



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

Present:

Dave Hennessey, Chair
Karin Elmer, Treasurer
Mike Fimbel, Vice Chair
James Battis
Janet Langdell
Sarah Marchant (phone)
Susan Ruch (phone)
Tom Young

Absent:

Dan Kelly

Staff:

Tim Roache, Executive Director
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director
Julie Chizmas, Sr. Transportation Planner

1. Call to Order:

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

Roache began by announcing that Sargent, NRPC GIS Analyst, had resigned. The position has been advertised on several planning websites, the NRPC webpage and on the GIS Job Clearinghouse website.

2. Business

a. Minutes –October 19, 2016

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the October 19, 2016 meeting. Langdell noted a typographical correction on page 4. Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Langdell, seconded by Young. The motion passed 6-0-2.

b. October/November Dashboard and Financial Reports

Roache reviewed the October/November Dashboard noting that bank balances are about the same as previous months. Several projects have kept the office busy with outreach events across the region. Roache noted that unfortunately the SVCC event wasn't highly attended due to other conflicts. NRPC also facilitated a conversation about wetlands in Lyndeborough. Staff has conducted outreach for the Nashua Fair Housing Assessment, the Climate Health Action Plan, and the Farmers Market. Additionally NRPC conducted an HHW event, attended a Brownfields grant writing workshop, Public Health Advisory Council meeting, and the Statewide GIS Steering committee meeting.

Website visits are up along with social media. There were no major changes to the budget however there will be a slight adjustment after hiring for the currently open GIS position. Roache moved onto the financials and noted that all is on target. Income and expenses both at 25% and we are a quarter of the way through the fiscal year. The month ended in the black by about \$13,000 given that for the time being receivables are outpacing expenses. As such, the balance sheet is in good shape. Langdell asked about the NHDOT adjustment reserve. Roache noted that DOT has asked for additional information for FY2012 and 2013 to close out those years.

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

c. Personnel Policy: Overtime Rule

Roache noted that the language included in his memo to the Executive Committee will be incorporated into the Personnel Policies. There are two new sections to replace existing content in the personnel policies to comply with the Department of Labor's overtime rule that becomes effective on December 1, 2016. The NRPC Compensatory Time has been replaced with a new Flex Time provision for employees that do not qualify under the overtime law.

Battis made a motion to accept the new personnel policy provisions relative to flex time and compensatory time, second by Elmer. The motion passed 8-0-0.

3. Other Business

a. Household Hazardous Waste Program Discussion

Roache distributed a memo with a revised and updated proposal to formalize the structure of the NRSWMD based on discussions with Attorney Waugh. The memo presents two possible approaches wherein NRSWMD remains a separate entity from NRPC, formalized through a cooperative agreement under RSA 149-M. Option A would structure the HHW collections as a fee for service program under NRPC. Option B allows NRPC to continue on as is and proposes to maintain the current operations with a more formalized system.

Hennessey asked what the status of NRSWMD would be after moving forward with either option. Roache noted that either way participating communities would continue to designate representatives to the NRSWMD. Roache noted that one concern is that DES reimburses for expenses at the end of the year. If the program were to come fully under NRPC's purview, the result would be that NRPC must advance funds to cover program expenses, opposed to the district that has an operating reserve. Elmer asked if additional staffing would be required to cover accounting for the program. Roache expects that it would remain about the same. Fimbel asked who owns the garage in Nashua used by the program and how maintenance of the garage would be budgeted. It is owned by the City and the cooperative agreement would include roles and responsibilities for garage maintenance. Marchant said she could get the right people to the table to discuss garage maintenance and review the draft cooperative agreement. Fimbel asked about the relocation of public works. Marchant noted that the transfer station will not be relocated thus the event location will not change.

Ruch asked if there is a way for participating communities to be indemnified or serve as a financial bridge for payments. Roache noted that there is the existing NRSWMD savings account that may be able to advance funds if needed before DES reimbursement is received.

