

1 **NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting**
2 **May 31, 2023**
3 **Hybrid Meeting - St. Albans City Hall**

4 **Attendance**

5 Commissioners: See attached. A quorum was present to conduct business.
6 Staff: Barry Lampke, Catherine Dimitruk, Dean Pierce
7 Chair Bill Irwin welcomed attendees and called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

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9 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

10 None

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12 **Welcome, introductions, opening remarks**

13 Participants briefly introduced themselves.

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15 **Public Hearing: Draft Northwest Regional Plan**

16 **Review of comments received to date**

17 Catherine Dimitruk thanked people who provided comments. A draft was sent to
18 communities and stakeholders. One person attended public hearings. We received
19 many email and portal comments. Comments suggest clarifications only. No comments
20 suggested major changes. The committee will meet one more time in the middle of
21 June. Members will receive a final copy incorporating comments. There is one more
22 public hearing, and the Board will be able to adopt the plan in July provided no further
23 changes are made.

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25 **Members of the public and Commissioners share comments on the draft plan**

26 No members provided comment at this meeting. Bill Irwin and other members thanked
27 the committee and staff for their hard work. Catherine Dimitruk reminded members of
28 the public engagement efforts earlier in the process. NRPC will be preparing a more
29 robust implementation plan once the plan is adopted. The meeting remained open for
30 public comments on the plan.

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32 **Opportunity for Public Comment on the remaining agenda**

33 None

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35 **Minutes of the April 2023 Meeting**

36 *Howard Demars moved to approve the April minutes as written and Marietta Scholten*
37 *seconded. Bill Irwin noted a typo on line 112 of p. 3. Motion carried. Kirk Waite and Sarah Hadd*
38 *abstained.*

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40 **Commission Reports:**

41 **Finance/Operations**

42 Kirk Waite reported the committee met on 5/22 and discussed two items: building mortgage
43 (action item for tonight) and review of the draft FY24 budget.

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Personnel

Lori Ruple shared the committee will meet 6/13 for annual staff reviews.

Executive Committee

Bill Irwin reported the committee met on the draft Code of Conduct, included on this agenda and in the packet.

Project Review

Catherine Dimitruk shared there is a project review business report. Bill Irwin reported that the St. Pierre farm had a methane processor previously and now plans to connect to the VGS system. The Board is asked to vote to concur with the project review committee’s decision that it is in conformance with the regional plan.

Kirk Waite made a motion to concur with the committee’s recommendation. Howard Demars seconded.

Discussion: Howard Demars commented that planning stages show how meticulous this process will be and he was impressed with their presentation. Barclay Morris asked why the farm is transitioning to connect with the VGS system. Kirk Waite indicated the reason was the volume of the gas produced and the economics. *Motion carried.*

Transportation

Harold Garrett indicated the TAC met in May and discussed EV information structures and their locations.

Energy and Climate

Peter Zamore indicated members at the recent meeting the committee wanted to see additional data and grounding of the plan. Marlena Valenta will provide the committee with this and more context for a future committee discussion.

Brownfields

Catherine Dimitruk reported that on 5/25 the commission received a new grant and replenishment of revolving loan and grant fund. She thanked Greta Brunswick for this work. Bill Irwin noted there is a vacancy on the committee for a commission member.

Regional Plan and Policy Committee

Peter Zamore noted that the committee will meet in June.

Municipal Plan Review

Committee did not meet.

Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – C. Dimitruk reported that there were no projects in the region.

88 **Green Mountain Transit-** Catherine Dimitruk clarified the January reinstatement of fares will only
89 take place in urban areas (there are none in our region).

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91 **Staff Reports**

92 Barry Lampke reported that the Housing For All Core Team is still seeking interviewees for
93 Voices From Home, a video series about how people in the region have navigated the housing
94 crisis. Contact him at blampke@nrpcvt.com if you know someone who may be willing to be
95 interviewed. A stipend is available for participants; Dean Pierce indicated the Basin Water
96 Quality Councils supported by NRPC had recently announced their second “Call for
97 Applications” and are continuing to make progress in their work. Catherine Dimitruk shared
98 that legislation passed provides additional funding for RPCs and she will share more once the
99 governor signs it. She will also share legislative summaries of relevant bills. The legislature also
100 created two RPC summer study committees: one is look at future land use plan, the other is
101 about municipal delegation for Act 250. Chip Sawyer asked if NRPC would inform towns about
102 July 1st about zoning for places with water and sewer. Howard Demars noted challenges fire
103 districts are facing with funding eligibility restrictions. Catherine indicated there may be an
104 upcoming funding opportunity and requested Howard contact her.

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106 **Code of Conduct**

107 *Barclay Morris made a motion to approve the Code of Conduct; Peter Zamore seconded.*
108 Discussion: Barclay Morris appreciated the clarification that the Code applies when members
109 are acting in an official capacity. *Motion carried.*

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111 **Mortgage Payoff**

112 Kirk Waite shared the commission currently has two mortgages, and that staff has
113 recommended paying off the NEFCU mortgage rather than refinancing; The Finance Committee
114 agreed and proposes using \$20,000 from building reserve fund and remainder from FY25
115 Budget. Barclay Morris noted the remaining building reserve funds are needed for foundation
116 and handicapped ramp. Harold Garrett shared a concern about using building reserve funds
117 given the condition of the building. Kirk Waite noted there can always be building
118 improvements, and that the remaining funds can be supplemented if needed. Catherine
119 Dimitruk noted we have a \$50,000 target for this fund so it would not be a great challenge to
120 bring it back up to this amount. Harold Garrett noted the condition of the driveway is not
121 adequate for wheelchairs and walkers. Linda McCall asked what the savings will be to pay it off.
122 Catherine Dimitruk responded that we will save a considerable amount in interest. Sarah Hadd
123 noted current interest rates make refinancing expensive. Kirk Waite suggested the commission
124 create a long-term capital plan rather than having monthly discussions about capital expenses.
125 Catherine Dimitruk suggested staff work with members to create a plan. Barclay Morris noted
126 roof, siding and windows were a big past focus. Chip Sawyer asked about space needs and the
127 value of the building for housing. Catherine Dimitruk indicated staff will explore this more.
128 *Sarah Hadd made a motion to approve the Finance Committee’s recommendation to pay off the*
129 *mortgage. Barclay Morris seconded. Ayes: Bill Irwin, Linda McCall, Sarah Hadd, Doug Grant,*
130 *Brian Dubie, Lori Ruple, Kirk Waite, Barclay Morris, Mary-Catherine Graziano, Andy Alling, Peter*

131 *Zamore, Chip Sawyer, Marietta Scholten, Megan Sherlund, Harold Garrett, Nicole Draper, Reg*
132 *Belliveau. Nays: Harold Demars. Motion carried.*

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134 **Public Hearing: Draft Northwest Regional Plan**

135 *Sarah Hadd made a motion to close public hearing for comments; Kirk Waite seconded. Motion*
136 *carried.*

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138 **Commission Announcements**

139 *Sarah Hadd invited members to Fairfax's June 19th Juneteenth Celebration from 3:00 – 8:00P.*

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141 *Howard Demars made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Andy Alling seconded. Motion carried,*
142 *the meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.*

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