

**Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission
Full Board Minutes
211 N. Gear Avenue, West Burlington, IA 52655
December 4, 2025**

Members Present: Brent Schleisman, Dr. Michael Ash, Jim Cary, Garry Seyb, Kirk Miller, Hans Trousil, Kevin Hardin, Steve Detrick, Jim Ferneau, Laura Liegois, Ron Teater, and Mark Huston; Cori Milan, Emily Benjamin, and Chad Hudson via Zoom

Members Absent: Jon Billups, and Brett Shafer

Staff Present: Mike Norris, Sherri Jones, Zach James, Lori Gilpin, Pat Inrachavongsa, and Jarred Lassiter

Guests Present: Chris Kukla (IDOT Transportation Planner)

Call to order at 12:00 p.m.

Agenda Approval

Motion by Seyb to approve the December 4, 2025 agenda, second by Miller. All Ayes, motion carried.

Consent Agenda Approval

Norris said parking lot rehabilitation and striping are complete. Smoke testing was done to find leaks and reduce chances of sewer gas entering finished spaces. Some seals were replaced. Staff are getting quotes on a direct sewer pit vent system to exchange fresh air and vent pit air to daylight to reduce chances of sewer gas/smells entering finished spaces. The NADO national conference was held in September with sessions including housing, AI, downtown redevelopment, and roundtables with other directors. Norris presented on the NADO Impact Award for the Keokuk 600 Block Main Street redevelopment. Financials through September show a negative, mostly due to SEIBUS waiting for its federal transit subsidy for Q1. As a reminder, SEIRPC waited six months last year for federal transit subsidy. Motion by Seyb to accept the consent agenda, second by Liegois. All Ayes, motion carried.

Old Business

1. Department Reports: Norris gave a Housing Department update reminding members that SEIRPC is active in several housing programs. He said staff work with our members to secure housing grants, discuss strategy for problem solving, and to find homes or homeowners to work with. He said private developers are also key partners for SEIRPC to assist and to enlist to solve housing issues in communities. Staff work with developers to understand and help secure outside grants, loans and tax credits, or to connect with communities that have specific projects to complete. James said staff are assisting with grant writing and administrative assistance for the construction of a new Lee County Public Health building at 5001 Avenue O in Fort Madison. The project is wrapping up with a ribbon cutting planned for December 5th from 4 to 6 PM. He highlighted some of the grants that are being administered as well as upcoming grant opportunities. Inrachavongsa gave SEIBUS quarterly ride statistics for 1st Quarter 2026 (July – September). He mentioned ride totals for the Haunted Rails event in October, and the Denmark IA Renaissance Fair and 2025

Community Thanksgiving Dinner in November. He also said SEIBUS has hired Carrie Muhs as a part-time dispatcher, and Heather Smith, Dennis Grizzle, and Allan Ruggles as substitute drivers. No action necessary.

2. Regional Priority Projects Update: James reviewed the general process and timeline for applications of Regionally Significant projects. He said applications were due yesterday, December 3rd and staff completed an initial review based on criteria used to determine regionally significant projects. Board members will be presented with the list of projects for their initial review and will be given until the January 2026 board meeting to provide feedback on any submitted projects. At the January board meeting the list of recommended projects by staff will be presented and board members will have the ability to provide additional feedback until the February Executive Board meeting. Staff will update the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for identified projects to be incorporated as regionally significant projects. Finally, at the February 2026 Executive board meeting staff will present the final list of projects as the updated Regional Priority Project section of the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for approval. No action necessary.

