

1 **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**
2 **NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**
3 October 27, 2010 Meeting Minutes
4

5 The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held at F-GI Training Center in Swanton, VT.
6

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

8 Staff: C. Dimitruk, B. Remmers and E. Hubbard

9 Guests: G.Newbury, VT Agency of Transportation
10

11 **Welcome, introductions, opening remarks**

12 Chair M. Guernsey began the meeting at 7: 01 p.m. M. Guernsey reported to everyone there will
13 be a Board meeting on November 17th and there still may be a meeting in December. This was
14 followed by roll call attendance. B. Kittell resigned as a regional commissioner. He reviewed his
15 twenty-one years of service to the NRPC and how things have changed over the years.
16

17 *A. Beaderstadt motioned to suspend the board meeting for a few minutes to thank B. Kittell. B.*
18 *Kade seconded. The motion carried.*
19

20 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

21 None.
22

23 **Gil Newbury, VT Agency of Transportation (Operations & activities of District 8 including**
24 **use of salt brine for winter road maintenance)**

25 M. Guernsey welcomes G. Newbury from the VT Agency of Transportation and explains G.
26 Newbury is here to show a presentation on winter road maintenance. G. Newbury states that
27 when dealing with snow maintenance you have three areas you need to look at: cost, safety and
28 the environment. Vermont spends about 15 million on winter road maintenance with about 7
29 million of that on salt alone just for the state system and these costs are going up all the time. G.
30 Newbury says VTrans wanted to look at winter road maintenance to see if they could bring the
31 cost down, make the winter roads safer and be better for the environment. G. Newbury goes on
32 to explain that in order for salt to work on winter roads the first thing it needs is moisture. The
33 next thing it needs is the right temperature. Salt does not work well in cold temperatures – it
34 loses efficiency. The last thing it needs is the correct concentration.
35

36 G. Newbury explains the difference between just putting salt on winter roads verses putting salt
37 brine on winter roads. He explains how using salt brine can be more cost effective than just salt
38 because you don't need to use as much salt and it sticks to the road better. G. Newbury also
39 stated VTrans used significantly less sand as well. A safety benefit to salt brine is you spray the
40 whole road instead of just putting salt in the center of the road. These roads also opened up a lot
41 faster than the roads that only used just salt. G. Newbury points out since you use less salt and
42 sand when using salt brine it is better for the environment.
43

44 G. Newbury was asked if there are any downsides to salt brine. He said vehicles closely
45 following a truck that is spraying salt brine can coat their windshields. G. Newbury was also

1 asked how many miles can a truck with salt brine get on a highway. He said you can get about
2 forty miles of interstate.

3
4 G. Newbury was also asked if the state knows of any problems with the plastic culverts and if
5 they had stopped using them. G. Newbury replied that the state is still using the plastic culverts
6 and the only problems they have had with them is that they can not get them in large enough
7 sizes. G. Newbury was asked about the culvert problem on Route 36 in Fairfield. He responded
8 by saying VTrans hopes to have a replacement made in the spring at the earliest.

9
10 **Minutes of the August and September 2010 Meetings**

11
12 *D. DeBevec motioned to accept the August minutes. P. Larner seconded. The motion carried*
13 *with one abstention.*

14
15 *A. Beaderstadt motioned to accept the Challenge for Change joint board meeting minutes of*
16 *September 14th. B. Kade seconded. The motion carried with four abstentions.*

17
18
19 **Commission Reports**

20
21 Finance/Operations: H. Garrett reported the Finance/Operations Committee met on October 18th.
22 He said at that meeting it was decided to take some of the NRPC long-term reserves and invest it
23 in CDs. C. Dimitruk and A. Adams went around to numerous banking facilities and the
24 Finance/Operations Committee decided to put in \$90,000.00 at the New England Federal Credit
25 Union.

26
27 *D. DeBevec motioned to invest a total of \$90,000.00 from the long-term reserves to the New*
28 *England Federal Credit Union (\$50,000.00 into a 5 year CD and \$40,000.00 into a 1 year CD).*
29 *J. Baitz seconded. The motion carried.*

30
31 B. Kade asks why the NRPC has money that they are not going to need for five years. M.
32 Guernsey responds that this money would be used in case the state really cuts the NRPC and
33 would be used to maintain staff or if the state decides to do away with funding it gives the NRPC
34 the money to close down its operation. M. Guernsey also notes he does not see either one of
35 these things happening. C. Dimitruk furthered explained that maintaining at least three months of
36 reserves is a recommended good practice for financial management, and the long-term reserve
37 plan is reviewed and adopted each year as part of the annual budget.

38
39 H. Garrett mentions that in the next board packet it will include two different types of profit and
40 loss statements to review and to see which one the board would like to use from now on.

41
42 Personnel: No Report.

43
44 Executive Committee: No Report.

