



**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**January 25, 2023**

**7:00 Meeting**

**Virtual Meeting  
details below**

**Physical Location: 75 Fairfield St., St Albans**

Note- this location will be minimally staffed if needed to comply with the open meeting law

- 1. Adjustments to the Agenda**
- 2. Welcome, introductions, opening remarks –William Irwin, *Chair***
- 3. Opportunity for Public Comment**
- 4. Minutes of the November 2022 Meeting (enclosed)**
- 5. Commission Reports (abbreviated): written reports enclosed**
  - Finance/Operations– *Harold Garrett***
  - Personnel – *Lori Ruple***
  - Executive Committee – *William Irwin***
  - Project Review – *Bob Buermann***
  - Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – *Harold Garrett***
  - Energy and Climate Committee- *Al Voegele***
  - Brownfields Committee – *Elisabeth Nance***
  - Regional Plan and Policy Committee- *Elisabeth Nance***
  - Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – *Al Voegele***
  - Green Mountain Transit- *Bob Buermann/Catherine Dimitruk***
  - Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- *Lynn Douglas***
  - Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- *Kirk Waite***
  - Office-*Staff***

6. **Code of Conduct-** *discussion, draft enclosed*
7. **Election of Treasurer-** *action item*  
Nominations from the floor
8. **Commissioner Announcements**

### **Meeting Access Information**

Please try to join the meeting 5-10 minutes prior to the start time. If you have trouble connecting, please call 802-310-6797.

Access via phone or video

#### **Join Zoom Meeting via video**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84672495167>

#### **Join Zoom via phone**

1(312)626-6799 or

1(646)558-8656

Meeting ID 846 7249 5167

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1 **NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting**  
2 **November 30, 2022**  
3 **6:30PM**  
4 **American Legion Hall**  
5 **100 Parah Drive**  
6 **St. Albans, VT 05478**  
7

8 **Attendance**

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

10 Staff: C. Dimitruk, B. Remmers, S. Coleman, G. Brunswick, D. Peirce, E. Klofft, A. Adams, K.  
11 Lavoie, C. Porcaro, M. Valenta

12 Guests: Dr. Jude Smith Rachele and Rose Gowdy  
13

14 Chair B. Irwin welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.  
15

16 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

17 None.

18 **Welcome, Introductions, Opening remarks**

19 B. Irwin welcomed everyone to the NRPC's holiday board meeting.

20 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

21 No members of the public offered comments.  
22

23 **Commission Reports**

24 Chair B. Irwin noted that staff updates are included in the board meeting packet.

25 **Finance/Operations** - No meeting.

26 **Personnel** – L. Ruple reported that the NRPC readvertised for the Transportation Planner  
27 position, and Linda Blasch's position is now also vacant.

28 **Executive Committee** – B. Irwin reported that the committee reviewed the code of conduct,  
29 which will be presented tonight for comment and action. The Committee also reviewed a  
30 proposal to open new checking accounts related to clean water programs.

31 **Project Review Committee (action item)** – B. Irwin reported that there is one project to  
32 take action on – a car dealership expansion in Franklin Park West which did not adequately  
33 address sidewalks and therefore the Committee has determined that it does not conform to  
34 the Regional Plan.

35 *B. Buermann motioned to ratify the committee's report that determines that the project*  
36 *does not conform to the Regional Plan. B. Morris seconded.*

37 *Discussion: B. Irwin explained that this issue comes a lot and every time we ask them to put*  
38 *sidewalks in the industrial park, an area that is bounded by shopping areas where people*

1 could walk and exercise. Each time, the applicant does not incorporate sidewalks and there  
2 is a conflict between local and regional planning in this area. In Act 250, where there is a  
3 difference in local and regional plans, the town plan rules unless the project has significant  
4 regional impact. The Committee has asked for a master plan from the Town of St. Albans to  
5 address sidewalks for the whole industrial park. A. Voegele asserted that the Town does  
6 have a master plan and that over time they will have sidewalks. They require developers to  
7 pay into a fund to build sidewalks.

