

Informational Purposes

**Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the
West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (WCWRPC)
Wednesday, June 10, 2026; 10:00 a.m.
Banbury Place, Room 405H, Eau Claire, WI**

Commissioners Present: John Frank, Louie Okey, Joe Waichulis, Paul Berning, Adam Accola

Commissioner Absent: George Rohmeyer, Sharon Kelly

Staff Present: Scott Allen, Erin Whyte, Kim Zimmerman, Susan Badtke

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Frank called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Chair Frank requested that the WCWRPC Office Manager, Erin Whyte, take roll call; quorum was present for the purpose of doing business.
2. **Review and Approve Minutes of May 27, 2026, Executive Committee Meeting** – Frank requested a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by Okey, seconded by Berning; motion carried.
3. **2027 Preliminary Budget Review** - Executive Director Allen gave an overview of the budget handouts, including a breakdown of the personnel cost, levy numbers updated, and future budget items such as a possible car replacement next year. Finance Manager Zimmerman touched on the health insurance costs and mentioned she does not know the exact increase yet. It was decided that the preliminary budget option to be presented to the full commission at the next meeting in July would be 14 employees. The Committee also asked that Zimmerman prepare a budget with 13 employees for discussion at the next Executive Committee meeting in August.
4. **Approval of Agreement between the Neillsville Improvement Corporation and WCWRPC for an O'Neill Creek Trail-West Recreational Trail Plan** - Allen introduced the project, stating that Neillsville Improvement Corporation (NIC) was awarded a WEDC Thrive Rural grant for a feasibility study of a recreational trail between Neillsville, the Highground memorial site, and Lake Arbutus / Hatfield. The project cost has been estimated to be \$30,000 over a 13-month period from June 2026-July 2027. The project will follow a similar process to the previous Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans, but with a narrower scope and more detailed analysis. NIC will handle all grant-related matters, with the RPC providing supporting documentation as needed. Allen invited Senior Planner Ross Pietrzak into the meeting for a brief overview of this project; he explained that it is a great opportunity and may be a future focus in other areas. A motion to approve the agreement was made by Okey, seconded by Waichulis; motion carried.
5. **Approval of Resolution Authorizing WCWRPC to Apply for a USDA Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) for a Regional Agricultural Economy Strategic Plan** - Senior Planner Susan Badtke gave a brief background on this resolution, explaining that WCWRPC staff have been exploring a potential strategic planning project related to the agricultural economy (e.g., ag-tourism, value-added agriculture, supply chains) and pulling together a small group of county land conservationists, UW Extension and EDC. As such, WCWRPC staff are requesting to apply for grant funds through the USDA-RBDG program with an Opportunity Grant. The next round of applications is due June 30, 2026. A motion to approve Resolution 2026-03 was made by Accola, seconded by Berning; approved without dissenting vote.
6. **Discussion on Data Centers** – Executive Director Allen gave an update on the ongoing subject of data centers. He met with Momentum West last week to collaborate on the data center information gathering and new online hub/clearinghouse for educating communities on data centers. Feedback was provided from the Committee which included the need for educating

other decision makers on the data centers. Accola volunteered to help collaborate this movement going forward on behalf of the Committee, serving as a conduit between WCWRPC and Momentum West. This topic will be revisited at the next Executive Committee meeting in August.

7. **Motion to go into Closed Session-** Chair Frank stated- “Pursuant to the Provisions of Section 19.85(1)(c) of Wisconsin Statutes to “Consider Employment, Promotion, Compensation or Performance Evaluation Data of any Public Employee over Which the Governmental Body has Jurisdiction or Exercises Responsibility.” A motion was made to go into a closed session by Okey, seconded by Waichulis.
8. **Roll Call Vote to be Taken –** Chair Frank requested Office Manager Erin Whyte take roll call to go into closed session; motion carried unanimously. Chair Frank requested that staff leave the meeting so that the committee can complete the exit interview of the Executive Director, Scott Allen.

Closed Session 10:38 a.m.

9. **Executive Director Exit Interview-** Chair Frank led the Executive Committee in the discussion of the exit interview of current Executive Director Allen. The following topics and questions were asked that involved his position at WCWRPC such as his most enjoyable part about working with WCWRPC and most challenging obstacles of service with the Commission. Also, items such as upcoming challenges, organization opportunities such as contractual work, were discussed. Feedback on ways the commission could do better to engage with or support the Executive Director. Lastly, any outgoing recommendations regarding the organization and duties of the Commission staff.
10. **Motion to Return to Open Session –** A motion to return to open session was made by Waichulis, seconded by Berning; motion carried.

Open Session 11:08 a.m.

11. **Any Appropriate Motion/ Actions –** Frank asked if there was anything else to be discussed, and no one had anything to add at this time. Frank noted that no actions or motions were needed at this time.
12. **Any Other Business or Updates –** Executive Director Allen stated there were no other business updates at this time.
13. **Next Commission Meeting Date:** Thursday, July 9, 2026 – 6Four Accord, Cameron, WI
14. **Next Executive Committee Meeting Date:** Thursday, August 13, 2026 – Banbury Place, Eau Claire
15. **Motion to Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn was made by Accola, seconded by Berning. Citing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Prepared by Erin Whyte