1 Policy/Project Review: C. Steen reports the Policy/Project Review Committee has met since the
2 last board meeting and the only project that has significant impact is the Wagon Wheel
3 reconstruction site in St. Albans Town. The Wagon Wheel will be re-developing the whole area
4 and will build a new convenience store with built-in fast food restaurant. It would change the
5 whole footprint of that area. C. Steen stated that in the letter NRPC wrote strongly to suggest
6 adding in some type of pedestrian walk ways in this area.

7
8 *H. Garrett motioned to ratify the report from the Policy/Project review committee. C. Charron*
9 *seconded. The motion carried with one abstention.*

10
11 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC): D. Leslie reported that Paul Hansen is now the
12 chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee and he is now the vice-chair.

13
14 Energy Committee: B. Buermann reported that staff has been working with the Village of
15 Enosburg Falls on a street light inventory. There have been 17 energy audits completed in 10
16 municipalities. There is still additional money available for any municipality that would like to
17 do an energy audit. Staff is also working on municipal plans with the town of Georgia and will
18 be working on one for Grand Isle. Energy funds are being used for the Safe Routes to School
19 program for St. Albans City and Town. Also these funds will be used for a Georgia sidewalk and
20 path plan.

21
22 VT Association of Planning and Development Agencies: C. Dimitruk notes that the NRPC will
23 need a new VAPDA representative from the NRPC. This will be decided at the next board
24 meeting. M. Guernsey notes that we will vote next month on this.

25
26 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC): No Report.

27
28 Downtown Development Board: No Report.

29
30 Office: B. Remmers reported she was in St. Louis last week for a conference. It was for the RPO
31 America which is an organization for rural transportation planners. Remmers serves as the
32 Vermont representative for this organization.

33
34 E. Hubbard reported she has been working on Georgia town plan maps, E911 road atlas updates
35 and stormwater mapping for Swanton and Fairfax.

36
37 C. Dimitruk reported on the meeting held in September for the Morses Line border crossing. She
38 commented on how well it went and how respectfull everyone was. C. Dimitruk also reported on
39 a grant the NRPC received for a streetscape improvement project for St. Albans City. NRPC is
40 working on transferring all of grant award to the St. Albans City. Dimitruk reported that the
41 collaboration with the state went well for regional planning commissions' performance contracts
42 that were required as a result of Challenges for Change. NRPC will have a new 17 month
43 contract starting February 1st, that will have performance measures, incentives for performance,
44 and hold-backs for non-performance. NRPC should have no problems meeting these new
45 requirements.

1 **FY 10 Audit**

2 C. Dimitruk explained about the finding found in FY09 audit and that because of the hard work
3 on A. Adams, the finding has been closed and no longer applies the NRPC. The FY10 audit has
4 been completed with no findings. At the request of H. Garrett C. Dimitruk explained the surplus
5 was a result of some delayed project expenditures and efficient completion of two lump sum
6 contracts. H. Garrett states the Finance/Operations Committee was happy with the way the
7 FY10 audit turned out.

8
9 *P. Larner motioned to accept the FY 10 Audit. J. Baitz seconded. The motion carried.*

10
11
12 **FY 12 Municipal Assessment Rate**

13 H. Garrett reported at the last Finance/Operation Committee meeting the committee discussed
14 the municipal assessment rate. There are three options the committee came up with. Option one
15 was to stay the way we are currently, option two was to increase the assessment rate from .86 to
16 .89, and option three was to increase the rate to .92. H. Garrett went on to explain the
17 Finance/Operations Committee thought it had been a while since there has been an increase and
18 the committee thought option two to increase the rate to .89 was the best option.

19
20 *M. Manahan motioned to accept the option two increase to increase the municipal assessment*
21 *rate from .86 to .89. J. Luneau seconded. The motion carried.*

22
23 It was asked if the NRPC will use the new census data. C. Dimitruk reported we will use the
24 2010 census data next year when it is available to set the FY 13 assessment rate. It was also
25 asked when was the last year the assessment rate was increased. C. Dimitruk stated it had been
26 two to three years since it had been increased.

27
28 **Project Review Policy Amendments**

29 C. Steen reported that the Policy/Project Review Committee would like to make a small change
30 in its amendments to allow staff, G. Brunswick at this time, to act on a project by sending out a
31 letter of recommendation without having to call a Policy/Project Review Committee meeting. C.
32 Steen goes on to explain some of these projects may be time sensitive. C. Steen also reported that
33 if there was a major project that was time sensitive the committee had decided they would meet
34 before the monthly NRPC board meeting.

35
36 *R. Roberge motioned to accept the change to the policy/project review amendments. C. Charron*
37 *seconded. The motion carried.*

38
39 **Other Business**

40 A. Beaderstadt noted there will be a 2nd annual festival of trees and a parade in St. Albans and if
41 anyone is interested in volunteering to contact her.

42
43 **Adjourn**

44 *R. Roberge motioned to adjourn. C. Charron seconded. Motion carried.*

45
46 The meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.