8 *The motion was carried. A. Voegele abstained.*

9 **Transportation Advisory Committee** - TAC met on November 10<sup>th</sup>. B. Buermann reported  
10 that they heard a presentation from GMT on micro-transit. A micro-transit project in  
11 Montpelier has been successful and they are looking at expanding from Barre to Berlin and  
12 trying it out in an area that is more rural. Generally, the pilot has been successful at getting  
13 people where they need to be.

14 **Energy and Climate** – The Committee met in November and A. Voegele was elected chair of  
15 the committee and P. Zamore as vice chair.

16 **FY24 Municipal Assessment Rate (action item)** - B. Morris reported that rather than meet  
17 this month with only 2 members, the Finance Committee members (B. Morris and R.  
18 Brown) individually recommended that the assessment rate be presented to board for  
19 action.

20 *B. Morris motioned to accept the 3% increase presented in the FY24 Municipal Assessment*  
21 *Rate. A. Voegele seconded.*

22 *Discussion: There was discussion around whether 3% is a high enough increase for the*  
23 *stability of the organization. It was stated that board policy is to raise more than 3% when*  
24 *there is a demonstrated need budget wise, and NRPC does not have that need right now. B.*  
25 *Morris suggested that we can revisit the 3% increase and whether it should be raised in 6*  
26 *months.*

27 *Motion carried. R. Thatcher abstained because the NRPC attorney advises that youth*  
28 *members not vote for fiduciary reasons. However, R. Thatcher is not under 18, so this may*  
29 *need to be revisited.*

30 **Treasurer Position and Committee Assignments.** B. Irwin reported that H. Garrett has been on  
31 the board 20 years and would like to step down from his leadership roles but stay on the Board.  
32 As a result, we need to elect new treasurer. H. Garrett has agreed to stay on until we find a  
33 new one. B. Irwin asked if anyone is interested. He noted that the board will have elections at  
34 the January meeting.

35 **Code of Conduct.** B. Irwin introduced a draft code of conduct for the Board of Commissioners.  
36 C. Dimitruk explained that they are looking for initial thoughts and comments and that it will be

1 brought to the Board in January for action. It is currently under review by the Commission's  
2 attorney. The Committee engaged in a discussion around the role of the code of conduct for  
3 board members as an expectation of how to behave and to set a common tone and  
4 understanding for board conduct. Issues that were brought up were how to manage a situation  
5 where an appointed representative refuses to follow the code up front, the understanding that  
6 diversity in the population is not always visible and that more discussion is needed. C. Dimitruk  
7 assured the board that it is important to adopt a code that the board is comfortable with, not  
8 to do it quickly.

9 **Presentation.** Abundant Sun representatives presented and led a discussion on Bias and  
10 Influence as part of the board's ongoing diversity, equity and inclusion work.

11 **Commissioner Announcements.** Staff and commissioners were honored for reaching  
12 milestones in service.

13 **Meeting Adjourned.**

DRAFT



Swanton Town	vacant												
Swanton Village	Elisabeth Nance	X			X	X							
Swanton Village	Neal Speer					X							
# MUNICIPALITIES		<b>14</b>			<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>							

QUORUM = 12

E= Excused

Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
**Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual**  
July through December 2022

