



**APPROVED MINUTES  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
Executive Committee  
April 19, 2017**

**Present:**

Dave Hennessey, Chair  
Mike Fimbel, Vice Chair  
Karin Elmer, Treasurer  
James Battis  
William Boyd  
Janet Langdell  
Sarah Marchant  
Tom Young

**Absent:**

Susan Ruch

**Staff:**

Tim Roache, Executive Director  
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director

**1. Call to Order:**

Hennessey called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**2. Business**

**a. Minutes – March 14, 2017**

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the March 14, 2017 meeting. Czysz noted that the date of the minutes that were reviewed and approved needs to be corrected from January to February. Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Langdell, seconded by Boyd. The motion passed 7-0-1.

**b. February/March Dashboard and Financial Reports**

Roache reviewed the Dashboard noting that Karen has updated the constant contact newsletter distribution list to ensure all boards and key municipal staff are included on the newsletter. The effort yielded 55 new subscribers. Additionally, she has updated the NRPC website to ensure all community pages are current and all recent documents added to the document library. Other events over the past month included a brownbag lunch on sourcewater protection, staff from each of the regional planning commissions began a collaborative MS4 planning assistance effort, and Siskavich and Friedman presented trail mapping efforts. The NRPC YouTube channel includes the transit presentation from the recent commission meeting. The April 27 GIS brownbag will highlight LiveMaps interface changes.

Web hits are expected to increase with HHW ramping up. The first event is on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Constant Contact opens are based on existing number of subscribers, prior to the recent updated list.

Fimbel asked about the \$7,500 line of credit that is not activated. Is there any danger in not using it occasionally? Roache said we pay an annual fee so that it remains active. Continuing to look at the month financial statements, February was a negative month. The common area maintenance was high this month and included a periodic adjustment. The year end is however projected to end in the black and the balance sheet is stable.

Battis made a motion to accept and place the report on file, second by Boyd. The motion passed 8-0-0.

**c. Ten Year Plan Project Recommendations**

Roache updated the committee on the process to prepare the Ten Year Plan priority project listing. The process commenced in January and is taking a more realistic view of what is feasible than years past. DOT is seeking proposals for new projects to be incorporated into the final two years of the plan. As in past years, NRPC solicited and evaluated new projects using a methodology consistent with that used by other regions to rank projects.

Roach reviewed the list prioritized projects. Boyd noted that the Merrimack DW Highway Wire Road project may be acted upon by the town before the state can get to the project in the Ten Year Plan. The area is of greater urgency to the town. Fimbel asked for an overview of the Nashua West Gateway project. Marchant and Roache noted that the project will reconfigure the oval into a regular street block pattern and change one-way flows to be more effective. Marchant also noted that the DW Highway Pedestrian Connectivity project is in response to the recently competed Complete Streets project.

There were two projects that were submitted but not scored. One such project was submitted by the Lower Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee (LMRLAC). The project was not ready to move forward and would be a better candidate for a Transportation Alternatives Program grant. NRPC staff will follow up with LMRLAC to assist with scoping the project in advance of the next TAP grant round. The other project was a turnpike project and thus not eligible for Federal Highway funding. Projects included in this scoring round and the Ten Year Plan are focused on those that are federal aid eligible.

Elmer noted that LCHIP might be a better and a more expedient funding source for the proposed Milford swing bridge project. Roache noted that while the Ten Year Plan priorities will focus exclusively on the federal aid eligible projects, NRPCs letter to DOT will also address other priority projects beyond this subsection.

Marchant made a motion to accept and submit the Ten Year Plan project priority listing for the NRPC region to NHDOT, second by Langdell. The motion passed 8-0-0.

**d. Preliminary Draft FY2018 Budget**

Roache reviewed the draft budget for FY2018 highlighting a few new items. There are currently a couple placeholders for undecided grants and some carry over projects. The DOT contract is the large budget item under state funding sources. Revenue is almost the same as fiscal year 2017 (approximately \$1.4 million).

On the expense side there are few fluctuations. Increased Rent and Common Area Maintenance (CAM) account for the additional costs we've experienced. Also, Roache added funding to staff training to respond to the strategic plan process. Boyd agreed that training is critical to both professional development and networking with peers. Roache is hoping to offer this as a benefit to employees. Hennessey agreed this is a priority. The draft budget assumes a 10% increase for health insurance and a 5% increase for dental insurance when the plans are renewed mid fiscal year. Roach will be requesting a price at the time of policy renewal for an 18 month plan year. The intent is to shift the plan year to correspond with our budget fiscal year. Marchant asked if there are raises or cost of living increases proposed. Roache said no, Marchant suggested doing so if the grants come through. Marchant reiterated that salary increases are imperative to staff

retention adding the need to make any increases meaningful. She is fully supportive of raises being solely on a merit basis.

