



**APROVED MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
November 20, 2019**

Present:

Karin Elmer, Chair
Jim Battis, Vice Chair
Susan Ruch, Treasurer
Janet Langdell
Sarah Marchant (via phone)
Tim Tenhave
Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja

Absent:

Tamara Sorell

Staff:

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director
Sara Siskavich, Assistant Director

1. Call to Order

Elmer called the Executive Committee meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Business

a. Public Hearing: Approval of FY 2019-2020 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #2/Metropolitan Transportation Plan Minor Update

At 6:01 p.m. Elmer opened the public hearing with a motion from Melizzi-Golja and second from Battis.

Minkarah reviewed the Amendment which is largely administrative in nature. There are some adjustments to funding in various years mainly to manage fiscal constraint. In the Brookline Route 13 project there is more funding now in preliminary analysis to reflect additional ROW needed and PE is shifted. He reviewed the changes to the Turnpike project reflecting a shift of funding to "child" projects and additional dollars to account for inflation. At the request of Langdell, Minkarah clarified that none of the 61 signals in the statewide signalization project are located in the NRPC region, but that could change in the future.

At 6:11 pm, noting that there were no members of the public in attendance, Elmer accepted a motion by Ruch, seconded by Tenhave, to close the public hearing. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Ruch motioned, with a second from Langdell, to approve the FY 2019-2020 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #2/Metropolitan Transportation Plan Minor Update. The motion passed 7-0-0.

b. Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2019

Tenhave moved to approve the Executive Committee Minutes from October 16, 2019, seconded by Battis. The motion passed 6-0-1 with abstention from Elmer.

c. October-November Dashboard

There has been no TD checking activity, but lots of activity in the Bar Harbor account, particularly payables. There are a few invoices outstanding, but only two beyond 60 days for reasons that are anticipated and expected to be resolved. CDs continue to bump up and there has been no activation of credit.

The most notable staff activity, with many staff involved, was the intensive two-day TMA certification review which went rather smoothly. NRPC is starting to get information requests from FHWA, specifically in the area of civil rights compliance, and we are now starting to get questions related to our TMA board makeup.

Discussion turned to the need to dive deeper into MPO/TMA organizational issues versus waiting for specific federal feedback. Langdell cautioned that it would be confusing to make a recommendation to the Commission in December, only to then have to revise it afterwards. Tenhave asked for clarification on the timeline we must follow in order to comply, but Minkarah said that is somewhat undetermined and depends on the particular topic or issue at hand, for example, administrative corrections needed in the area of civil rights may be simpler fixes and could prompt more immediate action.

Minkarah then briefed the group on the latest GACIT hearing. NDOT has proposed changes to the draft Ten Year Plan; most significantly, several of our projects have advanced as a result of a proposed increase in the amount of borrowing. The NHDOT agreed to conduct a corridor study for Daniel Webster Highway in Merrimack between Exit 12 to the Bedford Town line. The Executive Council will soon bring forward to a vote on the elimination of Exit 11 tolls in Merrimack, effective January 1, 2020. Minkarah will prepare a Commissioner communication on these matters.

Other notable staff activities include Minkarah's presentation at the Souhegan Chamber and site visits at collaborative and innovative workspaces in support of economic development planning. NRPC Staffed the NHARPC booth at the NHMA conference for two days and two staff members attended the NNECAPA conference at the Mt. Washington. Minkarah noted that the conference was particularly good this year. Household Hazardous Waste events have wrapped up for the season and final reports are being prepared for communities.

The working budget shows no changes. In terms of Profit and Loss, we are about a third of the way through the fiscal year, the EPA and EDA grants, both on a quarterly cycle, are gearing up, but the overall income at 28% is below where we want to be. Expenditures are lower overall also, though we did have some small equipment purchases and overall expenditures have outpaced revenue, reflecting a loss.

At the request of Elmer, Ruch made a motion to accept the Dashboard and Financials and place them on file for audit, seconded by Battis. The motion passed 7-0-0.

3. Old Business

a. TMA/MPO Governing Body Composition

Minkarah reviewed the packet items that describe three potential paths forward in terms of TMA/MPO Governing Body Composition, i.e. 1) maintain the status quo, 2) a “minimum intervention” option, and 3) the creation of a free-standing MPO Policy Board. He then followed with an overview of the structure of the Rockingham RPC which contains a clear hierarchy with the MPO Policy Committee being a superset of the Commission. Discussion followed regarding the pros and cons of a new, more frequent meeting schedule, whether or not MPO reps need to be elected officials or if designees could be allowed if they themselves were not also elected officials, the incongruence between state law defining RPC representation and Federal MPO policy board membership requirements, and the general challenges of recruiting volunteers to serve on boards.

Golja reported that her status as a Commissioner will be ending in December. The group thanked her for her service to the Commission and Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee then set Thursday April 9 as the date for the Annual Forum, being that it is seemingly free of conflicts with most local board and vacation schedules. Minkarah would like to plan a theme of entrepreneurship. Langdell thought that topic could be broadened to include non-profit entrepreneurship.

b. NRPC 501(c)(3)

Minkarah provided the bylaws of the Sustainable SNHPC foundation, the purpose of which is to support and enhance the efforts of the Southern NH Planning Commission. He also provided an excerpt from the newsletter of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission’s newsletter announcing their application to the Internal Revenue Service for their non-profit had been approved.

c. Proposed Personnel Policy Amendments

Minkarah departed the meeting for another work obligation, at which point Siskavich reviewed the latest proposed changes to the working draft of the NRPC personnel budget, specifically the removal of gender-specific references in Section 5.3 Acceptable Attire and revisions to the Telecommute Policy Appendix as requested last meeting. The group concurred that the language “regular part-time” should be added to clarify the eligibility of part-time employees for this benefit, and to make the language consistent with other areas of the document.

Siskavich then briefly reviewed all other previously-discussed substantial proposed changes in this draft. At the request of Elmer, Tenhave moved to adopt the NRPC Proposed Personnel Policy Amendments, as amended, seconded by Langdell. The motion passed 7-0-0.

4. Transportation Programs

a. TMA Certification Review

Item adequately covered in 3a TMA/MPO Governing Body Composition.

b. UPWP Updates

Siskavich did not provide a specific UPWP update beyond the staff activities discussed on the dashboard.

c. TYP updates

Item adequately covered under Agenda items 1,2, and 3.

5. Other Business

Siskavich agreed to provide the hard-copy handouts not in the agenda packet to Marchant and Sorell.

Langdell noted a typo in the Dashboard which should read FY20 working budget.

Discussion returned to the web stats presentation on the dashboard. Ruch and Tenhave noted the remove of trend information which they found helpful. Siskavich agreed to add it next time.

Discussion then turned to the nature of group email and associated analytics that can be collected. Siskavich agreed to look into disclosure and opt-out language to the group email template similar to the NRPC newsletter.

6. Adjourn

With a motion from Ruch, seconded by Battis, the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Next Meeting: December 18th, 2019