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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
October 27, 2021 Draft Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held using the Zoom platform, and public access was provided at the Regional Planning Commission offices at 75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans.

Attendance

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

Staff: C. Dimitruk, D. Pierce, B. Remmers

Guest: None

Chair B. Irwin began the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Adjustments to the Agenda- The presentation by Xusana Davis, the Vermont Executive Director of Racial Equity, has been rescheduled to the December 15th meeting.

Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks- Chair B. Irwin welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Opportunity for Public Comment- None.

Minutes of the July 2021 Meeting

Y. Dandurand moved to accept the September 2021 meeting minutes. B. Buermann seconded. Motion carried.

Commission Reports:

Finance/Operations - H. Garrett noted that the profit and loss statement was included in the meeting packet and asked for questions from the board.

Personnel - L. Ruple reported that the committee will meet in early November to interview climate/energy planner candidates.

Executive Committee - B. Irwin reported that the committee held a special meeting to consider and approve a Memorandum of Understanding with the Northwest Vermont Communications Union District to host the Executive Director as a temporary employee for the next 3-6 months.

Project Review - B. Buermann reported that the Committee met in October and the business report included in the meeting packet. He noted that the committee determined the Bell Atlantic Mobile Systems off of Fletcher Road in Fairfax did not have a substantial regional impact and did conform with the regional plan.

Transportation Advisory Committee - H. Garrett noted there was no TAC meeting in October.

Energy Committee - B. Buermann reported that the committee did not meet, but will plan to begin meeting again when staff is hired.

48 Brownfields Committee –L. Scangas noted that the committee is hopeful NRPC’s EPA Brownfield’s
49 assessment grant will be successful. The application is due December 1st and awards are made in spring
50 2022.

51
52 Regional Plan Committee – E. Nance reported that committee met in October and reviewed the two
53 basin plans and a discussed the timeframe for updating the regional plan.

54
55 Municipal Plan Review Committee – Rowena Brown noted the committee met and reviewed the
56 Fletcher plan.

57
58 VT Economic Progress Council – A. Voegele reported that no projects from the region were discussed by
59 the VEPC in October.

60
61 GMT – B. Buermann reported that the GMT board adopted an urban driver contract and heard an
62 update on other union contract negotiations, and discussed the challenges and benefits of fare free
63 rides.

64
65 CWAC – The committee did not meet.

66
67 **Staff Reports**

68 C. Dimitruk updated the board on her work serving as the rural community representative on the
69 Vermont Climate Council. She also is the co-chair for the Rural Resilience and Adaptation
70 Subcommittee. B. Remmers noted that staff is assisting our member communities with Better Roads
71 grant applications and wrapping Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid construction projects. Staff is also
72 working with the towns of Alburgh and Grand Isle to update their traffic/speed limit ordinances.

73
74 **Missisquoi and Lamoille Basin Plan: Regional Plan Conformance**

75 D. Pierce noted that NRPC has the opportunity to provide recommendations to the Agency of Natural
76 Resources regarding tactical basin plans. D. Pierce has completed a thorough review of both the
77 Missisquoi and Lamoille plans and a summary of comments was included in the meeting packet. The
78 conclusion of the staff review was that both basin plans conform with the regional plan, provided there
79 is language added on equity considerations in basin planning.

80
81 D. Pierce highlighted the maps and the restoration priorities included in both plans. R. Noel noted that
82 for the Missisquoi plan, the maps should show the rivers and streams in Canada because water does not
83 stop at the border. H. Demars asked about prioritization of restoration tasks and D. Pierce noted that
84 some level of prioritization was reflected in the implementation tables.

85
86 *L. Scangas moved that the Missisquoi Tactical Basin Plan and the Lamoille Tactical Basin Plan do conform*
87 *with the regional plan provided language be incorporated to address equity, diversity and inclusion. R.*
88 *Noel seconded. Motion carried.*

89
90 **Municipal Assessment Rate FY23**

91
92 The Finance Committee’s recommendation was to increase the overall funds raised through municipal
93 assessments 3% from \$62,377 to \$64,108. C. Dimitruk noted that this will be the first time the
94 assessment is based on the 2020 Census population numbers. While the overall assessments would
95 increase, the per capita rate would drop from 1.14 per capita to 1.12 because the region’s population

96 increased. Some municipalities will see a reduction in their overall assessment while other towns will
97 see an increase.

98
99 A. Voegele noted that because inflation is at 5%, he was concerned at having the assessment increase at
100 3%. B. Irwin asked if there has been discussion about tying the increase to the consumer price index. C.
101 Dimitruk noted the NRPC's assessment rate policy caps the increase at 3%.

102
103 *K. Waite moved to accept the Finance Committee's FY23 assessment rate recommendation. A. Alling*
104 *seconded. Motion carried.*

105
106 **Fletcher Town Plan Approval**

107
108 E. Nance reviewed the findings of Plan Review Committee for Town of Fletcher's request for regional
109 approval of the Fletcher Municipal Plan, confirmation of Fletcher's planning process and that the plan
110 receives determination of energy planning compliance with the enhanced energy planning standards. E.
111 Nance noted that the Plan Review Committee recommended approved these requests.

112
113 *A. Voegele motioned to regionally approve the Fletcher Municipal Plan. K. Waite seconded. Motion*
114 *carried.*

115 *A. Voegele motioned to confirm Fletcher's planning process. R. Noel seconded. Motion carried.*

116 *H. Garrett motioned to find the Fletcher Municipal Enhanced Energy Plan meets the standard for an*
117 *affirmative determination of energy compliance and is in conformance with the Northwest Regional*
118 *Plan. H. Demars seconded. Motion carried.*

119
120 **Commissioner Announcements**

121 None

122
123 **Adjournment**

124 *A. Voegele moved that the meeting adjourn. E. Nance seconded.*

125
126 Meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.