

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
**NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
*June 28, 2017 Draft Meeting Minutes*

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held at the Swanton Village Complex in Swanton Village, Vermont.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

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

Staff: C. Dimitruk

Chair B. Buermann began the meeting at 7:00 p.m. by opening the Public Hearing for the regional plan amendments.

## **PUBLIC HEARING, REGIONAL PLAN AMENDMENTS**

B. Buermann and Lynn Douglas explained that this was the second required public hearing for the regional plan amendments. No members of the public were in attendance, and Buermann asked for comments from Commissioners. T. Tatro commented that the Town of Alburgh is working with a wind developer on a small scale project that potentially has towers with a height of 101 feet. Buermann noted the ability to amend the regional plan in response to a local plan as an option for addressing this. A. Voegele asked about changing Public Service Board to Public Utility Commission as the name changed due to legislation passed this year. C. Dimitruk will get a second opinion about whether that is a change that would require an additional hearing. If not, staff can make the change as an administrative correction and if it would require an additional hearing, then a cover memo on the plan can note the name change. There being no further comments, Buermann closed the hearing and opened the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

## **ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:** None.

## WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, OPENING REMARKS

B. Buermann welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

No general public comment provided.

## **MINUTES OF THE MAY 2017 MEETING**

*Y. Dandurand moved to approve the minutes. G. Carton seconded the motion. Commissioners had a discussion about the written staff and committee reports and how best to include them in the minutes. C. Dimitruk will ensure that they are attached to the minutes that are part of the public record. Commissioners discussed the written reports and whether there is a preference for this or the in person reports at the meetings. After trying written reports for a few months, consensus opinion was that Commissioners prefer verbal reports at the Commission meetings in addition to the written reports provided in the meeting notice. Motion to approve the minutes carried.*

1   **BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REPORT**

2   H. Garrett reviewed the budget and financial report through May 2017. A. Voegele requested future  
3   balance sheets show a past year comparison. C. Dimitruk noted that budget expectations through the  
4   end of the year are a loss for FY 17. This was anticipated and reviewed by the finance committee mid-  
5   year and is mainly due to project completion/spending patterns in FY 16 and a copier purchase in FY  
6   17. With the large surplus in FY 16 NRPC should still be in the black over time. Commissioners  
7   discussed future years and the uncertainty in federal and state funding. Commissioners also discussed  
8   reviewing the past ten years of financial history.

9

10   **COMMISSION REPORTS:** See attached written reports for additional information.

11

12   Finance/Operations – H. Garrett noted that the committee just had a joint meeting with the  
13   Executive Committee and reviewed the FY 18 budget and associated financial plans.

14

15   Personnel – R. Devine noted that the Committee presented its recommendations to the Executive  
16   Committee at a meeting earlier that evening.

17

18   Executive – B. Buermann reported that the Committee met earlier and reviewed and endorsed the  
19   Personnel recommendations and jointly with the Finance Committee reviewed the FY 18 budget and  
20   associated financial plans.

21

22   Policy/Project Review – B. Irwin reported the committee did not meet.

23

24   Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – D. Borthwick-Leslie said TAC met and reviewed the  
25   Grants-in-Aid pilot project.

26

27   Energy Committee –B. Buermann reported the committee did not meet.

28

29   Brownfields Committee – L. Scangas reported that there are many sites currently being assessed by  
30   the program. Unfortunately NRPC did not get a new assessment grant, so we will not be able to take  
31   any new sites into the program.

32

33   VT Assoc. of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA) – C. Dimitruk reported on the meeting  
34   with the Senate Majority Leader Balint. S. Jensen stated that she has enjoyed serving as the VAPDA  
35   representative but has been unable to attend meetings and therefore asks that someone else  
36   consider this position when elections are held later in the meeting.

37

38   Regional Plan Committee – L. Douglas noted the Board will vote on the plan later in the agenda.

39

40   Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – A. Voegele reported that the last meeting had no  
41   applications from our region.

