

1 **NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting**
2 **April 27th, 2022**
3 **Virtual Meeting**
4

5 The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held using the Zoom platform.
6

7 **Attendance**

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

9 Staff: C. Dimitruk, D. Pierce, D. Devlin, C. Porcaro

10 Guests: Dr. Jude Smith Rachele, Abundant Sun
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12 Chair W. Irwin welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
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14 **Adjustments to the Agenda-** There are no adjustments to the agenda.
15

16 **Welcome, introductions, opening remarks**

17 W. Irwin welcomed those attending. Participants briefly introduced themselves.
18

19 **Opportunity for Public Comment-** No members of the public offered comments.
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21 **Minutes of the March 2022 Meeting** (enclosed)

22 A.Alling shared that on pg. 6 line 25 it should say that he lives in North Hero (not South Hero).
23

24 *A. Voegele moved to adjust the March 2022 Meeting Notes with A. Alling seconding. Motion carried with one*
25 *abstention (C. Steen).*
26

27 **Presentation/Discussion**

28 W. Irwin introduced Dr. J. Rachele of Abundant Sun.
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30 J. Rachele reminded the group of the group contract (Be honest, keep discussion productive, participate, listen
31 attentively, keep an open mind, take responsibility for your own works, respect the intentions of others, don't
32 be a bystander and determine options for action). She asked if everyone was ok or had questions about the
33 group contract. W. Irwin added that these would be great for us to keep in mind for every meeting that we
34 ever have. It is a collective of really valuable reminders for us in community service. J. Rachele shared the
35 agenda for the presentation. The agenda included: What does ethical performance mean for NRPC? What
36 vision do you have for the future?, Doughnut Economics, NRPC's responses to Vermont Housing Crisis, and
37 The Declaration of Inclusion---What good can it do? J. Rachele asked if people were familiar with Doughnut
38 Economics. A few people acknowledge they were a little familiar. J. Rachele that the following night they were
39 launching their first Racial Justice Housing Jam working group and they are looking, in particular, how to
40 increase racial equity in Vermont housing. J. Rachele added that C. Dimitruk also shared the Declaration of
41 Inclusion that was ratified at the last meeting and that she wants to have a discussion about what good can it
42 do, what does it mean and how do you operationalize it.
43

44 J. Rachele then shared a slide explaining VUCA, that they had gone over last time (Volatility, Uncertainty,
45 Complexity, Ambiguity). J. Rachele asked what ethical performance means to NRPC and how can it elevate
46 performance in the Commission's work, and what vision do we have and what does the future look like. W.
47 Irwin shared that NRPC has a really important role to try to exemplify the best ethical perspectives throughout
48 the work and writing that we do and that we can hope that it can trickle down to the municipalities that we

49 serve and then the leaders in those municipalities. He added that there needs to be an effort to get people to
50 focus on the broader community interests and identify the benefits and not just focus on how one particular
51 entity might be disturbed by it. J. Rachele referred back to VUCA and shared that the protectionism and
52 defensiveness is a reaction to the VUCA. The ethical consideration is the community development piece and
53 the helping of others who are in need. This work is not used in order to invalidate differing perspectives but
54 to have discourse to understand where the tensions are in order to balance the needs of the individual vs. the
55 needs of the collective. R. Noel added that there is a lack of respect. He shared that when there is a statement,
56 thought, or idea that does not side with your own, it does not mean an individual needs to shut someone else
57 down. J. Rachele shared that she also appreciated the intergenerational piece of the discussion. She asked
58 how can we plan, not just in the buildings but how we build the communities and relationships within and
59 around the buildings.

60
61 J. Rachele then asked where does NRPC want to take this for the future in order to make the community
62 different than it is today. S. Hadd shared that the American Institute of Certified Planners has aspirational
63 principles that are also recommended for planning boards, and one of them is about people who participate in
64 the planning process shall work to achieve economic, social, and racial equity. She shared that having a more
65 meaningful, more fully engaged community involvement in our decision-making process is a great goal to
66 have. J. Rachele added that we should review that protocol for engagement and see how we can increase and
67 measure that engagement, both qualitatively and quantitatively, throughout time.

68
69 A. Voegelé shared information from a radio show he was listening to where they discussed “Egalitarian
70 Democracy”. He shared that they went on to explain how we're all equal, and to work towards making sure
71 that the pie is equitably split among all people.

