



**APPROVED MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
January 23, 2018**

Present:

Susan Ruch, Chair
James Battis, Treasurer
Mike Fimbel
Sarah Marchant
William Boyd

Absent:

Karin Elmer, Vice Chair
Dave Hennessey
Janet Langdell

Staff:

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director

1. Call to Order:

Ruch called the Executive Committee meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

2. Business

a. Minutes – December 20, 2017 (Action Required)

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the December, 2017 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes made by Boyd, seconded by Marchant. The motion passed 5-0-0.

b. Minutes from Non-Public Sessions: April thru August 2017 (Action Required)

The Chair reordered the agenda to review minutes toward the end of the meeting.

Non Public Session: RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

7:05pm: Fimbel made a motion to enter into nonpublic Session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) to consider or act upon “the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee...” seconded by Boyd. Roll call vote:

Susan Ruch – yes
Sarah Marchant – yes
Mike Fimbel – yes

William Boyd – yes
James Battis – yes

Hard copies of the draft and sealed Minutes for Non-Public Sessions that were held on April 19, 2017, May 17, 2017, June 21, 2017, July 19, 2017, and August 16, 2017 were reviewed. Each of these Non-Public Sessions was held pursuant to RSA 91-A:3.

7:11pm: Boyd made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 19, 2017, seconded by Fimbel. Friendly amendment by Boyd was made to approve the minutes subject to specific edits (correct attendance and add votes of attendee). The minutes were approved, as edited, by a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.



7:13pm: Boyd made a motion to approve the Minutes of May 17, 2017, seconded by Fimbel. Friendly amendment was made by Ruch to approve the minutes subject to specific edits (fix format error and add minor clarifying detail). The minutes were approved, as edited, by a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

7:15pm: Boyd made a motion to approve the Minutes of June 21, 2017, seconded by Fimbel. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

7:16pm: Boyd made a motion to approve the Minutes of July 19, 2017, seconded by Fimbel. Friendly amendments were made by Fimbel and Battis to approve the minutes subject to specific edit for clarification purposes. The minutes were approved, as edited, by a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

7:18pm: Boyd made a motion to approve the Minutes of August 16, 2017, seconded by Fimbel. The minutes were approved, as edited, by a unanimous vote of 5-0-0.

Boyd made a motion to exit non-public session at **7:19 pm** seconded by Battis. Member Roll call vote:

Susan Ruch – yes
Sarah Marchant – yes
Mike Fimbel – yes

William Boyd – yes
James Battis – yes

c. December/January Dashboard and Financial Reports (*Action Required*)

Minkarah reviewed the bank account balances noting they are consistent with where we have been. There is approximately \$600,000 cash on hand, equating to about 5 months operating expenses. There are many pending grant applications, equating to a potential \$245,000 in new revenue if awarded. The largest is the EPA Brownfields grant.

Late December to early January was a quieter month given the holidays. NRPC launched the final Parks and Playgrounds suite of tools to promote recreation, including hosting a brownbag lunch. The Nashua Solid Waste Management District held its first organization meeting under the new cooperative agreement. Transportation staff was active coordinating with the other NH regional planning agencies including the Partnership for Performance Workgroup, SADES training, and Interagency conference. Karen organized our annual reports out to each of our member municipalities and managed distribution of the municipal land use law books.

Website statistics were down in December likely given the holidays and December was the first month without a HHW event. Constant contact opens was up this month.

Minkarah reviewed the Profit and Loss noting that there are no particular concerns. Total revenues were down a little in November; December should show an increase with several projects closing out at the end of the year. Balance sheet assets and liabilities are on target.

Fimbel made a motion to accept and place the report on file for audit, second by Boyd. The motion passed 5-0-0.

d. HB 1616 – Requiring Legislative Approval for Regional Planning Commissions to Accept Money from Governmental Sources other than the State or its Political Subdivisions

Minkarah will be attending the hearing tomorrow on HB1616 along with several other regional planning directors and the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions. There are a few varying interpretations of the direct impact this bill might have. Minkarah doesn't believe this would impact accessing federal funds sub-granted by a state agency. Were this to be precluded, regional planning agencies would be unable to access their federal transportation planning funds that are a requirement for the State to receive construction dollars. NH Municipal Association and several other groups will also be there to testify. Boyd offered some recommendations of key sponsors and committee members to contact and offered to assist.

3. Old Business

a. Nominating Committee Executive Committee Membership

The nominating committee consists of Fimbel, Langdell, and Ruch. Ruch has not yet contacted the Commissioners to send out an inquiry. Intent is to encourage a Commissioner to fill the vacant seat and identify additional individuals interested in potentially replacing long term Committee members. Marchant noted that Alderman Melizzi-Golja reached out to her and may be interested. She will be in touch with Minkarah.

b. NRSWMD Update

The Agreement has been signed by all communities and the district has met to elect officers. NRPC will be invoicing the district for the remaining budgeted funds. The transition occurred as was intended with no complications. The outreach process has shown a need to do more and increase awareness.

c. Working Budget Update

The working budget is in process and will be updated to reflect the NRSWMD program changes.

d. Pending Grants

There are several pending grant applications, the largest of which is the EPA Brownfields Assessment grant. NRPC was not awarded the Charitable Foundation proposal to conduct additional HHW outreach.

e. NRPC Office Lease Update

Minkarah conducted a survey of staff and is also looking to next reach out and survey frequent NRPC visitors to better understand travel patterns to help inform the RFP.

