



**APPROVED MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
March 16, 2016**

Present:

Dave Hennessey, Chair
Karin Elmer, Treasurer
Mike Fimbel, Vice Chair
Jim Battis

Dan Kelly
Janet Langdell
Susan Ruch (arrived at 6:20)
Tom Young

Absent:

Sarah Marchant

Staff:

Tim Roache, Executive Director
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director

1. Call to Order:

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

2. Business

i. Minutes – February 17, 2016

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the February 17, 2016 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted by Langdell, seconded by Young. The motion passed 7-0-0.

ii. January/February Dashboard and Financial Reports

Roache reviewed the most recent Dashboard and noted that we continue to have a healthy balance that supports two to three months of operating expenses and Roache is considering transferring \$50,000 to the Money Market account from the checking account to earn a higher interest rate. Payables are well behind the receivables. Relative to activities, Roache has become more active in the rail conversation and attended the NHRTA Capitol Corridor press conference and sent a letter to Representative Chandler documenting the region's interest in Rail. The letter was written from the perspective of the MPO and drawing from the regional plan. Additionally, Roache was quoted in a Union Leader article about rail. Staff attended a few of the Ten Year Plan work sessions. Pattison and Friedman have conducted several Plan4Health presentations. Czysz presented NRPCs work on GSF as part of the EDC RMOC peer-to-peer learning network. Additionally, Siskavich and Friedman have been meeting with local organizations to continue NRPCs trail mapping efforts.

Web traffic is up, particularly live maps, and social media is continuing to gradually climb. With Connors departure it is anticipated there will be a dip in social media engagement. Hennessey noted that the speaker presentations at the legislative forum were exceptional. He further suggested that future sessions be recorded with videos made available online. Roache suggested using municipal video facilities. He would like to schedule a visit to Hollis to conduct a live version of Venu Rao's presentation previously conducted at a Commission meeting. This would be an ideal candidate for filming.

Relative to the budget FY 2016, Roache noted that NRPC is still discussing the Climate Resiliency grant with the City of Nashua. Additionally, he is still working on the FY2017 budget that he will present a first draft of at the next Committee meeting.

Roache noted that the auditors had no concerns with NRPC's accounts and recommended using a true accrual approach to the profit and loss reports. This method shows larger revenue sources and expenses spread across the year, which evens out any volatility. Reviewing the January profit and loss, the report shows a substantial loss. This is due in part to low billing levels, but also several large annual payments that were due in January including health insurance payments and buyouts for those that opt out of the insurance plans. Low billing to date is partially due to the fact that staff have conducted approximately \$24,000 of work on the pipeline that has been charged against dues.

Langdell said there should be some thresholds established relative to services that NRPC continues to provide on the pipeline. Several communities have voted to earmark funds as of 2016 town meeting for the pipeline, both for planning and legal fees. Several members of the Committee raised concern that the pipeline efforts have exceeded that which can be provided as part of the day-to-day operations and reached "special project" level. NRPC should, at this point in time, state its ability to provide services as part of the annual membership dues and delineate those additional services that can be provided for a fee. Ruch noted that any special assessments, if proposed, should consider that it is not just the directly impacted communities that benefit from the work on the pipeline, but that all communities benefit from NRPC's engagement in the State Energy Committee (SEC) process. Ruch also noted there may be some misunderstanding of NRPC's neutral role and work relative to the pipeline. Roache said the challenge now is to figure out how to keep the EFAC alive without impacting the ability to move forward on other billable work. Elmer suggested maybe we need to consider whether we need to raise dues. Roache stated we will need to set the dues in June 2016 for FY 2018.

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

iii. Staffing Update

Roache noted that a job description has been posted for a couple weeks now to fill the vacant Regional Planner position. There has not been much interest in the position to date. In the interim Bill Parker, former Community Development Director in Milford, has been hired as a part time temporary employee to help keep a few projects moving forward. Milford has approached NRPC with potential interest to have a GIS person provide onsite staff support. Roache is considering structuring the proposal much like we do for a circuit rider.

iv. Strategic Planning Update

Czys noted that based on the conversation from the last Committee meeting a draft statement of the agency's core values has been prepared and included in the meeting packet. This document synthesizes statements expressed by staff, the Committee, Commissioners and partners through the process of surveys and the strategic planning retreat. Additionally, the NRPC mission and vision statements were added to the core values document. The action plan now includes purpose statements for each strategic goal as expressed at the last meeting.



Hennessey said the next steps are to work toward completing the action plans and would like to schedule time at the next few meetings to do so. Elmer suggested reserving 30 minutes at each of the upcoming meetings to do so.

Committee members requested staff send either an Excel or Word file of the Action Plan. The Committee will tackle pages 1-3 of the Action Plan at the next meeting. All are requested to either send in edits before the meeting, time permitting, otherwise members are asked to bring notes to the meeting.

v. Legislative Forum Debrief

Overall sentiment was that the session was excellent; overall organization, set up, and speakers. Roache asked for thoughts for future forums. Should we seek sponsors to help offset costs? Ruch, noted that if there are sponsors we are careful to avoid any appearance of impropriety. Roache asked the committee their thoughts on mailing paper invitations or whether electronic invites would suffice. Langdell suggested asking a sampling of legislators what works better for them. Ruch acknowledged that there is definitely a cost associated with paper invites, but perhaps a shorter invite list could help offset costs instead. There was some concern that legislators receive a significant amount of email, and paper invitations might better gain attention. Additionally, paper invitations were felt to have a more personal touch.

3. Other Business

i. Retirement Plan Update

Roache reported that he sent a letter to ICMA stating NRPC's displeasure and received a call in return from the CEO. ICMA was apologetic and definitely wants to retain our business. He has made some inquiries with alternative retirement plan providers and will report back once the responses have been received. Ruch suggested reminding ICMA that we are a non-profit entity and we would welcome their contribution to offset some of the costs incurred.

4. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Elmer with a second by Langdell. The motion passed 8-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:53.