

1 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
2 **NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
3 *June 24, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes*  
4

5 The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was a virtual meeting held on Zoom.  
6

7 **ATTENDANCE:**

8 Commissioners: See attached. A quorum was present to conduct business.

9 Staff: C. Dimitruk, B. Remmers, A. Brunstad

10 Guests: M. Serrano  
11

12 Chair K. Waite called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.  
13

14 **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** – None.  
15

16 **WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, OPENING REMARKS**

17 K. Waite noted this was the third monthly board meeting via Zoom and they have all gone well.

18 K. Waite introduced NRPC’s new AmeriCorps VISTA member Mark Serrano who would be  
19 beginning his service at the end of August. C. Dimitruk explained that Emily Klofft—NRPC’s  
20 current VISTA member—will be joining the NRPC staff when her AmeriCorps VISTA service ends  
21 in August.  
22

23 **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.  
24

25 **MINUTES OF THE MAY 2020 MEETING**

26 C. Dimitruk noted that B. Dubie needed to be added and marked as present on the attendance  
27 sheet for the May meeting.  
28

29 *Y. Dandurand motioned to accept the May meeting minutes with corrections. B. Morris*  
30 *seconded. The motion carried.*  
31

32 **COMMISSION REPORTS:**

33 Finance/Operations – H. Garrett reported the Finance/Operations Committee met on June 9<sup>th</sup>  
34 and the budget is later on the agenda. He reviewed the budget reports. B. Morris asked if about  
35 a reduction in Grants-in-Aid funding. C. Dimitruk replied that there is intention to continue  
36 funding for this program for FY 21 but it was not included in the state’s first quarter budget and  
37 therefore, not included in the NRPC budget for the time being. She noted that the FY 20  
38 Grants-in-Aid program was extended into October to give municipalities more time to finish  
39 projects this year.  
40

41 Personnel – J. Farnham thanked NRPC staff for persevering through these strange times and  
42 doing a great job under difficult conditions. The Personnel Committee and Executive Committee  
43 have preliminarily approved uniform annual bonuses for staff.  
44

45 Executive Committee – K. Waite noted the committee met on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and other than topics  
46 in preparation for this meeting, the only official action was to approve the Personnel  
47 Committee’s recommendation to do staff evaluations in August rather than June.

48  
49 Project Review – B. Irwin stated there was no June meeting but it is anticipated that the  
50 committee will meet in July.

51  
52 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – H. Garrett reported that the TAC met on June 11<sup>th</sup>,  
53 and the main agenda item was reviewing 2021 Transportation Planning Initiative work program.  
54 The board will vote on this later in the meeting.

55  
56 Energy Committee – No update.

57  
58 Brownfields Committee – No update.

59  
60 Regional Plan and Policy Committee – No update.

61  
62 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – C. Dimitruk reported that A. Voegelé was unable  
63 to attend tonight’s meeting and while there is a council meeting tomorrow, no projects from  
64 the region will be on the agenda.

65  
66 Green Mountain Transit – C. Dimitruk reported the GMT board met last week to discuss the  
67 budget, review the municipal assessment rate and updated the staff smoking policy. K. Waite  
68 asked about any impact on the federal grant for purchasing additional electric buses. B.  
69 Buermann confirmed GMT has received two buses already and two more are coming. GMT  
70 applied for the next round funding but awards have not yet been announced.

71  
72 Clean Water Advisory Committee – No updates.

73  
74 Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee – B. Docheff reported the committee met on  
75 June 9<sup>th</sup>. The gleaning program is up and running and while COVID-19 has presented challenges  
76 and additional access issues, there has been a lot of creativity and collaboration to get over  
77 those obstacles. B. Docheff highlighted the online ordering website for farmers markets. He  
78 noted that the next meeting will focus on fundraising strategies to make up for the future  
79 shortfall due to Northwest Medical Center discontinuing their quarterly financial contributions  
80 effective October 1, 2020. B. Morris asked if the fundraising will go directly through NRPC or  
81 through the Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation. C. Dimitruk replied that donations so far  
82 have been able to come directly to NRPC but she would be examining how to utilize the  
83 foundation in the future.

84  
85 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation – No updates.

86  
87 Office – B. Remmers noted she recently finished a mapping project with VTrans to record past  
88 road flooding damage in the Missisquoi Basin to support the web-based Transportation

89 Resiliency Planning Tool. The tool will help identify vulnerable road areas on state and town  
90 systems. This effort only included mapping past damages in the Missisquoi, but NRPC will use  
91 the new EDA disaster resiliency funding to expand this process for another watershed in the  
92 region.

