



**APPROVED MINUTES  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
Executive Committee  
December 16, 2015**

**Present:**

Dave Hennessey, Chair	Janet Langdell
Karin Elmer, Treasurer	Sarah Marchant
Mike Fimbel, Vice Chair	Susan Ruch
Jim Battis	Tom Young
Dan Kelly	

**Staff:**

Tim Roache, Executive Director  
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director  
Sara Siskavich, GIS Manager

**1. Call to Order:**

Hennessey called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**2. Business**

**i. Minutes – November 18, 2015**

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2015 meeting. Fimbel noted he was absent on November 18<sup>th</sup> and the minutes should be corrected as such. Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Elmer, seconded by Young. The motion passed 5-0-1.

**Minutes November 18, 2015 Non-public Session**

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2015 non-public session. Fimbel noted that he was absent from the meeting and should be removed from the list of meeting attendees. Marchant notes she was present and should be added. Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Battis, seconded by Langdell. The motion passed 6-0-1.

**ii. October/November Dashboard and Financial Reports**

Roache reviewed the most recent Dashboard and noted that bank balances remain good and constant with previous months retaining about two to three months of operating reserve. Activity this past month was a bit bit quieter. Roache visited the Wilton, Litchfield and Brookline Boards of Selectmen and Merrimack Town Council. Staff also attended the Nashua Chamber of Commerce's Citizen Bank Series Housing Breakfast along with Hennessey, as well as the NH SEC open house by Kinder Morgan and the NH BIA Energy Expo. Web traffic statistics were fairly consistent. LiveMaps' web traffic ebbs and flows with the issuance of new pipeline maps. Social media is about the same with a slow trend upward; sharing posts helps to increase traffic.

Financials, starting with the Profit and Loss are tracking about where they should. We are about a third of the way through the fiscal year. Year to date receivables are outpacing expenses. Kelly asked about the \$122,000 DOT overage has been carried for several years (FY12-13). Roache replied that DOT should be resolving this in the next few months.

**iii. Draft Midyear Budget**

Roache noted there were no significant changes to the working budget since the last meeting. He has done a little more research on health insurance and was able to offer a comparable plan and only increase premiums by one-percent. Best insurance prices were again through Granite Group, opposed to HealthTrust, and by switching from Harvard Pilgrim to Anthem. Roache noted that employee contribution rates are commensurate with that is offered at other RPCs. Hennessey noted that at some point employee contributions will have to go up.

Kelly asked about several items in the Draft Midyear Budget particularly focusing on budget increases to professional services, the legislative forum and salaries. Roache replied that the increase to professional services represents pass through contractual amounts associated with new grants. The legislative forum line is really a miscellaneous item with legislative forum called out as an example of what is included in the miscellaneous expenditures. This was increased to account for expenses associated with the strategic planning retreat. The Committee recommended that the miscellaneous row title be clarified to indicate other activities in addition to the legislative forum. The increase to salaries accounts for Pattison returning to work full time after the start of the fiscal year, Longval increasing her part time hours from ten to 15 hours per week, rehiring Chizmas and a couple potential salary increases to retain key staff. In summary, while some of the expenses have gone up, so too have revenues due to new grants and contracts. There is little change to the bottom line.

Langdell made a motion to recommend the Commission approve the Midyear Budget, second by Young. The motion passed 9-0-0.

**iv. Strategic Planning Report Outline – Preliminary Discussion**

Roach noted that a draft outline and basic findings from the Strategic Planning retreat were included in the meeting packets. He and Czyns met with the consultant via phone conference to discuss general comments on the draft outline. General concerns expressed by the Committee was that the draft was thin and needed more detail. Sections such as “Priority NRPC Actions within the Regional Plan” could use additional definition. What does it mean to lead, support, inspire or follow? The Acton selection decision making criteria could benefit from prioritization, such as which of the criteria would really be threshold items? Langdell noted that the new action item termed “municipal wish list” gets at what she was suggesting but isn’t the title she had intended. A revised draft will be available in January and February with the goal of having a complete draft to present to the Commission at their March meeting.

**v. EFAC Update**

Roache gave a quick update of the most recent EFAC efforts related to the proposed pipeline. NRPC is currently close to having dedicated \$17,000 of dues funds to EFAC efforts. About \$7,500 has been received in RSA 91-a cost recovery fees to offset those expenditures. Kinder Morgan has filed its application with FERC and it has been accepted. Attorney Steve Buckley attended a recent EFAC meeting to talk about the eminent domain process. Given the rapidly changing conditions, staff has not had an opportunity to update the Status Report. NRPC did file a joint letter with the other affected regional planning agencies in NH and MA regarding the adequacy of the FERC filing. Roache compiled a timeline of what has happened since the last Commission meeting. The question now is to what end is the EFAC operating? What is the intended deliverable? EFAC members need some clarity to ensure their continued participation and to acknowledge their time is valued.

Siskavich distributed a table of SEC time frames and draft administrative rules that outline the criteria used to evaluate the effects on orderly development. The NH SEC is particularly looking to the RPCs to participate formally in this process.

Hennessey noted that he, not in his role as NRPC chair, had a meeting with Councilor Sununu to discuss the pipeline. According to Sununu the agreement between Kinder and the power companies is about to be released. Hennessey noted we need to be able to see the combined impacts of the powerlines and the construction of the pipeline. Hennessey noted that Sununu is using Senator Ayotte's letter to Kinder Morgan with a series of questions. Sununu would like to get a stakeholder group together. Hennessey recommended he reach out to Roache to meet with EFAC.

Roache asked Committee members what they see as the end product of the EFAC. Ruch noted that this would be a good agenda topic for the next Executive Committee meeting to allow ample time to have a more detailed discussion, after having an opportunity to ask the full Commission their opinions this evening. Roache noted that the SEC process is about to start soon and that could be the focus for the time being. Marchant noted that the RPCs' one job that is called out in state statute is to make an informed comment to the SEC. Langdell asked whether there is interest in looking at other energy projects. This would be the time to start refocusing to other energy issues and efforts in or around the region. Ruch asked how we can make NH less dependent upon the grid and what different energy options are available.

Most, if not all, RPCs that are impacted by the pipeline are filing as intervenors in the FERC process. Roache will be coordinating with Southwest RPC and Northern Middlesex COG. NRPC will need to file for intervenor status by January 6, 2016.

**vi. Update on NRPC Retirement Plan**

Roache gave a quick update on the ICMA retirement plan corrective action. Checks were issued to affected parties on Tuesday and NRPC has nearly completed the process. Final step is to issue a notification to any former participants that no longer have funds in their accounts. Lastly, NRPC will issue a letter of disappointment to ICMA. Roache will research alternative retirement plan vendors for consideration after the New Year.

**3. Other Business**

Next meeting will be January 20, 2016.

Roache quickly discussed the annual legislative forum and suggested hosting the event either end of January or early February. He suggested Clay Mitchell to speak on the broader energy future. The Committee was fine with utilizing the same location as last year. The event should be posted as a public meeting. Invited guests may attend for free and \$25 tickets are required for all others to offset the meal cost. Roache plans to invite the new DOT Commissioner to the March Commission meeting.

**4. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn was made by Elmer with a second by Ruch. The motion passed 9-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:02.