	Jul - Dec 22	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
<b>Income</b>				
4016 - EDA	69,170.67	375,000.00	-305,829.33	18.45%
4026 - Grants in Aid Pilot Program	54,708.51	203,300.00	-148,591.49	26.91%
4027 - Healthy Roots	82,585.52	191,745.00	-109,159.48	43.07%
4030 - ACCD	190,536.82	436,131.00	-245,594.18	43.69%
4035 - VAOT	68,858.27	248,739.00	-179,880.73	27.68%
4045 - Public Safety	26,555.09	73,500.00	-46,944.91	36.13%
4047 - Municipal Assessments	64,110.00	64,108.00	2.00	100.0%
4050 - Municipal Contracts	132,580.68	131,430.00	1,150.68	100.88%
4054 - Other State Grants	59,003.54	99,800.00	-40,796.46	59.12%
4055 - Other Federal Grants	138,923.69	456,100.00	-317,176.31	30.46%
4056 - VANR	90,685.51	808,836.00	-718,150.49	11.21%
4059 - RSEP-St. Albans Town & City	5,857.70	6,000.00	-142.30	97.63%
4075 - VOREC	8,394.71	16,325.00	-7,930.29	51.42%
4080 - Misc. Income	119,311.70	193,500.00	-74,188.30	61.66%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,111,282.41</b>	<b>3,304,514.00</b>	<b>-2,193,231.59</b>	<b>33.63%</b>
<b>Expense</b>				
5010 - Salaries & Wages	535,276.41	978,500.00	-443,223.59	54.7%
5015 - Employer Social Security	32,483.81	60,667.00	-28,183.19	53.54%
5016 - Employer Medicare	7,597.04	14,188.25	-6,591.21	53.55%
5020 - Fringe Benefits	83,809.95	223,180.00	-139,370.05	37.55%
5030 - Travel	9,253.33	12,400.00	-3,146.67	74.62%
5040 - Advertising	1,497.80	4,500.00	-3,002.20	33.28%
5055 - Insurance-Liability	6,961.99	9,000.00	-2,038.01	77.36%
5080 - Meetings	7,408.81	8,000.00	-591.19	92.61%
5085 - Membership Dues	5,385.50	14,000.00	-8,614.50	38.47%
5090 - Technology and GIS	9,120.75	22,100.00	-12,979.25	41.27%
5092 - Healthy Roots Expense	15,030.04	62,200.00	-47,169.96	24.16%
5095 - Software	5,470.91	28,350.00	-22,879.09	19.3%
5100 - Supplies & Furniture	6,453.33	165,000.00	-158,546.67	3.91%
5660 - Postage	404.94	2,500.00	-2,095.06	16.2%
5680 - Printing & Copies	2,307.60	5,000.00	-2,692.40	46.15%
5700 - Telephone	5,406.88	10,000.00	-4,593.12	54.07%
6300 - Professional Services	369,038.20	1,432,829.00	-1,063,790.80	25.76%
6400 - Building/Utilities	13,425.16	40,508.00	-27,082.84	33.14%
6560 - Payroll Expenses	923.78	0.00	923.78	100.0%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,117,256.23</b>	<b>3,092,922.25</b>	<b>-1,975,666.02</b>	<b>36.12%</b>
	<b>-5,973.82</b>			

Open Invoices as of December 31, 2022 **\$279,357.41** Original Mortgage  
 Franklin County Industrial Dev Corp - outstanding mortgage **\$83,930.81** **\$130,000**  
 NEFCU - outstanding mortgage **\$56,119.20** **\$92,433.39**



## Northwest Regional Planning Commission

## Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2022

01/17/23

Accrual Basis

	<u>Dec 31, 22</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · People's Checking Account	273,787.45
1020 · People's Money Market Account	11,050.78
1035 · New England Federal Cr-1Year CD	44,980.88
1036 · New England Fed Cr-CD 5 Year	64,933.06
1040 · Union Bank	98,808.05
1080 · Petty Cash	9.05
1085 · Northwest VT Reg Foundation	5,000.00
Total Checking/Savings	498,569.27
Accounts Receivable	
1200 · Accounts Receivable	279,357.41
Total Accounts Receivable	279,357.41
Other Current Assets	
1400 · Prepaid Software	5,825.66
Total Other Current Assets	5,825.66
Total Current Assets	783,752.34
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>783,752.34</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 · Accounts Payable	48,282.87
Total Accounts Payable	48,282.87
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	141.60
2100 · Employee Health Ins. Payable	-204.49
2106 · Dental Insurance Payable	-242.84
2110 · Health Equity	4,251.81
2111 · Direct Deposit Liabilities	0.05
2120 · Accrued Payroll	41,932.54
2130 · Accrued Vacation	56,844.87
2213 · VT Tax Withholding Payable	3,542.92
2215 · Retirement Payable	9,205.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	115,471.46
Total Current Liabilities	163,754.33
Total Liabilities	163,754.33
Equity	
3000 · Opening Bal Equity	275,000.00
3900 · Fund Balance	350,971.83
Net Income	-5,973.82
Total Equity	619,998.01
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b><u>783,752.34</u></b>

