

**OMAHA–COUNCIL BLUFFS METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING AGENCY  
COUNCIL OF OFFICIALS MEETING MINUTES**

October 9, 2024

The October 9, 2024 Council of Officials Meeting was held at Holiday Inn & Suites Council Bluffs – I-29 at 2202 River Road, Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501. Registration and dDinner began at 5:30 p.m.

A. Welcome & Introductions:

1. Call to Order and Introductions – President Festersen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Scott Belt	Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors
Angi Burmeister	Commissioner, Sarpy County
Pete Festersen	City Council President, City of Omaha
Roger Garcia	County Commissioner, Douglas County
Cindy Grove	Mayor, City of Valley
Allen Hadfield	Mayor, City of Treynor
Sharron McNutt	Mayor, Silver City
Don Rowe	Council Member, City of Omaha
Matthew Walsh	Mayor, City of Council Bluffs
Angie Winquist	Mayor, City of Glenwood

Other Guests:

Kevin Bell	Project Manager, Rails & Trails Conservancy
Lance Brisbois	Deputy Director, Golden Hills
Cale Brodersen	Associated City Planner, City of LaVista
Lauren Cencic	CEO, Metro Transit
Paula Dennison	City Administrator, City of Gretna
Steve Dennison	Guest of City of Gretna
Cait Dumas-Hein	Associate Director, Bike Walk Nebraska
Amber Farnan	City Administrator/Finance Director, City of Glenwood
Bruce Fountain	Community Development Director, City of LaVista
Jeff Franco	Executive Director, Pottawattamie County Conservation Board
Cameron Gales	City Administrator, City of Valley
Brandon Garrett	City Administrator, City of Council Bluffs
Jamie Hansen	Founder, Alloy Solutions
Lauren Helgersen	Guest
Luke Hoffman	Executive Director, Iowa Bicycle Coalition
Eric Hough	President of the Pottawattamie County Conservation Board
Kylie Jacott	Promotions & Outreach Coordinator, Pottawattamie County Conservation
Board	
Chris Meeks	Government & Community Relations Strategist, OPPD
Craig Mielke	Senior Project Manager, Benesch
Dave Morgan	Budget, Omaha Public Power District
Melissa Peterson	Chief Marketing Officer, TS Banking
Erin Porterfield	Executive Director, Heartland Workforce Solutions
Dessie Redmond	Owner, Full Fledge Brewing Company
Marshall Redmon	Owner, Full Fledge Brewing Company
Tori Schuetz	Deputy City Administrator, City of Gretna
Dakotah Smith	Planning Commissioner, Douglas County
Chris Solberg	Deputy Community Development Director, City of LaVista
Keith Station	Deputy Chief of Staff, City of Omaha
Taylor Sterba	Communication and Outreach Coordinator, Bike Walk Nebraska
Mark Stursma	Deputy City Administrator, City of Papillion

Tyler Trout	City Administrator, City of Avoca
Eric Williams	Natural Resources Planner, Papio NRD
Greg Youell	Planner, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
Robert Zaruba	Bennington Planning Commissioner, City of Bennington

MAPA Staff:

Grant Anderson	Natasha Barrett	Christina Brownell	Lindsey Button	Sue Cutsforth
Elise Emanuel	Rachel Goettsch	Bradley Grefe	Mia Haschenburger	Laura Heilman
Michael Helgersen	Saul Lopez	Carlos Morales	Ryan Ossell	Connie Viner
Jodi Woolery	Elizabeth Zeller			

- B. Welcome Pottawattamie County & City of Council Bluffs – Pottawattamie County Supervisor Scott Belt, and Mayor Matt Walsh, City of Council Bluffs, welcomed MAPA members and guests to the 2024 MAPA Council of Officials Annual Meeting.
- C. Business – **(ACTION)**
1. Approval of the June 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- Motion by Winkquist, Second by Belt to approve the March 13, 2024 meeting minutes. Motion carried.
- D. Director's Remarks - (Information)  
Mr. Helgersen provided an update on MAPA projects and activities; MAPA's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan; and presented the 2024 MAPA Annual Report.
- E. Keynote Speaker – Kevin Belle, Project Manager for the Great American Rail Trail at Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC)  
Mr. Belle shared about the mission of RTC, as the Nation's largest trails, walking and biking advocacy organization, to build a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. Mr. Belle presented on key MAPA-area projects along the Great American Rail-Trail, including the First Ave Trail in Council Bluffs; and shared strategies for building trail networks and moving projects forward.
- F. 2024 Regional Award Presentations – President Pete Festersen & Chairman Matt Walsh
1. Regional Service Award Presentation – Pottawattamie Conservation  
Supervisor Belt presented the Regional Service Award to Pottawattamie Conservation. Each year MAPA presents the Regional Service award at our Annual Meeting to honor an organization whose efforts have had an extraordinarily positive influence on MAPA's six-county region. Pottawattamie Conservation, with the support of the Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors, has demonstrated exemplary leadership in the conservation of unique natural resources and contributing to regionally significant recreational facilities. The development of the Lewis & Clark Trail, the sustainably designed Heartwood Pavilion at Hitchcock Nature Center, and the enhancement of the Mt. Crescent Ski Area has increased access to high-quality public land and recreational opportunities in the MAPA region.
  2. Regional Citizenship Award Presentation – Mayor Cindy Grove, Valley, NE  
President Festersen presented the Regional Citizenship Award to Mayor Cindy Grove, City of Valley, Nebraska. Each year MAPA presents the Regional Citizenship award to honor an individual whose remarkable efforts have had a significant and positive influence on MAPA's six-county region. Mayor Grove has demonstrated strong leadership during times of rapid growth and change in the region; and played an instrumental role in initiatives such as the Community Collaboration Group, the comprehensive Community Needs Assessment, and the Western Douglas County Planning Collaborative.
- G. Adjournment – President Festersen adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.