42

43   Downtown Development Board – A. Voegele reported that the last meeting had no applications from  
44   our region.

1    CCTA/GMTA – C. Dimitruk reported that the Board adopted a new three year contract with the  
2    maintenance union. B. Buermann explained that the Next Gen study of routes system wide is moving  
3    forward.

4

5    Clean Water Advisory Committee- B. Buermann reported that the committee reviewed the proposed  
6    method of prioritizing water quality construction projects.

7

8    Office – C. Dimitruk provided an additional update on the Grants-in-Aid pilot program.

9

10 **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES FOR FY 18**

11 Y. Dandurand reported for the nominating committee. The following slate of officers and other  
12 members were recommended:

13

14 Chair - Bob Buermann

15 Vice-Chair - Kirk Waite

16 Secretary - Neil Speer

17 Treasurer - Harold Garrett

18 Personnel - Randy Devine

19 Program/Project Review - Bill Irwin

20 At-large Member to the Executive Committee - Lynn Douglas

21 Youth members to the Board- Gracey Adams and Cameron Roy

22

23 Y. Dandurand reported the recommendations for NRPC representatives to other groups and  
24 organizations:

25 Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies – Sylvia Jensen

26 Vermont Economic Progress Council – Al Voegele

27 Downtown Development Board - Al Voegele

28 Green Mountain Transit- B. Buermann (Grand Isle County) and C. Dimitruk (Franklin County), A.  
29 Holland, alternate

30

31 *H. Garrett moved to close nominations and direct the Secretary to cast one ballot for the slate. C.*  
32 *Steen seconded. A friendly amendment replaced Dustin Tanner for Sylvia Jensen as VAPDA*  
33 *representative. Motion carried.*

34

35 **REGIONAL PLAN AMENDMENT**

36 L. Douglas reported on the public hearing that was held May 30<sup>th</sup> and resulted in no substantive  
37 changes to the draft. Commissioners received a final copy that incorporated comments from the last  
38 Board meeting.

39 *A. Voegele moved to approve the plan amendments. D. Tanner seconded. Motion carried with two*  
40 *abstentions. The Chair confirmed that 60% of Commissioners had voted in the affirmative;*  
41 *amendments are adopted.*

1   **REQUEST FOR DETERMINATION OF ENERGY COMPLIANCE**

2   B. Buermann reminded Commissioners that this determination will allow NRPC's plan to receive  
3   substantial deference in Section 248 proceedings.

4

5   *A. Voegele moved to request determination from the Department of Public Service. P. Rico seconded.*  
6   *Motion carried.*

7

8   **NRPC RETIREMENT PROGRAM**

9   C. Dimitruk explained that this was a budget neutral decision that has been discussed at a Board  
10 meeting previously and reviewed by the Personnel, Finance and Executive Committees. If approved,  
11 the switch would be effective January 2018.

12

13   *M. Manahan moved to join the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System Group B effective*  
14   *January 1, 2018. A. Voegele seconded. Motion carried.*

15

16   **FY 18 OVERALL WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET**

17   C. Dimitruk provided an overview of the FY 18 overall workplan. H. Garrett provided an overview of  
18 the FY 18 budget and the long term reserve plan. B. Johnson asked why the brownfields revenue was  
19 up from last year when we did not get a new grant. C. Dimitruk and L. Scangas explained that this was  
20 due to spending on current sites under our exiting multi-year grants.

21

22   *R. Noel moved to approve the FY 18 budget and long term reserve plan. G. Carton seconded. Motion*  
23   *carried.*

24

25   B. Buermann reviewed the building repayment plan. The balloon payment on one mortgage is due in  
26 the fall of 2018 and based on Finance and Executive Committee recommendations options for  
27 refinancing will be sought now to see if there are favorable terms. In response to a question it was  
28 explained that NRPC has sufficient funds in reserves to make the balloon payment if needed, though  
29 it is not preferred.