## Project Review Committee: Monthly Business Report

Month: January 2023

### Project Reviews

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1) **Project Type: Section 248a- Industrial Tower and Wireless, LLC**

Project Location: Bordoville Road, Enosburgh, VT

Substantial Regional Impact: Yes  No  (If yes, Board action required)

- *Project Details:* Application for construction of a 140' tower and associated infrastructure in Enosburgh, VT.
  - *Project Comments:* Project is not in conformance due to height of tower without firm evidence of co-location. At this meeting, an update on the project was provided but further action was not taken.
  - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes  No
- 

2) **Project Type: Section 248- David & Peggy Howrigan (Wind Project)**

Project Location: 1272 Menard Road, Fairfield, VT

Substantial Regional Impact: Yes  No  (If yes, Board action required)

- *Project Details:* 150 kW wind system under 2 separate applications.
  - *Project Comments:* The Committee requested an independent aesthetics analysis to clarify potential impact of the project on Fairfield Pond.
  - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes  No
- 

3) **Project Type: Section 248a- VELCO**

Project Location: 238 Troy Street, Richford

Substantial Regional Impact: Yes  No  (If yes, Board action required)

- *Project Details:* Replacement of an existing diesel generator for a cellular tower with a new BESS system.
  - *Project Comments:* Committee's initial concerns about project safety were addressed by the applicant. The project is a "de minimis" addition so a formal motion on conformance with the Regional Plan is not part of the process.
  - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes  No
- 

4) **Project Type: Act 250- Highgate Airport Industrial Park, LLC**

Project Location: VT Route 78, Highgate, VT

Substantial Regional Impact: Yes  No  (If yes, Board action required)

- *Project Details:* Construction of an access road from VT 78, crossing the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) and extending southerly across an unnamed tributary of the Kelley Brook to permit access to the land-locked southeast portion of this property.
  - *Project Comments:* Committee found the project does not have a substantial regional impact and is in conformance with the Regional Plan, motion carried 4 in favor, 1 opposed. The Committee noted that if the parcel were to be used for commercial/industrial uses in the future there may be a concern about the access road intersecting with the LVRT.
  - *Conformance with Regional Plan:* Yes  No
- 

**Staff Reviews:** None.

**Board Action Necessary:** None.

## Committee and Staff Reports January 2023

NRPC has a YouTube channel for Board meetings, trainings and select committee meetings.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1JLkE8lwP-Vjd-5RYRaQjQ>

**Finance/Operations** – *Treasurer Elect*. The committee will meet in February for the budget adjustment.

**Personnel Committee**- *Lori Ruple*. The committee met to conduct interviews for the Transportation Planner and made an offer to the top candidate. Kyle Grenier accepted the position and started at NROC on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Executive Committee**- *William Irwin*. The committee met and reviewed the year to date budget and Board meeting schedule.

**Project Review** – *Bob Buermann*. The committee met and a report is enclosed.

**Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)** – *Harold Garrett*. The committee met on January 12<sup>th</sup> and had a preliminary discussion on Regional Plan transportation chapter goals and policies. The TAC also approved sending a letter to VTrans supporting replacing Bridge 20 in Sheldon (Bouchard Rd) with Bridge 11 (Church St) as a project in the General Highway Bridge Fund. This approval is dependent on the Town of Sheldon also supporting this project swap.