New Business

1. Lease Updates: Norris gave a timeline for leased space in the 211 N Gear Avenue building since October 2010 with the following tenants: Big River Resources, RSM, Trinity Consultants, and Tucker Freight Lines. He said leases help defray building expenses and are subject to property taxes. Both lower-level tenants have informed SEIRPC that they will vacate the premises in 2026 due to office consolidation and possible expansion. Big River Resources has executed their three-year renewal option as of November 1, 2025. Norris said the spaces will be listed with Midwest Realty Group when the spaces become available. No action necessary.
2. New Bank Account: Norris said SEIRPC manages several bank accounts for its various activities. Routine internal business is done through one account which we call "General Checking". ACH payments are becoming increasingly common; however, checks have advantages and SEIRPC pays most of its bills by checks. Staff propose to open a new account to manage ACH transfers which would carry a much smaller balance than General Checking and would reduce the risk of an ACH breach because of the smaller amount of funds available. Motion by Ash to open a new bank account for ACH transactions, second by Seyb. All Ayes, motion carried.
3. Public Hearing: FFY2026 – FFY2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment: Schleisman opened the public hearing at 12:22 p.m. James stated that the requested amendment concerns the multi-phase effort to rebuild the Business 61 route through the west side of Fort Madison. Following is a summary of the proposed amendment: New Description – In the City of Fort Madison, On Ave O from 41st St E to 36th St, and on Ave L from 35th St E to approximately 82 ft W of 29th St; New Project Scope – Removal and replacement of the top half of the existing concrete surface; and New Project Cost - \$3,800,000. **Hearing no additional questions or comments, Miller made a motion to close the Public Hearing: FFY2026 – FFY2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment at 12:26 p.m., second by Teater. All Ayes, motion carried. Seyb made a motion to approve the FFY2026 – FFY2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment, second by Trousil. All Ayes, motion carried.**

4. Land Surrounding SEIRPC Conversation: Norris updated board members on plans and requests from surrounding landowners and Grow Greater Burlington (GGB) for the land surrounding SEIRPC. GGB owns about 25 acres north and west of the SEIRPC property. Commercial development would best fit this area. Decisions have not been made on the business park idea, but would require a RISE grant for road access, and potentially an EDA grant to supplement the RISE. It remains the only undeveloped industrial-zoned area owned by the economic development group in West Burlington. The settling pond has been a maintenance problem with issues including overgrowth into the SEIRPC parking lot, a frequently clogged pond drain which then shoots water over the lawn and sidewalk, and it is an eyesore. Once GGB gets it in a state of good maintenance, staff feel comfortable acquiring the settling pond and adding the incremental expense of mowing the area to keep it in good shape. Foodliner, which owns 35 acres south of SEIRPC, will be approached about establishing a drainage association. Under that construct Foodliner would contribute an annual amount to escrow to fund maintenance of the impoundment that takes their water. Norris encouraged board members to take time to understand the timeline and situation and discuss best suited options. No action necessary.
5. Regional Housing Rehab and Construction Fund: Norris said Cerro Gordo County in northern Iowa has been included in U.S. Rep. Hinson's Community Funded Project list at \$3 million, called the North Iowa Corridor Workforce Housing Initiative for FY2026. The project seeks to acquire and redevelop properties and homes in the county to help alleviate housing issues. He said southeast Iowa should consider proposing a similar initiative to Rep. Miller-Meeks in its four-county region to jump-start existing, valuable, housing efforts. Community Funded Projects are ways to achieve a large, flexible grant, funded through familiar federal accounts, but without constraints of typical funding programs. He said the idea is presented for information and discussion, and if directed, staff will bring back the items for possible action to proceed. No action necessary.
6. Resolution #196-2025: EPA Community Coalition: James said EPA's Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grants provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, alternatives of cleanup, and community outreach. The grant is designed for one lead entity to partner with two to four entities that do not have the capacity to apply for and manage their own EPA cooperative agreement and otherwise would not have access to Brownfields Grant resources. The grant provides funding to assess sites contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum over a 4-year period. The application requires the lead applicant to provide a resolution in support of the project. Seyb made a motion to approve Resolution #196-2025: A Resolution Authorizing Staff to Submit an U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant Application, second by Ash. A roll call vote was taken. All Ayes, motion carried.
7. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Member Appointments: James said the SEIRPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is responsible for reviewing and scoring our Regional STBG and TAP applications each year. Four TAC members have terms expiring in 2025, and two others need to be replaced due to inability to serve. He explained how the vacant positions will change based on the rotation of positions, and how those vacancies will need to be filled. He asked that recommendations to fill the vacant positions be submitted to Executive Board members prior to the January Full Board meeting. No action necessary.

MATTERS FROM THE FLOOR: Board members were reminded to submit Leland McCosh and LeRoy Meyer award nominations by December 19th. Also, full board member appointments begin on January 1, 2026, and resolutions are needed for those who are appointed.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Teater, second by Miller. All Ayes

Meeting adjourned at 12:53 p.m.

Submitted by Sherri Jones

Mike Norris, Executive Director

Mark Huston, Secretary

Date: _____

Date: _____