



**APPROVED – MINUTES  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
June 16, 2021**

**Held in person and via Zoom, an in person quorum was present**

**Members Present:**

Mike Dell Orfano, Amherst  
Susan Ruch, Amherst  
Venu Rao, Hollis  
James Battis, Hudson  
Kara Roy, Hudson  
Kim Queenan, Litchfield  
Mike Croteau, Litchfield  
Burton Reynolds, Lyndeborough

Karin Elmer, Merrimack  
Tim Tenhave, Merrimack  
Janet Langdell, Milford  
Tim Berry, Mont Vernon  
Ed Weber, Nashua  
Sarah Marchant, Nashua  
Dave Hennessey, Pelham  
Peter Howd, Wilton

**Others Present:**

William Rose, NHDOT  
Tim White, NHDES

**Staff Present:**

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director  
Sara Siskavich, Assistant Director  
Gregg Lantos, Principal Transportation Planner/MPO Coor.  
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner  
Kate Lafond, Business Manager

**Welcome and Introductions**

Battis opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. A roll call attendance was conducted.

**Privilege of the Floor**

No members of the public were present to speak.

**Approval of Minutes – March 17, 2021**

Marchant motioned to approve as amended with a second from Tenhave.

THAT the minutes of March 17, 2021, be approved as written and placed on file. A roll call vote was conducted. Dell Orfano, Rao, Roy, Weber, and Croteau abstained.

The motion **carried**.

**Annual Business Meeting**

**FY 2022 Budget**

Minkarah provided an overview of the proposed budget including:

There is no proposed increase to the annual dues amount;

A significant decrease to EPA Brownfields grant in the upcoming fiscal year as this project wraps up;

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the EDA grant was completed in last fiscal year and NRPC received a grant from the EDA to develop a COVID-19 economic recovery plan; new grants also include two DES grants to do a watershed management plan for Robinson Pond in Hudson and to update the corridor management plan for the Lower Merrimack River; the UPWP is a two-year contract, FY22 is the first year of a new contract. Minkarah noted that the UPWP is NRPC's largest funding source and the document outlining the work to be done can be found on NRPC's website. Minkarah provided brief highlights of the upcoming UPWP.

Notable changes to the expense side of the budget include:

- Increase funds to host an annual forum. A forum has not been held in two years due to COVID-19;
- Professional Services is decreased from the prior year because there is not as much consulting services associated with the EPA Brownfields grant in the upcoming year;
- There is an increase in salaries because a part-time project manager has been brought on to manage the EDA economic recovery plan and two summer interns have been brought on to work both on the EDA grant and the RSMS projects under the UPWP.

Howd motioned with a second from Hennessey:

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission FY 2022 Budget be approved.

The motion **carried**, all in favor

Annual Grant and Contract Authorization

Minkarah explained that on an annual basis the full Commission must affirm that the Executive Director is authorized to file applications, sign contracts, and implement the annual work program.

Marchant motioned with a second from Langdell:

THAT the Executive Director be authorized to file applications with federal, state, and local governmental units and other agencies to implement the FY 2022 work program of the Commission, and to execute agreements to receive funds for such purposes.

The motion **carried**, all in favor.

FY 2023 Dues

Minkarah stated that there is no proposed increase and that the total dues amount will remain flat at \$163,000. Minkarah added that typically the amount assessed for each community in the region changes slightly because of that community's estimated population and equalized assessed valuation which is used to calculate the dues amount however the equalized assessed valuation has not yet been released by the NH Department of Revenue. This results in no change in amount for each community also.

Berry motioned with a second from Tenhave:

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission FY 2023 Dues assessment be approved.

The motion **carried**, all in favor.

Election of FY 2022 Executive Committee Officers

The Executive Committee recommends the following officer positions:

Susan Ruch, Chair

Sarah Marchant, Vice Chair

Jim Battis, Treasurer

Tenhave motioned with a second from Langdell:

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission approve the Executive Committee officers as recommended by the Executive Committee.

The motion **carried**, all in favor

Election of FY 2022 NRPC Foundation Board Officers

The Executive Committee recommends the following NRPC Foundation Board Officers:

Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja, Member at Large

Dave Hennessey, NRPC Commissioner

Elmer motioned with a second from Tenhave:

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission approve the NRPC Foundation Board Officers as recommended.

The motion **carried**, all in favor

Minkarah noted that there are still two vacancies, one Member at Large and one Commissioner seat.

