



**APPROVED MINUTES  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
Executive Committee  
April 18, 2018**

**Present:**

Susan Ruch, Chair  
Karin Elmer, Vice Chair  
James Battis, Treasurer  
William Boyd  
Dave Hennessey  
Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja

**Absent:**

Mike Fimbel  
Janet Langdell  
Sarah Marchant

**Staff:**

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director  
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director

**1. Call to Order:**

Ruch called the Executive Committee meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

**2. Business**

**a. Minutes: March 21, 2018**

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the March 21, 2018 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes made by Elmer, seconded by Boyd. The motion passed 6-0-0.

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

Minkarah started with the bank balances. March balances were slightly lower than February, however, remain healthy. Activities this month included the NH Freight Summit in Claremont. The Committee was interested in learning more about the Freight Summit event. Minkarah explained that it was organized as part of the State's Freight Plan outreach efforts. The plan itself is a federal requirement. Freight includes highways and tractor trailers as well as airports, shipping ports, and rail. The Summit was primarily a presentation of current research. The consultants are looking to hear from us as to freight routes and origins/destinations in our region.

Other activities included the Annual Forum. The State Business and Economic Affairs office has solicited proposals for a Statewide Economic Development Plan. NRPC submitted a proposal on behalf of the 9 NH RPCs using the Granite State Future model of partnership. This is expected to be a highly competitive process and a \$320,000 project. By working with the RPCs, the State can ensure the planning network can uniquely reach all corners of the state. Additionally, RPCs have by far the greatest expertise in GIS, outreach and transportation-economic development connections. If funded the turnaround time will be remarkably fast; 6 months. Ruch felt the RPCs could be a more cost-effective option than a national firm. Minkarah noted that the decision-making process is behind schedule. Boyd said it would be best to have an in-state entity as the selected contractor. Hennessey stated, at a minimum, the RPCs should be a subcontractor if another consultant is selected. He also asked if it would be appropriate to reach out to the short list, if it's public, and we are not on that list. Minkarah does not expect the short will be public, additionally, the RFP specifies that applicants are not permitted to directly contact the agency about the decision-making process. Melizzi-Golja asked if there is an

opportunity once a decision is made to approach the Executive Council to encourage future collaboration with the RPCs.

Other items of note, Minkarah and Lantos attended the Turnpike widening public session in Nashua. There is an additional session planned in Merrimack. Much of the public input centered on sound walls. Additional information is needed to discern whether the walls are effective. Minkarah also attended the East Hollis Street listening session. To effectively plan for this project there needs to be additional coordination with the Town of Hudson. Czysz, Mullen and Meno organized an Economic Development Roundtable Brownbag. Minkarah was asked to serve on the Northeast Economic Development Organization's Board of Directors. Ruch asked about the associated time commitment. Minkarah noted that meetings are held quarterly. The next is scheduled for Newark, NJ.

The Association of Regional Planning Commissions met this month and agreed to participate in the annual NH Municipal Association Conference. NRPC will present the Parks and Playgrounds project. Website statistics are up again. This may be attributable to several things including the recent Annual Forum, the Parks and Playgrounds presentations, launch of the 2018 HHW collection season and our newly launched bicycle and pedestrian transportation planning page.

Turning to the profit and loss, we are two-thirds of the way through the fiscal year. Most items are on target. There are a few projects that have concluded, several had more funding appropriated, and the anticipated CTAP funding is being pushed to FY19; CDFA will bill in a lump sum at the end of the fiscal year.

Balance sheet is also on target. Overall, we are down year over year. This will bump up as we bill more. Boyd asked what the interest rate is on the TD Bank Money Market account. Boyd proposed that the executive committee might want to shift some funds from the money market account to a greater income generating account, while retaining some funds in the money market to have a liquid cash reserve. Ruch did not see any harm in exploring what options might exist. Boyd suggested the executive committee develop an investment policy. Minkarah said we have sufficient funds on hand to handle cash flow. Three months on hand is a good target.