**Energy and Climate Committee**- *Bob Buermann*. The committee met and reviewed the draft energy chapter.

**Brownfields Committee** – *Staff*. The FY19 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant ended on September 30, 2022; closeout will be completed by the end of January. There is just over \$8,000 of unallocated funding from the ACCD Assessment funding. Funding announcements to replenish both of these sources are expected over the course of the Spring. Staff continues to coordinate with the Village of Swanton on brownfields assessment and cleanup at 6 South River Street; Section 106 approval (historic preservation) is moving forward.

**Regional Plan Committee**- *Elisabeth Nance*. The committee meets January 23<sup>rd</sup> to review the land use, all-hazards and energy sections.

**Municipal Plan Review Committee** – *Rowena Brown*. The committee did not meet.

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

**GMT**- *Bob Buermann/Catherine Dimitruk*. The GMT reviewed the FY24 budget and welcomed the new General Manager.

### Transportation

- Staff is supporting Northwest Vermont Rail Trail Council on adding LVRT in their work, including website update, expansion of Rail Trail Coordinator's tasks, and coordination of LVRT Grand Opening and Celebration of MVRT.
- NRPC worked with VTrans on a Road Safety Audit Review (RSAR) for VT Route 105 corridor from the intersection of VT105 and VT104 in St Albans Town and extending east to the class 1 limits in Enosburg Falls. The event was held on 1/11/2023 and included more than 25 participants representing VTrans, law enforcement, emergency response and local municipalities.
- VTrans has hired Wall Consultant Group to refine the St. Albans VT-104 & Exit 19 intersection project scope. NRPC staff will be a part of the project committee and will share updates with the TAC and board as they become available.

- As part of separate Municipal Project Manager (MPM) agreements with Franklin, Swanton and Montgomery, helped those towns with locally led transportation projects; assistance included coordination with VTrans and federal permitting officials, assisting in the identification of construction inspection engineers, and reporting/invoicing.
- Staff is kicking off a village streetscape scoping study in South Hero funded by a Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Program grant. Staff will serve as municipal project manager.
- With additional funding from VTrans, NRPC will be leading a scoping study for a trailhead and parking area at the junction of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail and the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail in Sheldon.
- Attended public hearing on USCBP's Highgate Port of Entry reconstruction project. The current project will design and build a new Land Port of Entry to replace the existing 25-year-old facility. Construction starts in May 2024 and completes in September 2027. See <https://www.gsa.gov/highgatespringslpoe> for more information.

### Emergency Management

- Activated for by State Emergency Operations Center during December 23-24<sup>th</sup> severe wind event. Collected and compiled situational reports from all communities in region. State currently assessing whether FEMA public assistance and individual assistance programs will be requested.
- Provided EM support (primarily sheltering information) to municipal officials before, during and after storm.
- On-going work with Vermont Department of Health District staff for supporting the Northwest Vermont Medical Reserve Corps including grant writing and team capacity building.
- Updating Local Hazard Mitigation Plans for Enosburgh and Berkshire.
- Continued collaboration with VT Department of Health (CDC Grant) on statewide program for emergency hot weather planning. Completed draft sheltering annexes for all communities in Grand Isle County as well as St. Albans City and Town and Swanton Town and Village.
- The Executive Director's appointment on the Climate Council ended in November.
- New staff attended FEMA and state trainings appropriate for serving in State EOC and in VEM/RPC's local liaison program during times of disaster.

### GIS

- Continued to work on updating each municipality's Road Atlas and the Community Maps (E-911).
- Worked on updating maps for the Regional Plan.
- Working on updating the South Hero Town Plan Maps.