MPO Policy Committee

Public Hearing: Approval of TIP Amendment #1 to the adopted Nashua Metropolitan Area 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Minkarah explained that we are federally required to have a transportation improvement program which is a 4-year program. As an MPO we must adopt the TIP every 4 years. Similarly, the state adopts its version of the STIP. Every year there are changes/amendments to the program which need to be formally adopted through the public hearing process.

Waitkins referenced the memo provided in the meeting agenda packet and summarized that the amendment was received from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) and NRPC is expected to amend the TIP to account for changes to projects within the Nashua region and to maintain consistency with the Statewide TIP (STIP). NRPC would also amend the 2021 – 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) project list and fiscal constraint analysis to maintain consistency with the amended TIP project list. Waitkins summarized the changes to the TIP described in the memo.

Battis opened the public hearing at 7:40 p.m.

No members of the public were present to speak.

Battis closed the public hearing at 7:41 p.m.

Hennessey motioned with a second from Langdell

THAT the TIP Amendment #1 to the adopted Nashua Metropolitan Area 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) be approved and to amend the 2019-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) project list and fiscal constraint analysis to maintain consistency with the amended TIP project list.

The motion **carried**, all in favor

### Presentation – Matt Waitkins: Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update

Waitkins informed the board that NRPC is completing the update to the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Waitkins indicated that the goal is to have the working draft complete by the end of the month and to have a final draft ready to be presented at the next board meeting in September. Waitkins gave an overview of the plan. The goal of the plan is to promote non-motorized transportation systems in the region. The benefits to incorporating more bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the region include economic, safety, health, environmental, and social equity benefits. The plan previews the current conditions in the region and data that support the inclusion of non-motorized transportation systems. The plan also includes a proposed network of systems that could connect the region and potential projects. Discussion ensued regarding various existing and future potential projects in the region and state.

### Transportation Project Updates

Minkarah noted that NRPC did file a notice of intent regarding the proposed CSX acquisition of PanAm. NH DOT has also provided their comments and is in support of the acquisition. NRPC can comment if we choose. Decisions will not be made until 2022 but Minkarah will find out the schedule for commenting.

Minkarah explained that the Transportation Alternatives Program funding got doubled so there is the ability for more projects to be funded. If communities can get applications in the pipeline the projects could likely get funded.

### General Updates

Tim White announced that a new funding round for the state diesel program starting around October 1<sup>st</sup> when FY20/21 funding is received from EPA. Additionally, First Student received funding to replace 32 diesel busses. A lot of the buses are operating in the City of Nashua, so this is good news for the region.

### Commissioners Roundtable

Amherst – Dell Orfano noted his last planning board meeting was last Wednesday. The new board has all new faces and new agendas.

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Amherst – Ruch had requested that the new planning board members be made aware of the NRPC training. Hopefully, they will participate in the opportunity. Also, there is much furor over the town not having a parade and fireworks. A reverse parade will be held instead.

Wilton – Howd informed that the town held its annual town meeting.

Milford – Landgell expressed that there is a lot of energy, there are new businesses in town, and a lot of property transfers that will potentially be redeveloped.

Litchfield – Queenan told that the planning board is reviewing the town's land-use regulations; the commercial areas are getting a little crowded.

Hollis – Rao stated that he is continuing to pursue collaboration amongst towns regarding energy

Mont Vernon – Berry noted that the small town is changing. Like all town's real estate values are high, the ordinances will likely need to be looked at because of the influx of new residents.

Hudson – Roy updated that the planning board issued a conditional use permit for the Amazon project. Since two appeals have been filed. Traffic is a large concern. The town will also be transitioning to an elected planning board.

Merrimack – Tenhave mentioned that a lot of things are happening on the D.W. highway. A few projects are coming before the planning board. There are also lots for sale and building occurring. The town has new town councilors which will change the dynamic. This year is also the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary and there will be fireworks.

Nashua – Weber commented that Nashua Landing is the biggest project right now and he thinks it is a very interesting project. There is a lot of conservation efforts and improvements relating to the project. Historic preservation is also a focus of the Master Plan update.

Nashua – Marchant added that Nashua is booming with new housing units approved and commercial development. The Master Plan process is wrapping up, we have had great public participation. Hoping for a final draft for August.

Pelham – Dave noted that the increase in home values is record-breaking, but this too shall pass, there is a leveling happening. Also notable, Jeff Gowan has retired, and Jen Beauregard is interim.

**Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn was made by Berry with a second from Weber. The meeting ended at 9:02 p.m.

The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director