Boyd had to depart early.

The committee plans to review a second draft of the budget in May. The budget is to be finalized and presented to the full Commission for adoption in June.

**e. MS4 Stormwater Update**

Czys updated the Committee on NRPCs efforts to collaborate with the four other regions with regulated communities. To date NRPC has produced an information guide outlining the new permit requirements. This has been shared with the other four regions for their customization and use. In efforts to further collaborate, staff from the five regions met recently to discuss further potential services of common interest. Rockingham Planning Commission staff have developed a community assessment tool and is updating model stormwater regulations. Additionally, staff from the five regions developed a municipal services survey to assess interest levels in each of our regions. This survey has been sent out to all MS4 communities in the NRPC region as well as commissioners from those communities.

**3. Other Business**

This item was moved up in the agenda.

Roache shared a letter from the Mayor of Nashua requesting that NRPC take a formal position to elevate the priority of passenger rail. The City is looking to take an incremental approach, bringing rail to Nashua as an important first step. Hennessey agreed that the region should take a position on rail. Marchant noted that the City isn't talking about abandoning the Capital Corridor but instead looking to take the first step in bringing rail to Nashua. If our region doesn't step up, rail will not be feasible in New Hampshire. Fimbel said that demonstrating success in Nashua would be helpful in advocating for future extension beyond Nashua. Elmer suggested that since we are just looking at bringing the rail to Nashua, perhaps the Executive Committee could promote it as a City of Nashua effort. If and when the project extends beyond Nashua, then it would need Commission endorsement. Roache said that the project, even if it only goes to Nashua, is a regional project. Hennessey said Pelham is supportive of rail because it is next to impossible to get into the Lowell rail station parking. Marchant also noted that the bus lines are exceeding capacity and riders are frequently required to wait for a later bus. A further discussion of rail will be on the May agenda.

Dan Kelly, NRPC Commissioner from Nashua, has requested that NRPC meet with BIA staff to get out in front of the energy issues in New Hampshire. Hennessey questioned some of the statistics being used and is concerned the issue is being overstated. Marchant noted that NRPC does not have budget to work on the issue. Elmer did not support expending dues to solve the State's high energy costs. Marchant said we need more commitment or demand from communities before we move forward. However, all agreed that it would be worth meeting with Dan Kelly to learn more.

Fimbel noted that a study committee will be reporting to the Massachusetts governor to shift to Atlantic Time. New Hampshire has in the past stated that it will shift to Atlantic Time if Massachusetts does so.

#### 4. Old Business

##### a. 2019 NRPC Dues Discussion

Last month we had limited time to discuss whether to increase dues in the future. Langdell asked about making a list of anticipated costs. Roache noted currently about \$150,000 of the \$163,000 of dues goes toward match funds for grants, special projects, and cost for purchases not eligible under our federally approved indirect rate.

Elmer suggested we survey communities on what services they would like NRPC to be offering and estimate what the additional cost would be to support those projects or needs. Marchant said we also need to tie the dues rate to the cost to implement the strategic plan. What items in the strategic plan are without a funding source? Hennessey disagreed with issuing a survey tied to a dues conversation. He suggested the evaluation of the need for additional revenue be based upon implementation of the strategic plan.

All agreed the most critical regional hot topics and actions from the strategic plan include staff development, increased economic development services and providing MS4 assistance to municipalities. Elmer suggested hosting an open house for new municipal officials to introduce them to NRPC and what we do.

The committee tied the conversation about dues to the draft budget. The recommendation was made to move unconfirmed grants to a foot note to the budget and remove each from the listed revenue sources. The next step would be to identify where dues could complete the requests for services and/or shortfalls.

##### b. Executive Director Evaluation

*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.*

7:15 pm: Elmer 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 Battis. Roll call vote:

Jim Battis – yes  
Karin Elmer - yes  
Mike Fimbel - yes  
Dave Hennessey- yes

Janet Langdell - yes  
Sarah Marchant -yes  
Tom Young - yes

Battis made a motion to exit nonpublic Session at 8:15 pm, seconded by Langdell. Member Roll call vote:

Jim Battis – yes  
Karin Elmer - yes  
Mike Fimbel - yes  
Dave Hennessey- yes

Janet Langdell - yes  
Sarah Marchant -yes  
Tom Young - yes



Battis made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session, seconded by Young. Roll call vote:

Jim Battis – yes  
Karin Elmer - yes  
Mike Fimbel - yes  
Dave Hennessey- yes

Janet Langdell - yes  
Sarah Marchant -yes  
Tom Young - yes

**5. Adjourn**

The next regular Executive Committee meeting will be May 17, 2017.

Motion to adjourn was made by Langdell with a second by Young. The motion passed 7-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:16pm