

RPA18

Regional Planning Affiliation - Region 18 Policy Board and Technical Committee Meeting

Mar 18, 2026 11:00 AM Board Room ▾ 2222 Cuming St, Omaha, NE 68102 ▾

MINUTES

In attendance:

Policy Board Voting Members

- **Charlie Parkhurst** - Shelby County, Chair
- **Richard Crouch** - Mills County
- **Gervas Mgonja** - City of Harlan
- **John Rasmussen** - Harrison County (ALT)
- **Susan Miller** - Pottawattamie County, Vice Chair*
- **Angie Winquist** - City of Glenwood*

Technical Committee Voting Members

- **Jacob Ferro** - Mills County, Chair
- **Chris Fredericksen** - Shelby County, Vice Chair
- **Jamey Clark** - City of Glenwood*
- **Andy Wicks** - Pottawattamie County*

Non-Voting/MAPA Staff

- **Rachel Goettsch** - MAPA
- **Latifa Moro** - MAPA
- **Carlos Morales** - MAPA
- **Jeff Franco** - Pottawattamie Conservation
- **Connie Casson** - Pottawattamie County Trails Association
- **Joe Munch** - Pottawattamie County Trails Association
- **Barbara Johnston** - Snyder & Associates, Inc
- **Scott Suhr** - Iowa DOT*
- **Travis Halm** - Iowa DOT*
- **City of Harlan***
- **KETV crew (2)**

*Virtual attendance**

Charlie Parkhurst called the meeting to order at 11:12 am.

The slides noted the meeting was held in accordance with Chapters 21 and 22 of the Iowa Code and was live-streamed on MAPA's YouTube page.



ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of the Agenda

Charlie Parkhurst called for a motion to approve the agenda. No changes were made to the agenda.

Policy Board: Richard Crouch motioned to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by John Rasmussen. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of the Minutes: March 18, 2026 Meeting

Charlie Parkhurst called for a motion to approve the minutes. No changes were made to the minutes.

Policy Board: John Rasmussen motioned to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Angie Winquist. Motion passed unanimously.

C. FY27 Draft Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

Carlos Morales presented the Draft TPWP and outlined the focus areas for the FY2027 work program. These included implementation of the SS4A RPA 13/18 Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, block talks coordination with local communities, trail development assistance, and working with local jurisdictions to pursue discretionary funding. He also noted that updates to the project selection process align with the recently adopted Long Range Transportation Plan.

Carlos provided an overview of the draft TPWP budget, noting that it consists of federal funds and is organized into three primary work categories: 1) management & administration; 2) regional transportation planning, where a significant portion of the RPA work is conducted; along with 3) TIP and local project-related activities.

He also reviewed the TPWP/TIP timeline, noting that the draft TPWP is due to Iowa DOT and federal partners by April 1. He stated that the final TPWP will be completed in May and submitted in June. The draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is also due in May, with final adoption in July.

Technical Committee: Chris Fredericksen motioned to

- Recommended approval of the FY27 Draft Transportation Planning Work Program (TPWP)

Motion was seconded by Jacob Ferro. Motion passed unanimously.

Policy Board: John Rasmussen motioned to

- Approve the Technical Committee recommendation.

Motion was seconded by Richard Crouch. Motion passed unanimously.



D. FY27 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA/TAP) Project Selection

Rachel Goetsch presented the FY2027 TA Set-Aside project selection and provided a brief overview of the program. The TA Set-Aside program funds projects that are regionally significant, and includes construction, planning, and design (PE) activities. Eligible projects typically include trail development, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and Safe Routes to School projects.

She reviewed the TASA/STBG project selection timeline, noting that the open call for projects and amendments occurred in the fall, followed by an informational meeting in November, with applications due in January, and that the process is now in the final stage of reviewing applications and making selections.

Rachel presented the Great American Rail Trail – Weston to Underwood application submitted by Pottawattamie Conservation. She explained that this project represents a key segment of a larger regional and national trail network and will help close an important gap in the system, particularly in rural Iowa. The project is requesting \$500,000 in Regional TAP funds and has also been awarded \$1,920,435 in State TAP funding. She also went on to explain the project details and discussed coordination with Iowa DOT regarding the Weston to Underwood segment, as the project overlaps both the MPO (TMA) and RPA boundaries. Because of this, additional coordination is required to determine how the project will be programmed within the TIP and LRTP.

Only one application was received for the FY27 TA Set-Aside program. Pottawattamie Conservation submitted for the Great American Rail Trail segment from Weston to Underwood with a TA Set Aside funding request of \$500,000.