### Municipal Planning

- Technical assistance to Alburgh, Berkshire, Enosburg Falls, Fairfield, Fletcher, Franklin, North Hero, Sheldon, South Hero, Fletcher, Franklin, Montgomery, Highgate, Georgia, Grand Isle and Richford.
- Continued work on the Alburgh Child Care Center by working with project partners on funding applications and coordinating with the architect and engineering team on preparing construction documents.
- Bakersfield, with support from NRPC, continued work on the Brigham Academy redevelopment project through a Community Development Block Grant.
- Working with the City of St. Albans and the Almond Blossoms child care facility to provide grant management services for a renovation that will add 30 child care spots. Construction of the facility is complete and all childcare spots are now filled.
- Staff provided grant management services to the Town of Fairfield and the Fairfield Community Center VCDP for a CARES Act grant to construct an outdoor pavilion in East Fairfield. Construction has been completed on the project.
- Providing Highgate and Sheldon with on-going zoning administrator services.
- Working with the Town of South Hero to complete a Municipal Planning Grant funded update to its Town Plan. The Planning Commission is reviewing drafts of the plan over the course of the next few months.

- Completing bylaw audits and updates aimed at reducing regulatory barriers to housing choice and affordability, funded by a bylaw modernization grant from ACCD to St. Albans Town. A website has been initiated at <https://www.nrpcvt.com/housing-choice-and-affordability-in-northwest-vermont>. Staff is meeting with participating towns to review the regional and local housing assessments in December and January and is meeting with participating towns to review a housing audit of their bylaws in January and February.
- Supporting the Town of South Hero's new wastewater planning committee with preparations for a preliminary engineering investigation, including a plan for completing test pits on potential properties.
- Assisted the Town of South Hero with its VCDP Planning Grant to plan for renovations of the South Hero Meeting House. The Town received an amendment to the grant to fund final design, allowing the Town to leverage implementation funding.
- Staff is supporting the Richford Planning Commission on working with a consultant to develop a Streetscape Master Plan, funded by a Municipal Planning Grant. A public opportunities presentation was held in December and staff will be working to complete the final report in February.
- As part of a statewide RPC partnership, worked on developing a health equity toolkit for municipalities.
- Staff is contributing as a supporting team member to the Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Commission VOREC grant studying bike routes in the community.
- Staff is completing a review of municipal flood hazard bylaws for conformance with FEMA standards, which is a requirement for continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Program when new NFIP maps become effective. Draft Special Flood Hazard Area maps for the region are anticipated to be released in the Spring of 2023.
- Provided assistance to the Town of Highgate with updating data and information in their Town Plan.

### Energy

- Continued work building Saint Albans region Civilian Conservation Corps, a new organization that will be funded by a thrift store and will use revenue to fund climate, conservation, and poverty fighting projects.
- Continued work on updating energy chapter of regional plan
- Worked with Swanton Energy Committee on organizing Button Up event
- Coordinated with other energy planners to create more consistent meet ups
- Worked with Clean Cities Coalition to organize and promote Walk to Shop events
- Connected with new town manager in Enosburg to discuss priorities and projects.

### Water Quality

- Continued activities in support of NRPC's role as Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP), which included:
  - Planning and Hosting Basin 6 (Missisquoi) and Basin 7 (Lamoille) Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) meetings;
  - Presenting BWQC with proposed project prioritization system, 'call for projects' announcement, and application form;
  - Supporting and attending meeting of Basin 6 Public Participation Committee;
  - Participating as member and Regional Planning Commission representative during meeting of Basin 5 Water Quality Council (Northern Lake Champlain) and providing update on Basin 7 activities at Clean Water Advisory Committee meeting;
  - Participating in monthly "CWSP check-ins" and other meetings organized by DEC;
  - Reviewing and commenting upon draft DEC guidance documents;
  - Identifying prequalified partners from among respondents to project implementer RFQ; and
  - Evaluating and scoring responses to contractor Request for Qualifications.
- Participated in information exchange meetings of water quality partner organizations in the northwest region and participated in quarterly meeting of water quality partners in the Lamoille and Northern Lake Champlain basins.

- Met with RSEP partners St. Albans City and St. Albans Town to approve 2023 budget and work plan and present summary of 2022 work, struck agreement with partner FNLC regarding 2023 tasks, and participated in post event discussion of 2022 Lake Lessons event.
- As part of Lake Carmi private roads project funded by LCBP, obtained landowner consent letter and project commitment letter for Patton Shore Road project.

