

Minutes
DCTA Executive Board Meeting
December 16, 2025
Cottage Grove Town Hall
4058 County Road N, Cottage Grove, Wisconsin

Present: Mathies, Gibson, Hyer, Willison, Manering

Absent: Anders

Also Present: Lauber, Pfeiffer

Ted Olson, Executive Board member since 2011, passed away on Sunday, December 14. Over many years of service, Ted exemplified thoughtful leadership and dedication. He will be greatly missed.

Meeting called to order by President Mathies at 10:11 AM

Approve 11/18/2025 minutes

Motion: Manering/Gibson. Approve 11/18/2025 minutes. Carried.

Consider Financial Report

Motion: Gibson/ Willison. Approve Financial Report. Carried.

Update on CUP Working Group

The working group met in early December. Lauber noted participation from several people that have not been on DCTA committees in the past. The initial focus is on removing conditional uses in agricultural areas that are not ag related and getting draft language for an OA to clarify application procedures. Non ag related conditional uses include mineral extraction, electric generation facilities, asphalt plants or ready-mix concrete plants, and transportation, communications, pipeline, electric transmission, utility, or drainage uses. Members commented that Rural Mixed Use zoning districts also have similar concerns and their conditional uses should also be reviewed. Opt out towns mentioned similar issues with their zoning code. Lauber will send the working group meeting notes to the Executive Board.

Update on January Membership Meeting

Adding a discussion of draft language for a moratorium on data centers to the agenda was discussed. It was noted that towns have significant land use control on this issue through their comprehensive

plans. If a moratorium is enacted, towns then have to look into and resolve the issue within a designated amount of time. Creating this required timeframe might not be in towns best interest at this time. The group decided to continue with the previous plan to have Agard as the main speaker with a Q and A session.

Updates on Clean Lakes Alliance

Members shared their understanding of what they thought DCTA was getting for the \$125 membership payment. Some thought that would include a seat at the table, others did not remember it that way. The CLA has offered DCTA an advisory seat. There was agreement that this pay-to play structure is not an appropriate ask of local governments and there was discussion of whether DCTA should share the concern. There was discussion about how many different government entities (CARPC, DNR, Dane Co, towns, cities etc) are paying this fee and how many of them then do associated work for CLA. There was agreement that CLA does do a good job getting people to the table, but at a high cost.

Update on Dane County Data Center Advisory Committee

The Committee has been approved but not all members have been appointed.

Meeting/discussion with CARPC appointee David Pfeiffer

Initial discussion focused on how CARPC affects towns and the perception that towns get the short end of the stick.

CARPC's role in QTS (data center) development proposal was discussed. Q: Why did CARPC staff meet with QTS and not inform Vienna? A: CARPC needs to respond when someone asks about a service area amendment and let them know what the process is. It was noted that CARPC Executive Director Jason Valerius described the meeting as explaining to QTS "what to expect and some of the processes and challenges that they would encounter" — not limited to the service area amendment process.

The revision of the CARPC urban service area (USA) application process was discussed. Q: Did CARPC reach out to towns on this? A: Probably not as USAs impact cities and villages. Discussion followed on the many towns with urban service areas and the goals of application consistency and to shorten the time of the review process.

How to give towns a voice in development was discussed. CARPC is trying to incentivize cities and villages to communicate with towns early in the process and to talk about down stream impacts. CARPC has no authority require this so they are offering an expedited process as an incentive. For USA amendments, the expedited process would be that if you do all the things (involve CARPC

early, communicate with neighbors, etc), CARPC should be able to make the process shorter by 30 days. This is a carrot to get developers to talk with towns. David has been pushing for this for 2 years. David emphasized: “we can’t vote down bad planning.”

User fees were discussed. It was noted that setting these fees are one of the few tasks given to the BPP. Fees are currently set to cover time and materials. Fees are reviewed by the South West RPC (DOT requires a yearly rate evaluation). David noted that CARPC has a policy for charging what it costs with the caveat, if CARPC can incentivize collaboration, they can then consider subsidizing work. There is a flow chart that staff used to determine if a discount can be given. Hardship and incentivizing behavior are two factors. It was noted that the BPP has not approved the discount structure and it would be a good idea to give them a presentation on it and get approval.

For work outside of the county, CARPC structures pricing to make sure that the work doesn’t come from the county levy. David noted that it was strategic to make connections outside of the county because we are affected by the commutershed, watershed etc. The long term objective is to have greater cooperation with counties that surround us. This initiative came out of strategic planning.

Q: When doing strategic planning, did CARPC seek input from the other counties? A: Regional Development Framework – was the process that did this, Greater Madison Vision. That survey was broadly distributed.

David noted that CARPC is trying to be an educational resource as well as educating on best practices.

The budget process was discussed. It was noted that the BPP has the authority to approve the budget but that hasn’t been done because there hasn’t been a functioning BPP in many years. DCTA would like the BPP to approve budgets.

Regional Development Framework performance indicators were discussed. Plans state that metrics will be developed and there will be an annual report. Q: It seems like nothing is being done on the indicators. A: The last year has been tough because of personnel changes. David agreed that the indicators are an important part of what CARPC does. That work should happen this year.

Supervision of the Executive Director was discussed. There has never been an ED before. The BPP and CARPC by-laws both have provisions for reviewing the ED. DCTA hears complaints that the ED is very pro growth.

The working group on population projections was discussed. David reported that the idea to evaluate the projections came from the city of Madison housing people and the county (Olivia Perry at the County). It was not a CARPC effort. Q: It seemed like it was a group of people that going in all believed the DOA numbers were too low and by consensus rather than analysis found new numbers. A: You are assuming that there is a lot of analysis that goes into the DOA numbers.

Q: What are the negative consequences if the numbers are too low? What problem has been caused? A: I will get back to you on that one, but the likely answer has to do with funding and opposition to density.

DCTA hears that the new projections seem high and there is an impression that high numbers are a boon for real estate development. We hear skepticism and resentment about these numbers, people think the new numbers are driven by developers. CARPC promoting relationships with MABA, Smart Growth Madison, etc increase these optics. David noted that it is better to be in the room than out of the room for development discussions.

We also hear criticism that we don't have elected officials on CARPC.

Adjourn

Motion: Gibson/Willison. Adjourn at 12:05 PM. Carried.