Battis made a motion to accept and place the report on file for audit, second by Boyd. The motion passed 6-0-0.

### **3. Old Business**

#### **a. NRPC Office Lease Update**

Minkarah reported that the RFP has been issued and has begun to receive interest. There were no changes to the draft last circulated and the final copy is available on the NRPC website. The deadline for submissions is early May. There have been four inquiries plus the current land lord all of which are anticipated to submit full proposals. From a tenant perspective there are a lot of commercial space options right now.

#### **b. NRPC 2018 Annual Forum Debrief**

Feedback thus far has been very positive. Melizzi-Golja noted she directly reached out to the new Aldermen in Nashua to encourage their attendance. Battis asked what the ratio of commissioners to other attendees was. Minkarah estimated there was one commissioner to

three other guests. All agreed the panelists were excellent. Elmer suggested starting a little bit earlier to give more time at the end for questions. Melizzi-Golja agreed it would be good to have more time, but it would be better to let it run late as many may not be able to get to Nashua earlier.

Minkarah shared a conversation with a Pelham planning board member that asked about holding roundtable conversations for planning board members. The conversations would be held periodically and be informal discussions. Boyd noted that OEP (now OSI) hosts an annual conference. Hennessey noted that much of the training board members need is basic meeting management.

Czys reported that NRPC will be holding a Planning Board basics session on May 17. Attorney Buckley from the NH Municipal Association will reprise his OSI conference presentation for those interested in attending.

Ruch shared comments emailed in by Fimbel who appreciated the presentations. Going forward, Minkarah thought it would be good to stick with the same format, possibly bring Russ Thibeault back for an annual update on the state of the economy.

#### **4. Transportation Programs**

##### **a. Ten Year Plan Update**

Senate Transportation Committee hearing was held on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Minkarah reported that the Pelham Mammoth and Sherburne Roads project is listed in the plan twice; once with highway funding and again with CMAQ funding. NRPC has been working with DOT to swap the duplicate project out, retaining the CMAQ funded version, with the Broad Street Parkway Franklin Street Interchange. During that process it was discovered that the Broad Street Parkway has yet to be classified making it ineligible for funding until it meets federal classification requirements.

##### **b. MTP Project Selection**

The transportation survey is still active and has received over 560 responses. Minkarah may close the survey at the end of this week. A paid Facebook promotion that ran at the beginning of the week was beneficial and generated additional response. The plan is intended to be complete at the end of this year. However, there is some talk between regions to push that out consistent with the TIP amendment process that is also under consideration to be extended to March. Goal would be to do the full MTP update concurrent with the TIP update.

##### **c. Nashua Transit System Expansion Study**

Czys reported that the project is kicking off with a series of surveys, the first of which will be to update the periodic on-board surveys that NRPC completes under the UPWP to gauge current ridership trends and demographics. An online survey has been developed that will launch at the conclusion of the on board surveys. The online survey will target both existing NTS riders, Nashua Residents and those from surrounding communities where fixed route service may extend. The surveys are available in both English and Spanish. Elmer asked if the surveys will be available in other languages. Melizzi-Golja suggested using the existing and extensive social service network. Hennessey noted there are currently Walmart employees that are taking cabs to get to work.



Minkarah noted that traditional fixed route service is going to primarily appeal to retail employment locations. To appeal to other employment nodes the service offered would need to be something that is frequent, free and fast. We need to figure out what would get people out of their cars. The committee discussed an example of siting of a grocery store in downtown Manchester which has made it possible to live downtown without a car.

**5. Other Business**

Minkarah has submitted a pre-application to EDA for planning funds. Submitted projects include a collaborative workspace in Wilton and infrastructure planning in the Nashua mill yard. We are still waiting to hear whether the EPA Brownfields assessment grant was funded. Longval is also working on a HHW education programming proposal through the EPA Healthy Communities grant.

**6. Adjourn**

The next regular Executive Committee meeting will be Wednesday, May 16, 2018.

Motion to adjourn was made by Boyd with a second by Hennessey. The motion passed 6-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:21 PM.