#### Workforce & Economic Development and Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD)

- NRPC is supporting projects in Enosburgh, Bakersfield, St. Albans City, LVRT, as well as efforts in homelessness & housing, and workforce & business support.
- Staff are finalizing model town plan language and bylaw related to accessory on-farm businesses under the EDA Disaster Resiliency Grant. Staff are assisting the Town of Berkshire and Town of Fairfax with developing new draft bylaw language to support accessory on-farm businesses.
- Staff is providing grant management and application assistance to Northern Border Regional Commission grantees and interested parties.
- NVEDD is done in partnership with Lamoille County Planning Commission, Lamoille County Industrial Development Corporation, Northeastern VT Development Association, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation and Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation. Primary initiatives include the completion of an Economic Recovery Plan for the District, and an interactive platform on NVEDD and partners' websites that supports communities, planners, municipalities and others seeking information on various funding sources for economic development related projects.

#### Healthy Roots Collaborative- <https://www.healthyrootsvt.org/>

- Healthy Roots is working alongside the South Hero Land Trust and the Worthen Library to put together a series of talks called Winter Wednesday which is focused around the regional food system.
- Healthy Roots continues to work with the Abbey Group to move into donated space at their Blue Sky Packing location in Sheldon. Discussions with CVOEO have to started to see about sharing the use of that space for storage and aggregation.
- Healthy Roots received additional funding through VCDP to help support regular delivery of local produce to select food sites in the region.
- Staff is starting to put together the 2022 Healthy Roots Annual Report, some preliminary numbers from last year include: 47,343 lbs. of produce distributed, 50,687 Everyone Eats meals organized and distributed, 37 recipient sites, 20 farm and food donors, 206 volunteers, 13 gleaning field trips, \$10,000 spent on local food purchasing, and 65 farms and food producers engaged in networking, community engagement and market access facilitation.
- The Healthy Roots Gleaning Program has entered its slow season, but we are still distributing locally grown root vegetables to our recipient sites every other week.
- Year-end reports and thank you letters are being sent to our farm donors, recipient sites, and volunteers.

#### Housing For All - Working Communities Challenge

- Housing For All's Core Team met in December to discuss follow-up from the November Community Conversation on Housing. Members appreciated hearing the diversity of views and experiences of participants. Follow-up will include engaging municipal officials and employers.
- The Housing Needs Assessment will be complete by the end of January. The report confirms we are not creating the number and types of homes in Franklin and Grand Isle counties to provide people with the foundation for economic stability and better health.
- All Vermont Working Communities Challenge initiative directors met to review policy objectives that include supporting community-based economic development and ensuring the sustainability of our work beyond the grant period.

## **Discussion Draft 01/25/23**

### **Code of Conduct for the Northwest Regional Planning Commission**

#### **Purpose:**

This policy provides a standard to ensure the Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is striving at every meeting, forum or other official interaction to treat every person fairly and with respect, regardless of any differences. This policy is adopted in part to uphold the intent of the NRPC's *Statement of Inclusion* (attached) and other adopted policies of NRPC.

This policy ensures that members of the Board of Commissioners or an established committee of NRPC (members) understand their role is to uphold the goals of NRPC and the interests of the community or group they represent.

The Code of Conduct will be provided to all members of the NRPC Board and Committees, including new members as they join, and will be periodically reviewed and affirmed.

#### **General Conduct**

Members of the Board of Commissioners and committees shall conduct themselves in a manner that serves the public interest and is consistent with this Code of Conduct, NRPC's *Statement of Inclusion* and the mission of NRPC. In addition, Board and Committee members will:

- Act honestly, conscientiously, reasonably and in good faith at all times having regard for a member's responsibilities, the interests of NRPC and the welfare of the region.
- Refrain from communicating or acting in a disrespectful, abusive and/or threatening manner towards members of the community, other members of the Board/Committee, or NRPC staff.
- Comply with all applicable local, state and federal government laws, rules, and regulations including but not limited to Vermont's Open Meeting and Public Records Laws, as well as all NRPC adopted policies including but not limited to the Conflict of Interest Policy and the Personnel Policy's non-discrimination policy (attached).

