drive, Wausau, WI 54403 in the Wisconsin Room.
- Fifrick mentioned adding the Domtar Dam Letter of Support to the agenda for the Tuesday May 13th, 2025, Meeting.
7. Adjournment
- Action: There being no further business before the members Motion/Second by Rhoden/VanDeWalle to adjourn the meeting of the Marathon County Metropolitan Planning Commission at 3:08pm. Motion carried by voice vote, no dissent.**

Submitted by:
Aaron Anklam, Transportation Planner
Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning
Wausau MPO