72
73 P. Zamore added that he was thinking of the vision in a more substantive form. He shared that Vermont is a
74 real challenge economically given how flat the population curve is and how old the average age is and we
75 need to take measures to get more youth, get more diversity and grow the population in a way that will
76 stimulate both the economic and social sustainability of Vermont.

77
78 J. Rachele shared that a lot of times people assume that when we're talking about innovating or doing new
79 things that we're saying that everything that existed before we need to get rid of and that's not what the
80 narrative should be.

81
82 J. Rachele shared a slide on Doughnut Economics: 7 ways to think like a 21st century economist. She shared
83 that Doughnut Economics was developed by Kate Raworth who is an economist from England. She added that
84 the whole notion is that we have to figure out how to live in balance. She pointed to the social foundation
85 which was in the inside ring of the doughnut which are all key elements of society. She added that we need to
86 ensure that any actions that we're engaged in are actions that are going to enable individuals and community
87 to thrive. J. Rachele then asked how do we apply this in the work that the Commission is doing.

88
89 B. Buermann added that we are a shortfall on all the social foundations. He shared that the US is built around
90 a system that we need to be bigger and bigger consumers all the time otherwise the systems break. He added
91 that when we talk about Vermont's population being stable, it doesn't work because in this system you need
92 to have exponential growth. He hopes that applying Doughnut Economics can get to think about things more
93 broadly.

95 A.Voegele added that the first thing that came to mind is the reaction of the majority to not wanting to give up
96 consumerism. If we try to put a break on it, it becomes hard to make change because of people’s reaction to
97 it. A. Voegele shared a story about a program down in the Winooski back in the 1990s called Grandmothers
98 and Grandfathers. A. Voegele described the relationships built between these volunteer grandparents and the
99 students in the school. J. Rachele shared that she enjoyed hearing all of these intergenerational stories.

100
101 J. Rachele shared information on research being done at UVM to take a look at genuine progress indicators,
102 instead of just looking at something like the GDP. C. Dimitruk added that she likes this Doughnut Economics
103 diagram because it shows the work that NRPC does to create the conditions for economic success. C. Dimitruk
104 also shared that the biggest programs that the State and others have wanted us to work on in recent years,
105 which is the Grants-In-Aid program for town road improvements for water quality and resilience and the new
106 clean water service provider, are the biggest money ticket items that we've worked on in recent years, and
107 those are all correcting problems on the outside rather than building up the good on the inside.

108
109 J. Rachele shared a slide on Low-Carbon Regenerative Economy which looks at building a
110 regenerative/equitable instead of an exploitive/extractive economy. J. Rachele added that this is a mindset
111 shift and not just about compliance. She emphasized that it does not mean that all items on the lefthand side
112 of the slide are bad because we need to find the balance. In concluding the presentation, J. Rachele shared
113 additional resources that the Commission can look at. W. Irwin added that it would be nice to see those slides
114 again to get a better sense of it. W. Irwin thanked the board for their participation.

115
116 **Commission Reports:**

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118 **Finance/Operations**– C. Dimitruk noted that we are ¾ of the way through the year. There are a few trouble
119 spots including being ahead on a few contracts and they are working on fixing that by the end of the year.

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121 **Personnel** – L. Ruple stated that the Committee did not meet.

122
123 **Executive Committee** – W. Irwin reported that they did not meet.

124
125 **Project Review** – B. Buermann shared that the specifics of airport’s application were not a substantial regional
126 impact and they were in conformance with the regional plan. He added that they like to have a discussion
127 either at the committee or at the full board about the long-range plan for the airport to have a more complete
128 understanding of what is going on there. The other projects that discussed were the expansion of the mini
129 storage on Franklin Park West, the solar project in Georgie which is an expansion of an existing solar project.
130 They found the project does not have substantial regional impact and it conforms with the regional plan. W.
131 Irwin asked if the airport was willing to do a masterplan. C. Dimitruk responded that they were looking to
132 meet with them next month with the full Commission.

133
134 **Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)** – B. Remmers reported that the TAC met, this year they are
135 working on state and town highway bridges that are greater than 20 ft in length. They are going to continue
136 that until May and at the May board meeting you will see the results of that work. B. Remmers also shared
137 that C. Steen is stepping down from TAC.

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139 **Energy and Climate Committee**- B. Buermann shared that they had the kick-off meeting of the new revitalized
140 Energy and Climate Committee. They reviewed the Global Warming Solutions Act and the Vermont Climate
141 Action Plan. He reported that Marlina has been doing many things including the window inserts project.