Ruch recalled there was past discussion of forming a subcommittee of Executive Committee members to assist in the process and wanted Minkarah's input on what might be helpful. Minkarah would appreciate any possible assistance and anticipates there could be many proposals. It would be helpful to have Commissioners assist in reviewing RFPs and attending showings. Marchant said she was happy to assist and serve on a subcommittee. Ruch feels like we should set up a subcommittee and perhaps discuss further next month. Boyd suggested putting it on the March Commission agenda to provide an opportunity for other Commissioners to participate. Ruch felt this was still a business operational function and should be led by the Executive Committee, but agreed it would be beneficial to broaden the subcommittee and include a few commissioners as well. At the February meeting the Committee will work on the logistics.

f. NRPC 2018 Annual Forum

Minkarah informed the Executive Committee that he's working to line up speakers and requested any possible contacts to do so. Marchant has a BAE contact and Boyd a Fidelity contact. Minkarah is looking for upper management to talk about recruiting challenges.

Ruch recalled the intent was to have a panel follow up on last year's Economic Development presentations. What specifically are we asking panelists to speak to? Fimbel asked; from the housing perspective, what does it take to build housing that matches the demand for needed workforce. Marchant noted that NH Housing might be a good speaker. Minkarah shared what he took from the Nashua Chamber's Economic Outlook luncheon today. The current issue is there is no way to meet market demand without increasing net migration. Ruch asked if there is an overarching theme for the Forum? Minkarah, focused on the concept of meeting demand for labor force and the ability to attract employees. The housing link would tie in as a critical component in order to recruit new talent. Minkarah is planning a moderated panel presentation and discussion.

The Committee discussed whether to reserve time to discuss legislative issues. Boyd felt the focus should be on the learning experience post Amazon HQ2. What do we need to do to compete with those locations that were finalists? What are our strengths and weaknesses? We should keep the focus on housing and workforce to make the region more marketable. How do we become a destination location for businesses?

4. Transportation Programs**a. FEE Turnpike Widening**

Minkarah noted the transportation programs updates are follow ups from the December Commission meeting. January's TTAC meeting included a presentation from DOT on both the FEE Widening and Open Road Tolling projects. The largest function of the FEE Widening cost increase was that the preliminary estimates were rough estimates and not prepared at the engineering level and as a result were well below actual costs. The project also includes an additional southern segment that was not part of the original scope. DOT was asked about increasing to 4 lanes and couldn't justify the expense of the additional lane. Battis noted part of the significant cost increase of doing so would be to upgrade the culverts to bridges to support the span. Traffic modelling also shows that the 3 lanes is projected to be satisfactory for at least 30 years. Minkarah pointed to modelling conducted by NRPC staff.

b. Open Road Tolling

This project consists of converting the F.E. Everett Turnpike toll plaza in the Town of Bedford to an Open Road Tolling (ORT) facility. Improvements include plaza widening, rehabilitation of the existing structure, roadway widening and Open Road Tolling (ORT) implementation. The conceptual estimate was developed in support of a study comparing ORT to All Electronic Tolling (AET) and only included "implementation" of the ORT facility. As the project progressed more details became known regarding the condition of the facility and additional items and elements of the improvements were included for rehabilitation of the facility. The two largest additional costs include advanced traffic management systems and toll plaza modifications. At the time it was evaluated ORT was selected over AET. However, NH DOT is reconsidering this approach as the capital costs of AET are significantly less than ORT.

c. NH 101, 101A, and 122 Lighting

This project was brought to NRPCs attention by Gordon Leedy, Amherst's Planning Director. DOT provided Amherst with short notice about the prospect of removing many of the street lights along several major corridors. NRPC hasn't been asked to do anything particular, but this is a regional issue. Ruch agreed that it is of regional importance. Minkarah would like to continue to follow up and have a further conversation at the February TTAC meeting and reach out to other communities on the corridor. Committee members suggested Minkarah include a conversation at the March Commission meeting. Ruch asked if there was a report to document DOT's evaluation process. Marchant noted there are high accident rate intersections on the list. Minkarah would like to know the criteria for deciding where to remove lights. This might be a less objective process than deciding where to place signals and may simply be a cost saving measure enacted by DOT.

d. TMA Update

Minkarah informed the Committee that the revised draft is in process. NRPC is working with SNHPC to prepare an updated model for proportional distributed funds and programming. The methodology will be documented within an updated version of the MOU between the MPOs, NH DOT, and Transit Providers.

5. Other Business

Fimbel, asked for an update on the Governor's decision to support the \$4 million rail study. Minkarah noted that the Governor's support helps, but the project will still need to proceed through the legislative process as part of the Ten Year Plan. Boston Surface presented at the last Rail Authority meeting. Fimbel requested a list of bills that pertain to commuter rail.

6. Adjourn

The next regular Executive Committee meeting will be Wednesday, February 21, 2018.

Motion to adjourn was made by Battis with a second by Marchant. The motion passed 4-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:32 PM.