

1 **NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting**
2 **February 25, 2025, at 6:30 PM**
3 **Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and NRPC Office)**
4 **75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans, VT 05478**
5

6 **Board Member Attendance:** *See attached.* A quorum was present to conduct business.
7

8 **Staff:** Catherine Dimitruk, Shaun Coleman, Luke Slomba
9

10 **Other Attendees:** None
11

12 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

13 None
14

15 **Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks**

16 Chair P. Zamore called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM followed by roll call. D. Broderick, A.
17 Alling, and Y. Dandurand made commissioner introductions.
18

19 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

20 No public commented.
21

21 **Minutes of the January 2026 Meeting (action)**

22 *B. Murphy motioned to accept the January 2026 minutes as corrected. A. Alling seconded.*
23 *B. Murphy asked that the attendance sheet be corrected to reflect her attendance at the*
24 *last meeting. C. Dimitruk responded that the sheet would be corrected. Motion passed.*

25 **Commission Reports - written reports enclosed**

26 Finance/Operations– K. Waite reported that the committee discussed assignment of funds
27 to long term reserves and will be asking for approval later at this meeting.

28 Personnel – No report.

29 Executive Committee – No report.

30 Project Review– W. Irwin reported on the three projects that are listed on the Project Review
31 Report in the board packet. He updated the board that the City of St. Albans project was
32 found to be in conformance with the Regional Plan and to have no substantial regional
33 impact, which was not listed in the packet. He noted that the G.W. Tatro project to resume
34 and expand operations of a rock quarry in Fletcher was found to have substantial regional
35 impact so it will require a board vote. H. Britch-Valenta asked for a summary of the impact.
36 W. Irwin responded that it's centrally located in the region so towns will benefit from a new
37 source of rock. H. Demars added that it will also cut down on truck travel in the region. S.
38 Jensen noted that she is on the Act 250 District Commission and reviewed the project in
39 that capacity, and it was determined that she should abstain from the vote. *B. Morris*

1 *Motioned to approve the Project Review Committee recommendations on the G.W. Tatro*
2 *project in Fletcher. B. Murphy seconded. Motion carried, S. Jensen abstained. P. Zamore*
3 *noted that in the future Project Review votes should be a separate agenda item.*
4 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – At their most recent meeting, TAC had the chair
5 of the VT House Transportation Committee and a representative from VTrans as guests. At
6 the previous TAC meeting in November, the committee had voted to study local
7 transportation needs and costs in the region. At this meeting, the TAC learned that the
8 legislature and VTrans are also interested in determining what the total financial need is for
9 towns across the state for bridges and highways, etc. so TAC is postponing their project to
10 see what VTrans comes up with and not duplicate efforts. C. Dimitruk also noted that she
11 and a few other RPC Directors are having a follow-up meeting with the House
12 Transportation Committee chair to talk about regional priorities.
13 Brownfields Committee – No report
14 Plan and Policy Committee- L. Ruple reported that the committee met to review the St.
15 Albans City and Richford municipal plans and recommended that both receive board
16 approval. St. Albans City vote will be at this meeting, Richford vote will likely be in March.
17 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – C. Dimitruk reported that the council is co-
18 hosting a workshop on the Community Housing and Infrastructure (CHIP) Program with
19 NRPC and St. Albans Town in March.
20 Rural Community Transit- C. Dimitruk reported that she attended her first RCT board
21 meeting and got an overview on how the different routes are doing in terms of cost
22 effectiveness. RCT is working on a budget adjustment to reflect the new service area,
23 which will be discussed at the next meeting. The RCT board meets every other month.
24 Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- No report.
25 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- No report.
26 Office- See staff report.

27 **Emergency Management Program Highlights - Shaun Coleman, Senior Planner**
28 **(discussion)**

29 S. Coleman presented on NRPC transportation program highlights:

- 30 • Purposes of emergency planning and its role in regional planning's web of resilience.
- 31 • Overview of the different types of emergency planning services offered by NRPC to
32 municipalities, including project examples.
- 33 • List of committees and organizations that NRPC is involved with in emergency
34 planning and management.
- 35 • Challenges: 1. Slight reduction of funding in 2025, state took over funding for
36 updating emergency management plans; 2. Recruiting volunteers for fire and EMS;

1 3. Increasing dispatching costs; 4. Funding uncertainty at federal level, FEMA local
2 assistance is on hold and state hasn't heard anything about the status of current
3 programs.