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Brownfields Committee – Nothing additional to report.

Regional Plan and Policy Committee- Nothing additional to report.

Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – A. Voegele shared that the council is meeting tomorrow and that there are no applications from the area.

Green Mountain Transit- C. Dimitruk reported that the proposed route cuts are not happening.

Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- L. Douglas shared the HRC did not meet. C. Porcaro shared information on funding HRC recently received through both the Vermont Foodbank (Vermonters Feeding Vermonter) and the Dairy Business Innovation Center.

Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- Nothing additional to report.

Office-B. Remmers shared that she'd answer any questions on transportations items in the packet. C. Dimitruk shared that everyone has stepped up with many staff being sick/having COVID. D. Pierce shared that as the Clean Water Service Provider Clean Water Service provider some meaningful work that they've been doing lately includes more systems development for grants management and project development and they've also been commenting on some significant department of environmental conservation policy documents. D. Pierce also shared that S. Hadd was elected as Vice Chair to the Lamoille Basin Council

Transportation Advisory Committee Rules of Procedure –B. Remmers shared that the full board needs to approve changes in the rules and procedures. The changes are in two areas, on page 16 of the packet, moving the annual election of officers from October to June to be in line with the rest of NRPC committees. The second change is on page 17 lines 10-16 where she is cleaning up some processes in how meetings are posted in compliance with open meeting law.

R. Noel moved to approve the changes to the TAC Rules of Procedure with B. Buermann seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Announcements- No announcements made.

Adjourn- A.Voegele moved to adjourn; R. Noel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Municipality	Board Member	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June
FrkIn Cty Youth	Eagan Murphy	X		excused	X		X	X	X	X			
GI Cty Youth	vacant		N			N							
Alburg Town	Alton Bruso		O			O							
Alburg Town	Terry Tatro			excused			X						
Alburg Village	Terry Tatro		M			M	X						
Alburg Village	Vacant		E			E							
Bakersfield	Bill Irwin	X	E	X	X	E	X	X	X	X	X		
Bakersfield	vacant		T			T							
Berkshire	Vincent Hickey	Excused	I	excused	X	I		X	excused				
Berkshire	Claude Charron		N			N							
Enosburg Falls	Leonard Charron		G			G							
Enosburg Falls	Vacant	Excused		X									
Enosburgh Town	Jesse Woods 3/22	Excused		X	---	---	---	---	---	excused			
Enosburgh Town	Jessica Eagle 3/22	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	excused			
Fairfax	Colleen Steen	X					X	excused	X		X		
Fairfax	Sarah Hadd	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Fairfield	Alisha Larocque												
Fairfield	Brian Dubie	Excused		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Fletcher	Lynn Douglas	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Fletcher	Lori Ruple	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Franklin	Yvon Dandurand	X		X	X		excused	X	X	X	X		
Franklin	Wesley Kempton	Excused		x									
Georgia	Scott St. Onge												
Georgia	Kirk Waite	X		X	X		X	X	X		X		
Grand Isle	Barclay Morris	Excused		X	X		excused	excused	X	X			
Grand Isle	Howard Demars	Excused		X	X			X		X			
Highgate	Vacant												
Highgate	Richard Noel	X		X	X		X	X	excused	X			
Isle La Motte	Sylvia Jensen	X		excused				X	X	X			
Isle La Motte	Vacant												
Montgomery	Vacant												
Montgomery	Vacant												
North Hero	Andy Alling	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
North Hero	Vacant												
Richford	Rowena Brown	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
Richford	Vacant												
Sheldon	Vacant												
Sheldon	Jeff Kane												
South Hero	Peter Zamore	X		X	X		X	X	excused	X	X		
South Hero	Bob Buermann	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
St. Albans City	Marty Manahan												
St. Albans City	L. Scangas/Vacant 1-22	Excused		excused	X		excused	---					
St. Albans Town	Marietta Scholten	---		---	---		---	X	X	X	X		
St. Albans Town	Albin Voegele	X		excused	X		X	X	X		X		
Swanton Town	Harold Garrett	X			X		X	X	excused	X			
Swanton Town	Vacant												
Swanton Village	Elisabeth Nance	X		excused	X		X	X	X	X			
Swanton Village	Neal Speer	X						X					
# OF MUNICIPALITIES		13		13	16		14	17	13	14			
QUORUM = 12													