UPPER EXPLORERLAND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (UERPC)
BOARD MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2026 MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dennis Keatley, Jack Knight, Fern Rissman, Barb Collins (via zoom), Brandi Crozier (via zoom), Darla Kelchen, Brett Devore (via zoom), Leon Griebenow, Bruce Lehmann, Pat Murray (via phone at 2:09 pm), Nina Taylor, Shirley Vermace, and Cheryl Wieseler.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ray Peterson, Tim Burrack, Darla Recker, Alison Holten, Peggy Lensing, and Mark Vick

OTHERS PRESENT: Alicia Wemark, Rachelle Howe, Jodi Emery, Aaron Detter (via zoom), and Diana Johnson

Chair Vermace called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion was requested for approval of the agenda. A motion was made for approval by Knight with a change to item 6, noting that Lehmann should be listed as Vice Chair and Taylor as Treasurer; seconded by Kelchen. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION: Alicia Wemark from Hacker Nelson was in attendance to discuss the audit completed as of June 30, 2025. She noted that she had no concerns and that there were no findings. Several items of the report were discussed, and members were encouraged to ask questions.

Murray joined the meeting.

AUDIT: Motion was requested for approval of the audit. A motion was made Knight; seconded by Rissman to approve the 2024-2025 audit. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was requested for approval of the meeting minutes of the October 30, 2025, meeting. A motion was made for approval by Lehmann; seconded by Wieseler. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

OFFICERS: A motion was made by Kelchen; seconded by Keatley to approve the following slate of officers for 2026 as presented by the nominating committee: Shirley Vermace, Chair; Bruce Lehmann, Vice Chair; Diana Johnson, Secretary; and Nina Taylor, Treasurer. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously. Vermace, Lehmann and Taylor abstained from the vote.

DISBURSEMENTS: Emery presented the list of disbursements from October 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025 to the board for review. A motion was made by Taylor; seconded by Griebenow to approve these disbursements for UERPC. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER REPORT: Emery also presented the treasurer's report to the board for review. A motion was made by Wieseler; seconded by Lehmann to approve the treasurer's report as presented. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

FY '26 LOCAL MATCH: Howe stated that UERPC knows the local match dollars from Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is $4,737.42 and Economic Development Authority (EDA) is $3,800 for each of the counties for fiscal year 2026 but will not know the match for the Department of Transportation (DOT), however that amount will not be over $6,402. A motion was made by Griebenow; seconded by Keatley to approve this match from each of the counties. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

CONTRACTS: Howe read Resolution #2026-01 authorizing the Executive Director and Department Heads to sign contracts and grants. A motion was made by Kelchen; seconded by Rissman to approve Resolution #2026-01. A roll call vote was taken with all members voting aye. No further discussion. Motion carried.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: Howe presented the Conflict-of-Interest policy and asked board members to read over, indicate any conflicts, and sign. A motion was made by Keatley; seconded by Wieseler to approve the Conflict-of-Interest policy as presented. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

CAPITALIZATION POLICY: Emery presented and discussed the one change to the Capitalization and Disposition policy of updating the dollar amount. A motion was made by Murray; seconded by Lehmann to approve the Capitalization and Disposition policy as presented. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

NEWSPAPER: A motion was made by Lehmann; seconded by Wieseler to approve the Oelwein Daily Register as the official newspaper of the commission. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

MILEAGE RATE: A motion was made by Kelchen; seconded by Keatley to continue with the federal mileage rate, which is currently at .725 cents. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

POSTINGS: Johnson explained that UERPC agendas are posted at the front door and back door of the building and on the bulletin board inside the office. In addition, the agenda is posted on the UERPC website. Agendas are normally posted on the Friday before the normally scheduled Thursday quarterly meeting. A motion was made by Knight; seconded by Griebenow to continue with these posting locations. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

LAWFUL CUSTODIAN: Howe explained that through open meetings training, it was determined that UERPC should appoint someone as lawful custodian. A motion was made by Lehmann; seconded by Taylor to appoint the Executive Director of Upper Explorerland as the lawful custodian of UERPC's public records. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS: Howe explained the board seat appointments that were up for re-election in each county. They are as follows: Fern Rissman, Allamakee; Darla Kelchen, Clayton; Bruce Lehmann, Fayette; Shirley Vermace, Winneshiek; and Mark Vick, Winneshiek. These re-appointments have been approved by each county supervisor group and are appointed for a three-year term.

RLF UPDATE: Johnson stated that there had been no RLF meeting since the last commission board meeting so there was nothing to report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE: Howe prepared a director's report and sent it within the board packets. She highlighted her recent training on open meetings, the Housing Summit next week in Calmar and her upcoming legislative visits to Des Moines.

Collins left the meeting.

FLOOR ITEMS: Vermace discussed the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) coming to Winneshiek County on March 25 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm and Keatley stated they are also visiting Allamakee around that date. Knight asked about a data center ordinance.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2026, at 1:00 pm or as called by the Chair.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Taylor; seconded by Kelchen to adjourn the meeting. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

The above constitutes my interpretation of the matters discussed and the decisions reached. Please contact the undersigned for any corrections or omissions.

/s/ Diana Johnson, Recording Secretary