#### **Conduct in Carrying out Duties of the Board or Committee**

All members appointed to the Board of Commissioners or one of its committees must maintain respectful discourse with their fellow members, with those who work for NRPC, those who volunteer their time and services on behalf of NRPC, and members of the public.

- Treat all members of the Board/Committee to which you belong with respect despite differences of opinion; keeping in mind that professional respect does not preclude honest differences of opinion, but requires respect within those differences.

- Participate and interact in official meetings with dignity and decorum fitting those who hold a position of public trust.
- Attend all regularly scheduled Board and committee meetings insofar as possible, and notify staff as soon as possible if unable to attend.
- Uphold the intent of executive session as defined in the Open Meeting Law and respect the privileged communication that exists in executive session.
- Act only as a member of the Board/Committee and not assume any individual authority when the Board/Committee is not in session, unless otherwise directed by the Board/Committee.
- Treat all staff as professionals and respect the abilities, experience, and dignity of each individual.
- Take advantage of learning opportunities related to NRPC's Statement of Inclusion.
- Utilize inclusive meeting practices to make all feel welcome. Words or phrases that have been used in the past or present in a derogatory manner towards a group of people should never be used, regardless of the context.
- Take advantage of opportunities to learn about NRPC projects and programs.
- Speak up -within meetings or to the Chair- if something does not meet this Code of Conduct. Hear with a fair and open mind and be responsive to concerns about conduct brought by members of the public, staff and other Board or committee members. Never retaliate against a person or persons raising a concern.

**Commented [c1]:** This was added at the suggestion of the NRPC attorney.

**Upholding the Code of Conduct Policy:**

NRPC strives to assist members in adhering to this Code of Conduct through education, training and discussion. All Board and Committee members of NRPC have a responsibility to respect and uphold this Code of Conduct. In addition to any other remedies or enforcement options available or required under the law, the NRPC Executive Committee may take any action including but not limited to:

- Request member(s) receive specific training or education
- Arrange for additional training for the Board or Committee
- Request an apology or other restorative action
- Vote to censure any member



- Notify the appointing authority that their member(s) is in violation of the Code of Conduct Policy
- Request resignation of the member(s)
- Remove the member from the Board or Committee (when NRPC is the appointing authority)

If any Board or Committee member is accused of violating NRPC's requirements under our Personnel Policies or a state or federal law, the NRPC will initiate actions as described in the NRPC Personnel Policies.

**I agree to abide by the principles outlined in this Code of Conduct and will strive to work as a productive member of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission. I understand that failure to adhere the Code of Conduct or other misconduct may result in formal actions taken by the Executive Committee.**

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Print

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Date

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Signature

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

### Northwest Regional Planning Commission Statement of Inclusion

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners, 2020

NRPC celebrates diversity and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, or disability. NRPC wants everyone to feel and be safe and welcome in the communities we serve. We formally condemn racism and discrimination in all of its forms, and commit to fair and equitable treatment of everyone in our communities. NRPC strives to ensure all of our actions, policies, and operating procedures reflect this commitment. NRPC has and will continue to support its member communities as places where all individuals can live freely, express their opinions, and feel a sense of belonging.

Personnel Policies

From NRPC Personnel Policies, Adopted 2019. This is an excerpt and does not represent the full policy.

U. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is against the policies of this employer, and illegal, for any employee to discriminate against or harass another employee, Commission member, or member of the public because of that person's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, citizenship, ancestry, place of birth, disability, military or veteran status, gender identity, health coverage status, HIV status, genetic information, crime victim status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition or any other category protected under local, state or federal law. This employer is committed to providing a workplace free from this unlawful conduct. It is a violation of this policy for an employee to engage in illegal harassment. It is also illegal, and violates the Commission's policies, to retaliate against any employee for filing or cooperating in the investigation of a complaint of illegal harassment.