30

31   *H. Garrett moved to approve the building repayment plan as presented with the change to start*  
32   *examining refinancing options now. B. Irwin seconded. Motion carried.*

33

34   **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

35   B. Buermann read a resolution that thanked Chris Leach for his 20 years of service on the NRPC  
36   Board. *A. Voegele moved to adopt the resolution. P. Rico seconded, motion carried.*

37

38   P. Rico noted she is resigning from the Board due to taking on a role on the school board.  
39   Commissioners thanked her for her service.

40

41   **ADJOURN**

42   *A. Voegele moved to adjourn. M. Manahan seconded. Motion carried.*

## **Committee and Staff Reports, June 2017**

### **Finance/Operations (budget report enclosed) – *Harold Garrett***

The Committee is meeting prior to the Board meeting for final budget review in advance of Board consideration.

### **Personnel Committee- *Randy Devine***

The Committee met June 21 for staff evaluations. NRPC hired two summer field technicians to complete road erosion inventories (Nicole Kim and Ryan Bell), and is still advertising for a new AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer to take over from Adrienne Kaplan; her term with NRPC ends in November.

### **Executive Committee- *Bob Buermann***

The Committee is meeting prior to the Board meeting to review Personnel Committee recommendations and the draft budget.

### **Policy/Project Review – *Bill Irwin***

No meeting and no Board action needed.

### **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – *David Borthwick-Leslie***

TAC met on 6/8/2017 and VTrans staff presented on the 2040 Vermont Long Range Transportation Plan. The TAC also discussed the Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid pilot project and VTrans' revamping of the Project Selection & Prioritization Processes. It is anticipated that there will be a presentation on the Grand Isle County Park and Ride Scoping Study final report at the 7/13/2017 meeting.

### **Energy Committee- *Bob Buermann***

The Committee did not meet.

### **Brownfields Committee – *Laz Scangas***

NRPC did not receive a FY17 Brownfields Hazardous Materials Assessment grant and will not be taking on any new sites. We have funding to see our active development projects through corrective planning. We still have uncommitted petroleum assessment funding. We will be reapplying for hazardous materials funding in FY18.

Active sites and projects:

- 14 St. Armand Road/Machia Estate and the neighboring former Highgate Town Garage Property in Highgate Center
  - Phase 1 already complete for 14 St. Armand Road and just completed and under review for the former Town Garage. As soon as the Town Garage phase 1 is approved, a QAPP/workplan for a Phase 2 on both properties will be completed together.
- 14 Stebbins, St. Albans City VT
  - QAPP/workplan for phase 2 under development
- 1, 3, 5 Canada Street and Municipal Lot at Merchants Row
  - Supplemental phase 2 assessment report due at the end of the week.
- Swanton Lower Dam, Swanton VT
  - Phase 1 completed and under review. We will be holding off on funding additional

phases of this project at this time.

- St. Albans DPW, St. Albans City VT
- St. Albans City Targeted Area Wide Plan. Draft completed, see NRPC brownfields website. Final meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June.
- Swanton Northern Gateway Targeted Area Wide Plan. Draft completed, see NRPC brownfields website. Final meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> of July.

**VT Assoc. of Planning and Development Agencies (VAPDA) – *Sylvia Jensen***

VAPDA Annual meeting was held June 1. Representative Balint of Brattleboro addressed the group and led a discussion about Vermont's future needs and the role of regional planning commissions.

**Regional Plan Committee- *Lynn Douglas***

The Committee did not meet in June. The final draft plan amendments were distributed earlier.

**Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – *Al Voegele***

No active regional projects.

**Downtown Development Board – *Al Voegele***

No active regional projects.

**GMT- *Bob Buermann/Catherine Dimitruk***

A service analysis of the entire region is underway and will be completed by the end of the year. The Board approved a new three-year union contract for mechanics.

**Clean Water Advisory Committee- *Staff***

In lieu of Committee meeting, CWAC members were encouraged to attend Friends of Northern Lake Champlain's Annual Dinner at the Tyler Place held on the same evening. A meeting is scheduled for June 22 and will include a review of project prioritization criteria.

**Office**

Transportation

- Transportation field staff have completed road erosion inventories for Swanton, Enosburgh and Franklin (partial) so far this season. Inventories for eight more towns are planned.
- Staff is developing the FY18 Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI) work program which will be reviewed by the TAC on 7/13/2017 and presented for approval at the July board meeting.
- Scheduled regional road foreman meeting for 6/28/2017.

Emergency Management

- 90% of municipalities in the Region now have updated Local Emergency Operations Plans (LEOPs). The remaining communities continue to work on the plans, which were due May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Completed work on the Saint Albans City Hazard Mitigation which was officially accepted by FEMA and locally adopted. Other pending plans include Fairfax, Grand Isle, Enosburg Falls and Richford. Plans that are submitted to the state mitigation division for review meet the hazard mitigation plan ERAF requirement.
- Currently collecting data along Route 78 and Route 2, US 7 and I-89 (from Canada) for a state-wide Hazardous Materials Commodity Flow Study for the State Emergency Response Committee. Staff

was able to obtain data from the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection for Highgate Springs and Derby Line Ports of Entry.

- Northwest VT Medical Reserve Corps will provide a first aid tent at Saint Albans Bay Day Fourth of July Celebration and is providing CPR and First Aid training to Martha's Kitchen clients. Members were recently recognized nationally for their work.
- Burlington International Airport will be conducted a full scale exercise in early June.
- A series of Local Emergency Management training courses is being developed and will be rolled out in each county this fall. The brief courses will outline roles and responsibilities for local EMD appointees.

#### GIS

- Completed the energy mapping and formatting for the Regional Energy Plan
- Completed a project to map all the State Register Historic Districts in the region. These shape files are now available in the region and will be available statewide.

#### Municipal Planning

- Staff is starting the Town Plan update for the Town of Fairfax.
- Staff is finishing work on the Town of South Hero Development Regulations project. The project was focused on creating development standard for two new village zoning districts in South Hero Village and Keeler Bay Village. The project was funded through a municipal planning grant.
- Staff provided technical assistance to Alburgh, Berkshire, Enosburgh, Fairfax, Fletcher, Franklin, Highgate, North Hero, Sheldon, and Richford.
- Staff is beginning work on the Berkshire bylaws, which will include a buildout analysis.

#### Energy Planning

- Continued to move the regional energy plan through the adoption process.
- Revised energy data for all municipalities in region. Created and distributed municipal energy data and map packages which are available on the NRPC website.
- Began working with five municipalities to educate them about the Act 174 standards and began to revise their municipal energy plans (Richford, Highgate, Fairfax, Franklin, Enosburgh, and Enosburg Falls).

#### Water Quality

- Staff is holding a stormwater workshop for St. Albans area residents as part of the Franklin County Stormwater Collaborative on June 28<sup>th</sup> titled, "Managing Runoff on Your Property: a Do-It-Yourself Site Assessment".
- Coordinating with DEC and VAPDA on the development of criteria to regionally prioritize projects in the state's Watershed Projects database. The scoring from regional prioritization will be a part of the DEC's overall grading of a project and can influence the projects that receive funding.
- Staff mailed letters to all our municipalities inviting them to participate in the Municipal roads Grants-In-Aid pilot project. So far the reception from our towns has been positive. Signed letters of intent to participate are due back 7/5/2017. This new pilot project will provide funding to participating municipalities to implement best management practices on municipal roads ahead of the forthcoming Municipal roads General Permit (MRGP).

### Northern Vermont Development District

NRPC submitted a request for the second year of funding from our three year grant to manage the Northern Vermont Economic Development District. This project is done in partnership with Lamoille County Planning Commission, Lamoille County Industrial Development Corporation, Northeastern VT Development Association, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation and Grand Isle Economic Development Corporation.

### Information Technologies

NRPC recently migrated from SHDSL to Cable Internet services and now uses cloud based email services. This ensures increased reliability for remote access, greater email storage and improved archiving. NRPC will upgrade its server in FY 18.