

1 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
2 **NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
3 *October 28, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes*  
4

5 The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held virtually via Zoom.us.  
6

7 **Attendance**

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

9 Staff: B. Remmers, E. Klofft, P. Jenkins, C. Porcaro, K. Boynton

10 Guests: None.  
11

12 Chair K. Waite began the meeting at 7:00 PM.  
13

14 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

15 None.  
16

17 **Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks**

18 K. Waite welcomed everyone and introductions were made.  
19

20 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

21 K. Waite asked for comments. There were none.  
22

23 **Minutes of the September 2020 Meeting**

24 *A. Voegle motioned to accept the September meeting minutes with the addition of attaching the list*  
25 *of new committee assignments. R. Noel seconded. Motion carried.*  
26

27 **Healthy Roots Collaborative**

28 K. Boynton from the Healthy Roots Collaborative gave a presentation on the past year of work at  
29 Healthy Roots. Healthy Roots is a collective impact organization with the mission of strengthening  
30 the local food system. Healthy Roots works in three program areas: gleaning, farm & food business  
31 support, and farm to school. They have been housed at the Commission for one year.  
32

33 Just over a year ago, Healthy Roots completed a Local Foods, Local Places Action Plan funded by the  
34 EPA. Through this process they identified several goals including increasing education access,  
35 removing barriers to local distribution, increasing the number of outlets that sell local food, and  
36 build culture of supporting local food. Over the last year, Healthy Roots has provided farm & food  
37 business support to many farmers, including developing an online ordering system for the  
38 Northwest and St. Albans Bay Farmer's Market. Typically, Healthy Roots gleans 25,000 pounds of  
39 produce a year, this year staff also distributed prepared meals, produce boxes, and meat and dairy  
40 to 22 food sites. Staff are developing farm to school activities that can be completed virtually.  
41

42 Upcoming projects planned by the staff are infrastructure investments funded by the EDA,  
43 developing an apprenticeship program, technical assistance through the Restart Vermont program,  
44 and supporting the Everyone Eats program in Franklin & Grand Isle Counties. Healthy Roots staff  
45 are working to diversify sources of funding for organization.  
46

47 A. Voegele asked whether Healthy Roots could form a partnership with the Cardiac & Pulmonary  
48 Rehabilitation program at Northwestern Medical Center to advertise where to buy healthy local  
49 food. K. Boynton stated that she would contact staff at the program.  
50

51 A. Voegele asked about the financial future of Healthy Roots. K. Boynton stated that as a result of the  
52 pandemic, there has been a significant amount of money available for food access work. Farm to  
53 school and farm business support have been harder to find funding for. Healthy Roots staff are  
54 working on a fundraising plan, and are hoping to gain new corporate sponsorships.  
55

56 A. Voegele asked if Healthy Roots staff had worked with the Congressional delegation. K. Boynton  
57 replied that that they have worked with Congressional staff in some instances and found them  
58 supportive.  
59

60 L. Scangas asked to hear from the other Healthy Roots staff at the meeting. P. Jenkins stated that he  
61 has been with Healthy Roots for a year and a half, and has been working on gleaning and food  
62 distribution. C. Porcaro reported that she had joined the Healthy Roots team in August and that her  
63 role primarily involves supporting farm and food businesses.  
64

65 K. Waite thanked the Healthy Roots staff for their work, and stated that he looked forward to the  
66 continued success of the program.  
67

68 **Committee Reports** – See attached handouts for details on the reports.  
69

70 Finance/Operations – H. Garret reported that the committee was recommending suspending the  
71 municipal assessment rate assessment policy for FY22 due to the state of emergency. The  
72 committee also discussed the audit and the FY21 preliminary budget adjustment, which will be  
73 presented at the next Board meeting.  
74

75 Personnel – L. Ruple reported that they met and reviewed employee evaluations. The committee  
76 sent recommendations for increases for each staff member to the executive committee. -  
77

78 Executive – K. Waite reported that they met to review employee evaluations and discuss the  
79 preliminary audit and FY21 budget adjustment. There were no findings in the audit, but want to  
80 ensure that they fully understand everything before presenting it to the full Board. The committee  
81 is recommending one action item related to the FY 22 Municipal Assessment Rate.  
82

83 Project Review – K. Waite summarized the business report. There are several renewable energy  
84 projects and an expansion of the Alexander Estates senior housing project. No Board action is  
85 necessary.  
86

87 Transportation Advisory Committee – H. Garret reported that they met with Chittenden County  
88 Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) in October to discuss the I-89 2050 project. They were  
89 supportive of some elements presented, but skeptical of others. The committee requested that  
90 CCRPC continue to update them as the project moves forward.  
91

92 A. Voegele asked if the project has identified any working solutions to the issues with Exit 17 for  
93 Grand Isle County residents. H. Garret reported that there had been some discussion about an  
94 additional exit in Milton. B. Buermann stated that there is going to be separate Section 502 hearing  
95 about Exit 17. K. Waite reported that this meeting will be held on November 12 at 6 PM via Zoom. B.