To provide scoring context since it was the only project application received, Rachel shared scoring comparisons from previously funded projects, indicating that this project scored within a competitive range similar to past selected projects. She also explained that staff have been working through several challenges with previously programmed projects that have not advanced as expected and therefore continue to roll over into subsequent fiscal years. Because of this, MAPA staff are taking a closer look at those projects that have remained programmed for several years without any further development, and recommending potential amendments, deletions, or reapplications of these projects by their sponsors, to ensure the program remains fiscally constrained and keeps funding from stagnating.

Public engagement for the project was highlighted, noting that 12 comments were received, and all were in support of project selection. This level of engagement, and specifically the overwhelmingly positive engagement, is greater than typically seen for the program.



E. Bylaws Revisions

Rachel Goettsch presented the proposed bylaws updates and noted that the document, formally referred to as the Articles of Agreement, has not been updated since 1997. The revisions are intended to modernize language, clarify roles and responsibilities, and better reflect current RPA-18 operations. She went ahead to review key updates, including definitions of members and representatives, the difference between voting and non-voting roles, and updates to statutory authority, membership structure, and administrative responsibilities.

She reviewed Article IV, which outlines the Policy Board, and John Rasmussen suggested adding the phrase “at the same meeting” to the language in Section 4.03. John Rasmussen further asked about the composition of the Policy Board, including the change from seven to eight members and whether having an even number would create any issues. Rachel noted that she had not seen significant concerns with quorum and explained that the changes were intended to better reflect regional representation, including adjustments to the population threshold and the addition of a Small Community Representative.

Susan Miller raised a question regarding Section 4.02 and indicated that the non-redlined version she was reviewing was not what she would recommend. Rachel walked through the updated redlined version section 4.02 in detail, reviewed the language for voting representatives. Susan responded that the language was acceptable, noting that it allows for continuity in representation rather than requiring changes each year.

Travis Halm asked whether there had been any consideration of including transit representation. Rachel Goettsch responded that it had not been discussed in depth. Travis then noted that some regions include transit providers within their committee structure, depending on how their organizations are set up, and that in some cases transit agencies are already part of the RPA structure and do not have a separate voting role. John Rasmussen stated that this would be more appropriate at the Technical Committee level. Carlos Morales added that the language could be updated to include this.

John Rasmussen asked whether the Technical Committee would need a quorum. In response, it was noted that the Policy Board is responsible for making decisions, while the Technical Committee provides technical background and knowledge for those decisions. Rachel noted that the Technical Committee section is new and that this is the first time that body is being formalized in the bylaws. She emphasized the importance of not being overly prescriptive so the bylaws can continue to serve their purpose appropriately over time. Following the discussion, it was finally agreed to remove Section 5.11 relating to quorum for the Technical Committee.



To conclude, additional changes to the policy were discussed, including generally updating language and phrasing, and clarifying specific sections as noted below:

- 4.10: Updated Policy Board quorum minimum from three to four to match increase in overall membership
- 5.03: Clarified language to indicate Designated Alternates cannot serve concurrently on Policy Board and Technical, at the same meeting
- 5.11: Removed Technical Committee quorum requirement

Rachel confirmed that these revisions would be incorporated into the final version of the bylaws.

Technical Committee: Jacob Ferro motioned to

- Recommend approval to make changes to the March 2026 version of the RPA-18 Articles of Agreement

Motion was seconded by Chris Fredericksen. Motion passed unanimously.

Policy Board: Richard Crouch motioned to

- Approve the Technical Committee recommendation.

Motion was seconded by Gervas Mgonja. Motion passed unanimously. passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

F. Public Comment

The floor was opened for public comment, and members of the public from Pottawattamie Conservation, Pottawattamie County Trails Association, and Snyder & Associates, Inc., introduced themselves and expressed strong support for the Pottawattamie Conservation TAP application.

G. Additional Business

a. Safety Updates

Rachel Goettsch presented updates on the ongoing SS4A RPA 13/18 safety planning efforts and noted that communities are continuing to finalize the safety plan. MAPA will share the completed plan with RPA member jurisdictions and continue to provide support for regional safety initiatives, including assistance with future funding opportunities. The final Safety Technical Advisory Group (STAG) meeting is scheduled for April 14, which will serve as the last opportunity for input on the draft safety plan before it is finalized in May.



H. Adjournment

Charlie Parkhurst called for a motion for the meeting to adjourn.

John Rasmussen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:14pm. Motion was seconded by Richard Crouch.

FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS

- **RPA-18 Meeting:** April 8 - CANCELED
- **STAG #4 - Draft/Final Plan:** April 14 at 1:30pm
- **Heartland 2050 Learning Site Visit** - Detroit: May 11-14
- **RPA-18 Meeting:** May 20 at 11:00am