- 4 • Board's role in emergency management program: Regional plan supports disaster
5 resilience goals. Board also approves budget for cross border collaboration during
6 disasters, and for trainings.

7 P. Zamore asked whether S. Coleman thinks there is an appropriate allocation of staff
8 time/funding to address flooding risks and impacts. S. Coleman responded that there are a
9 lot of different funding sources, including contracts with municipalities who get funding
10 from state/federal sources. The emergency planning fund has provided stable funding for
11 quite a few years. NRPC has been able to do the work we need through current funds, and
12 when there is a disaster we have access to additional money through the Local Liason
13 program.

14 P. Zamore asked how much of the NRPC's focus is proactive vs. reactive. S. Coleman
15 answered that about 80% of the focus is proactive, and there are usually 1-2 major
16 disasters every year that make it reactive. The recovery piece is a whole other thing that can
17 take months to years, NRPC provides initial support during early stages and then takes a
18 lesser role.

19 M. Bishop commented agreeing that getting fire training for people who are interested is a
20 large barrier. He also emphasized the importance of the dispatching costs issue and how
21 much money towns are spending. C. Rosenquist asked whether M. Bishop had any
22 suggestions or ideas on how to lower dispatch costs. M. Bishop responded that towns can't
23 do much locally, dispatch charges per capita so combining jurisdictions doesn't save
24 much. The state has a 5-6 year plan for establishing statewide dispatch with good ideas on
25 how to pay for it, funded by state taxes. At local/regional level we can pressure our
26 representatives to follow through on state plans.

27 H. Demars asked whether the current federal administration's reduction of funding will
28 affect S. Coleman's role or the services NRPC is able to offer. C. Dimitruk responded that
29 there are no staff adjustments as a result of the budget adjustment. S. Coleman responded
30 that it definitely limits the amount of services NRPC is able to offer and we can't honor
31 every request for local assistance like we used to.

32 **City of St. Albans Municipal Plan and Confirmation of Planning Efforts**

33 L. Ruple reported that the Plan and Policy Committee met two weeks ago and reviewed a
34 memo and supporting materials from staff that are also available in the report. She

1 recommended that the Board make a motion for approval of the plan and confirmation of
2 St. Albans City's planning process.

3

4 *B. Murphy made a motion to grant regional approval to the St. Albans City Plan and regional*
5 *confirmation of St. Albans City's planning process. Y. Dandurand seconded. Motion carried,*
6 *with C. Sawyer abstaining.*

7

8 **FY 26 Budget Adjustment (action)**

9 C. Dimitruk reported that the Finance Committee met last week and reviewed the
10 proposed mid-year budget adjustment. Staff prepared a memo with projected revenues
11 and expenses based on FY26 revenues and expenses so far as of mid-year. The end result
12 of the proposed budget adjustment is that NRPC is still in the positive by a small amount.
13 There were no questions or comments on the budget adjustment.

14 *W. Irwin moved to accept the proposed budget adjustments. H. Demars seconded. Motion*
15 *carried.*

16 **Long Term Reserve Fund Assignment (action)**

17 C. Dimitruk stated that the question before the Board tonight is whether to increase the
18 portion of the fund balance that the Board has already set aside for long-term reserves. The
19 increase would be +\$65,800 dollars to bring in compliance with the new fund balance
20 policy adopted by the Board last month.

21 *B. Murphy motioned to approve the assignment of \$65,800 to long term reserves. as*
22 *presented. C. Rosenquist seconded. Motion carried.*

23 **Commissioner Announcements**

24 E. Nance announced that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns received a Northern
25 Border Regional Commission capacity award to assist municipalities with the new
26 Community Housing and Infrastructure (CHIP) Program. It's currently live on the VLCT
27 website and they have received interest so far. S. Jensen asked whether this funding could
28 be used to help Isle La Motte with a senior housing project. E. Nance responded that the
29 grant is for technical assistance, if a town reaches out to VLCT they can see if it's a good fit.

30 Adjourned 7:32PM