96 Morris stated that his impression of the project was that CCRPC's main focus was on the area  
97 between Exit 12 and Exit 15, especially focusing on Exit 14.  
98  
99 Energy Committee – Did not meet.  
100  
101 Brownfields Committee – Did not meet.  
102  
103 Regional Plan and Policy Committee – Did not meet.  
104  
105 Municipal Plan Review Committee: R. Brown reported that the committee met and held a public  
106 hearing on the Berkshire Town Plan. The committee is recommending three action items related to  
107 the plan. The committee also reviewed the draft plan for the Town of Fairfield.  
108  
109 Vermont Economic Progress Council – A. Voegele reported that there were no applications for the  
110 region.  
111  
112 Green Mountain Transit – B. Buermann stated that the GMT Board reviewed FY20 and draft FY21  
113 budget along with a proposal for a pilot micro-transit program in Montpelier that will begin in  
114 January. If successful, micro-transit may be implemented in other areas of the state.  
115  
116 Clean Water Advisory Committee – Committee did not meet.  
117  
118  
119 Office – B. Remmers reported that due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the November Board meeting  
120 will be held in early December.  
121  
122  
123 **FY 22 Municipal Assessment Rate**  
124 K. Waite explained that in 2013, the Board adopted a policy to increase the municipal assessment  
125 rate each year based on inflation. Given the current state of emergency, both the finance and  
126 executive committee felt that it would be a good gesture to suspend the policy and keep the  
127 municipal assessment the same rate for FY 22.  
128  
129 *L. Scangas motioned to suspend the Municipal Assessment Rate Policy for one year due to the State of*  
130 *Emergency, and keep municipal assessments at the same rate for FY 22. A. Voegele seconded. Motion*  
131 *carried.*  
132  
133 **Berkshire Plan Approval and Confirmation**  
134 R. Brown stated that the Plan Review Committee was recommending three actions for the  
135 Berkshire Municipal Plan.  
136  
137 *R. Noel motioned to regionally approve the Berkshire Municipal Plan. V. Hickey seconded. Motion*  
138 *carried.*  
139  
140 *R. Noel motioned to confirm Berkshire's planning process. H. Garret seconded. Motion carried.*  
141  
142 *B. Buermann motioned to find the Berkshire Municipal Enhanced Energy Plan meets the standard for*  
143 *an affirmative determination of energy compliance and is in conformance with the Northwest*  
144 *Regional Plan. V. Hickey seconded. Motion carried.*

145  
146 K. Waite asked if energy committee had reviewed Berkshire's Enhanced Energy Plan. B. Buermann  
147 stated that the committee had not formally reviewed the enhanced energy plan but both he and B.  
148 Irwin reviewed and found the plan consistent with the regional energy plan.  
149

150 **NMC Letter of Support**

151 K. Waite presented on the letter of support to the Green Mountain Care Board that the Board had  
152 requested C. Dimitruk to draft at the last meeting. The letter states that the Board supports NMC  
153 and believes it gives good service in terms of care and cost.  
154

155 *A. Voegele motioned to approve, sign and send letter to the Green Mountain Care Board. R. Noel*  
156 *seconded. Motion carried.*  
157

158 B. Morris asked whether the Board should consider inviting Northwestern Medical Center to  
159 present on a regular annual or bi-annual basis. K. Waite stated he would ask C. Dimitruk to  
160 determine if NMC was willing to present on a regular basis. A. Voegele asked if the Board should  
161 invite the Green Mountain Care Board to a Board meeting. K. Waite stated that he was reluctant to  
162 meet with the Green Mountain Care Board without first determining from NMC whether such action  
163 would be helpful.  
164

165 **Commissioner Announcements**

166 None.  
167

168 **Adjourn**

169 *R. Noel motioned to adjourn. E. Nance seconded. Motion carried.*  
170

171 Meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM

Board of Commissioners  
FY 20  
Attendance

Town	Board Member	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	May	Jun	Total Absences
Frkin Cty Youth	Eagan Murphy	X			X								
GI Cty Youth	vacant		N										
Alburg Town	Alton Brusio		O										
Alburg Town	Terry Tatro	X		X	X								
Alburg Village	Terry Tatro	X	M	X	X								
Alburg Village	Vacant		E										
Bakersfield	Bill Irwin	X	E	X	excused								
Bakersfield	vacant		T										
Berkshire	Vincent Hickey	X	I	X	X								
Berkshire	Claude Charron	X	N										
Enosburg Falls	Leonard Charron		G										
Enosburg Falls	Sean Kio	X											
Enosburgh Town	Sean Kio	X											
Enosburgh Town	vacant												
Fairfax	Colleen Steen	X		X									
Fairfax	Brad Docheff	X		X	X								
Fairfield	Alisha Larocque	X		X									
Fairfield	Brian Dubie	X			X								
Fletcher	Lynn Douglas	X		X	X								
Fletcher	Lori Ruple	X		X	X								
Franklin	Yvon Dandurand	X		X	X								
Franklin	Wesley Kempton												
Georgia	Scott St. Onge			X	X								
Georgia	Kirk Waite	X		X	X								
Grand Isle	Barclay Morris	X		X	X								
Grand Isle	Howard Demars												
Highgate	Vacant												
Highgate	Richard Noel	X		X	X								
Isle La Motte	Sylvia Jensen			X									
Isle La Motte	Paul Hinman												
Montgomery	Charlie Hancock												
Montgomery	Vacant												
North Hero	Andy Alling	X		X	X								
North Hero	Vacant												
Richford	Rowena Brown	X		X	X								
Richford	Vacant												
Sheldon	Vacant												
Sheldon	Jeff Kane												
South Hero	Joe Farnham			X	excused								
South Hero	Bob Buermann	X		X	X								
St. Albans City	Marty Manahan												
St. Albans City	Lazarus Scangas			X	X								
St. Albans Town	Sara Hadd	X		X	X								
St. Albans Town	Albin Voegele	X		X	X								
Swanton Town	Harold Garrett	X		X	X								
Swanton Town	Ross Lavoie												
Swanton Village	Elizabeth Nance	X			X								
Swanton Village	Neal Speer												

# OF MUNICIPALITIES  
QUORUM = 12

18

18

17