93

94 C. Dimitruk reported NRPC staff are beginning to discuss reopening the office for partial activity  
95 after expiration of last executive order. Currently all staff are telecommuting except for  
96 occasional check-ins. There was a meeting with FEMA representatives to apply for  
97 reimbursement for extra expenses due to pandemic. This would be primarily for the Healthy  
98 Roots Collaborative because of extra hours and purchasing personal protective equipment.

99

#### 100 **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES FOR FY 21**

101 Y. Dandurand reported that the nominating committee put forth the following slate of officers:

102 **Chair:** Kirk Waite

103 **Vice-Chair:** Bill Irwin

104 **Secretary:** Rowena Brown

105 **Treasurer:** Harold Garrett

106 **Chair-Personnel:** Lori Ruple

107 **Chair- Project Review:** Alisha Larocque

108 **Chair- Regional Plan and Policy Committee:** Lynn Douglas

109 **At-large member on Executive Committee:** Laz Scangas

110 **Youth Member to the Board of Commissioners:** Franklin County- Eagan Murphy, Grand Isle  
111 County- vacant

112

113 *K. Waite asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor. None were made.*

114 *R. Noel motioned to close nominations and direct the Secretary to cast a single ballot for the  
115 slate. T. Tatro seconded. The motion carried.*

116

117 J. Farnham reported the following nominations for board representatives:

118 **Vermont Economic Progress Council:** Albin Voegelé

119 **Green Mountain Transit:** Catherine Dimitruk (Franklin County), Bob Buermann (Grand Isle),  
120 Amanda Holland (alternate)

121

122 *K. Waite asked for any floor nominations for the Vermont Economic Progress Council and Green  
123 Mountain Transit. None were made. B. Irwin motioned to close nominations and direct the  
124 Secretary to cast a single ballot for the slate. J. Farnham seconded. The motion carried.*

125

#### 126 **FY 21 OVERALL WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

127 C. Dimitruk gave a brief overview of the Work Program and Budget. The budget has a  
128 conservative approach in terms of both revenue and expenses. There are built-in contingencies  
129 for uncertainty about state funding including an assumed 20% decrease in state planning funds.  
130 For the Transportation Planning Initiative FY 21 contract beginning in October, it is assumed the  
131 state will be unable to cover the 10% match and the regional match will increase from 10% to  
132 20%.

133  
134 There is the addition of two new grants from the Economic Development Administration (EDA).  
135 One is the disaster resiliency grant previously mentioned. The second is through the CARES Act  
136 where the six northern VT counties will receive \$400,000 over two years which can be directed  
137 toward recovery activities. The budget includes a new three-quarter position for two years to  
138 assist with these recovery activities. The budget also includes another position to fill a vacancy  
139 in the Healthy Roots Collaborative.

140  
141 K. Waite noted that even with the conservative budget in terms of revenue, it is showing a  
142 budget surplus at the end of the budget of \$34,000. K. Waite complimented the team that put  
143 work plan and budget together.

144  
145 *B. Buermann moved to approve the FY 21 Workplan and Budget. J. Farnham seconded. The*  
146 *motion carried.*

147  
148 **FY 21 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INITIATIVE WORKPLAN AND BUDGET**

149 B. Remmers reported that the TAC recommended approval of the workplan at their June  
150 meeting and now approval by the full board was needed. K. Waite asked if there was any issues  
151 or areas of disagreement regarding the work plan brought up at the TAC meeting. B. Remmers  
152 said there was not.

153  
154 *J. Farnham moved to approve the FY 21 Transportation Planning Initiative workplan and budget.*  
155 *E. Nance seconded. The motion carried.*

156  
157 **FY 21 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

158 K. Waite explained there was a description of all the committees in the board packet. If a  
159 member would like to add or change committees, let C. Dimitruk know via email or call. She will  
160 assume a committee member wants to remain on a committee if she does not hear from them.

161  
162 **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

163 Y. Dandurand reported that the number of participants in Franklin for Green Up Day was down  
164 this year. There were 50 tires picked up and dropped off compared to hundreds of tires last  
165 year. H. Garrett let the board know that there will be no roadside mowing contracts by VTTrans  
166 this year due to budget cuts.

167  
168 **ADJOURN**

169 *B. Morris motioned to adjourn. E. Nance seconded. The motion carried.*  
170 *The meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM*