

1 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**
2 **NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**
3 *January 29, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes*
4

5 The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held at Northwestern Medical Center, St.
6 Albans, Vermont.

7
8 **ATTENDANCE:**

9 Commissioners: See attached. A quorum was present to conduct business.
10 Staff: C. Dimitruk, T. Newton.

11
12 Chair K. Waite called the meeting to order at 7:01 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 - None.**

21
22 **MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2019 AND DECEMBER 2019 MEETING**

23 In the October minutes, B. Dorcheff stated that the word “change” on Line 28 should be
24 changed to “chance.”

25
26 *H. Demars motioned to accept the October meeting minutes as amended. H. Garrett seconded.*
27 *The motion passed.*

28
29 *Y. Dandurand motioned to accept the December meeting minutes as written. A. Voegele*
30 *seconded. The motion passed.*

31
32 **COMMISSION REPORTS:** See attached written reports for additional information. K. Waite
33 asked for committees that met in the past month to provide an update.

34
35 Finance/Operations – H. Garret stated that the Finance Committee will meet on February 18th
36 at NRPC (5 PM). H. Garrett said there will be a profit/loss sheet included in the packet next
37 month.

38
39 Personnel – J. Farnham stated that the Personnel Committee has been meeting to review
40 applications for the posted Regional Planner position over the past several weeks and hope to
41 make a decision on a new staff member in the coming weeks.
42

1 Executive – K. Waite stated that the Executive Committee met immediately before the Board
2 meeting. He said that the only official action taken by the Committee was to approve a
3 Brownfields Program revolving loan fund application for Granite Works in Montpelier. This loan
4 will be the first interest bearing loan that NRPC has administered.
5

6 Project Review – A. LaRocque stated that the Committee had reviewed three applications in
7 January. The AT&T Wireless Section 248a application in Grand Isle was found by the
8 Committee to not have a substantial regional impact, but the Committee was waiting for
9 additional information on aesthetics before making a decision regarding conformance with the
10 Regional Plan. The Franklin Foods and Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation Act
11 250 applications were both found to not have a substantial regional impact and to be in
12 conformance with the Regional Plan. C. Dimitruk noted Franklin Foods agreed to the Project
13 Review Committee’s suggested Act 250 permit condition to connect the property to Jayview
14 Drive in the future. This will allow trucks to have an additional way to access Franklin Foods
15 without having to drive through a residential neighborhood
16

17 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – Committee did not meet.
18

19 Energy Committee – Committee did not meet.
20

21 Brownfields Committee – K. Waite referred to the approved revolving loan fund application
22 referenced under Executive Committee.
23

24 Regional Plan and Policy Committee – Committee did not meet.
25

26 Vermont Economic Progress Council – A. Voegele stated that the group is meeting tomorrow
27 afternoon and that there aren’t any applications from the region this month.
28

29 Green Mountain Transit – B. Buermann stated that GMT has acquired two fully electric buses.
30 The buses will be “online” in March and will be utilized primarily in the Burlington area in the
31 short term. B. Buermann also stated that GMT continues the search for a new General
32 Manager. C. Dimitruk stated that the GMT Board hopes to interview five or six applicants., A.
33 Voegele asked why it’s been so hard to retain General Managers. C. Dimitruk stated that it is a
34 complicated job and a tough industry.
35

36 A. Voegele stated that perhaps the Energy Committee could begin to assist municipalities in
37 carbon reduction and helping municipalities transitioning fleets to alternative fuels.
38

39 Clean Water Advisory Committee – Committee did not meet. C. Dimitruk stated that NRPC will
40 begin coordinating with regional partners in the Lamoille, Missisquoi, and Upper Lake
41 Champlain basin in the coming weeks to determine which organization in each basin should

1 respond a RFP from the Agency of Natural Resources to be a Clean Water Service Provider. Each
2 Clean Water Service Provider will be responsible for setting up a “basin council” and will
3 determine how utilized grant money from the Agency to reduce phosphorus load within the
4 basin. C. Dimitruk will updated the Board with additional details next month. A. Voegele asked
5 more information about how proposed EPA rules changes regarding sewage regulation may
6 impact Lake Champlain.

7

8 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation – Committee did not meet.

9

10 Office – T. Newton stated that his focus over the past month has been on wrapping up projects
11 and transitioning them to other staff members. He stated that he very much enjoyed his time
12 at NRPC and thanked the Board for their support over the past 6 years. Several board members
13 thanked Taylor for his service.

14

15 *A. Voegele motioned thank Taylor for his service on behalf of all the municipalities in Franklin
16 and Grand Isle Counties. B. Buermann seconded. All in favor.*

17 C. Dimitruk stated that there are several Act 250-related bills under consideration. She stated
18 that the Executive Committee does not support one particular proposed measure to extend Act
19 250 jurisdiction to the areas around all interstate interchanges. There is also a substantial
20 housing bill that includes many changes to Ch. 117 to allow for denser housing development,
21 yet this bill will like be substantially changed.

22 C. Dimitruk stated that staff is beginning work on a water/wastewater study in Highgate and on
23 a municipal planning grant funded project in Sheldon related to the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.
24 The Sheldon project is well-timed given that the Governor’s proposed budget includes funds to
25 construct the remaining sections of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.

26 C. Dimitruk stated that there is an applicant briefing on January 30th for all municipalites
27 impacted by the October 31, 2019 that will be applying for Emergency Relief and Assistance
28 Funds. C. Dimitruk noted that the management of the Municipal Roads General Permit
29 program will transition from the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to the Agency of
30 Transportation (VTrans). The Committee discussed the permit program and reimbursement to
31 municipalities given the transition to the VTrans. H. Garrett requested that the current
32 municipal project development process be retained. W. Irwin asked why the program is
33 changing agencies. C. Dimitruk said that she is unsure, but S. Jensen stated that it may be due
34 to ANR current workload.

35 **HEALTHY ROOTS COLLABORATIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

36 C. Dimitruk said that the proposed rules of procedure are based on TAC’s rules of procedure
37 and that the proposed rules allow the Health Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee a chance
38 to codify its membership. The current draft has been approved by the Advisory Committee.

39

1 S. Jensen proposed the following changes: the reference to "TAC" should be removed from the
2 document, the word "the" should go in front of "annual" on Line 15 and the word "in" should
3 be added after "participating" on Line 33.

4

5 *S. Jensen motioned approve the proposed Rules of Procedure with proposed changes. W. Irwin*
6 *seconded. All in favor.*

7

8 **COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

9 Y. Dandurand noted that after last Green Up Day in Franklin there were 100s of tires that
10 needed to be disposed of properly and that this cost the Town over \$4000. He proposed that
11 municipalities in the region that have similar issues potentially collaborate in the coming year to
12 find a cheaper solution. He noted that he has found a facility in Canada, near Champlain, NY,
13 that will process the tires at a lower cost than can be found in Vermont. He inquired if the
14 State could perhaps provide equipment to haul tires to Canada.

15

16 A. Voegele stated that he would discuss the issue with Northwest Vermont Solid Waste
17 Management District. W. Irwin suggested coordination with the Green Up Vermont
18 organization, if possible. S. Jensen discussed previously successful collaboration with the Solid
19 Waste Management District in Isle La Motte. B. Morris suggested that the idea be brought up at
20 TAC. H. Garrett stated that he thought a deposit system for tires purchased in Vermont might
21 encourage responsible disposal.

22

23 **ADJOURN**

24 *R. Noel motioned to adjourn. S. Jensen seconded. Motion carried.*

25 *Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.*