Langdell asked about the "fee for service." Roache noted the term "fee for service" is used for programs offered by NRPC that require additional fees above and beyond dues. Additionally, he was looking to use a term other than dues to avoid confusion with the NRPC dues. Langdell noted that perhaps it should be called the NRSWMD municipal share. Fimbel asked if it would be confusing to ask towns to pay two checks for NRPC dues and NRSWMD fees. Roache noted that there is already some confusion as both bills are sent out on NRPC letterhead.

b. Legislative Forum Discussion

Roache noted that preliminary ideas are to hold the event on a Wednesday or Thursday in the second week in February at the same location as 2015. He is considering an event centered on an Economic Development theme to tie in with new efforts ongoing at NRPC. Potential panelists brainstormed include Taylor Caswell from CDFA, Tim Cummings from the City of Nashua, and possibly Karen Pollard from the City of Rochester.

Ruch noted that if we are putting together an Economic Development oriented panel we need to think from both the perspective of smaller and larger communities. The more rural communities are less interested in larger economic development initiatives. Langdell noted that all should be done in balance but there are things we are all interested in such as jobs and community vitality. Marchant noted that each community's character is different and solutions are scalable. Fimbel stated that even some of the small towns, such as Mont Vernon, are interested in promoting business or economic development.

Elmer mentioned a session at the NHMA conference that she attended that included municipal examples of complete streets infrastructure improvements that have seen businesses in turn making investments in their community.

c. Transportation Planning Update

Roache noted that at the December Commission meeting we will have the new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is adopted every two years. The document outlines the region, MPO, demographics and includes a list of projects for the next four years; functioning much like a Capital Improvements Program. The TTAC has already seen a draft copy of the TIP and that communication was also forwarded to the NRPC commissioners. Langdell asked if there is anything in the TIP that isn't in the current STIP or Ten Year Plan. Roache said no. Langdell asked about the potential funding as a result of the TMA programming authority. Roache noted this isn't yet factored in to the budget.

Hennessey asked how much time we will need to present and discuss this at the Commission meeting. Chizmas noted that it's fiscally constrained and air quality conformity isn't required. Langdell said we need to also make it clear that this is consistent with the Ten Year Plan and represents the first 4 years of that plan. TTAC has already reviewed and addressed most projects. In deciding how much time to dedicate to the TIP during Decembers' meeting agenda we will need to consider that the Commissioners haven't seen the TIP for two years. We will need an introduction that makes it clear that this is not a debate but needs a motion to approve.

Once the TIP is adopted, the Ten Year Plan process begins again. We need to ask what our regional priorities are. Roache stated he feels the Ten Year Plan process is failing the region. Route 101A has been a top priority in the region, however for several decades the project makes it in the plan yet is consistently pushed out. The problem is having adequate funding available. Hennessey shared several examples of projects that have been pushed through quickly using an economic development argument. We need to reiterate that economic development along the 101A corridor is struggling and the road improvements are essential to supporting jobs and getting people to jobs. Langdell noted that the western travel corridors from Nashua to the Vermont state line are historically ignored at the state level.

Roache said we can sent out a letter to all towns and request projects, but we aren't solving the region's major transportation and traffic issues with the smaller projects that are submitted. We need to double down on our existing project priorities and getting them built. Amherst has lost several large employers to other NH communities because of 101A traffic.

Roache would like to convene several commissioners to attend the Ten Year Plan hearings with him to make the case. Langdell noted the case would be strengthened with the attendance and testimony of local elected officials and business owners. This Ten Year Plan will be business as usual, the following one though should include the TMA programming authority for the MPO.

Elmer suggested adding a transportation voice to the Legislative Forum to make sure to make the case for transportation improvements as a critical piece of economic development needs for the region. Elmer again referred to a NHMA Complete Streets conference session that made clear that larger projects relied on PR firms to run their community outreach efforts. We need to remember to promote ourselves through sustained outreach.

Hennessey noted that there is a potential federal infrastructure bill that will be presented at the beginning of January. NRPC needs to be prepared to react and respond should new funding be available. Roache also noted that NRPC is currently working to set its two-year contract with the NH DOT. Now is the time to incorporate any known local technical assistance, corridor or regional transportation planning projects. Chizmas noted there will likely be a new task item in the forthcoming UPWP that will call for additional corridor based transportation planning. Roache added that while the UPWP structure is dictated to us, we have the ability to make it robust and customized to meet our region's needs.

d. CDFA Tax Credit Discussion

Czys provided a brief update the tax credit process. Between the October and November meetings she prepared and distributed a one-page fact sheet on the available tax credits as well as the necessary forms for potential purchasers to make their pledge. Commissioners are asked to help distribute these items to businesses they have contacts with or forward any leads to NRPC staff.

e. Other

Fimbel noted that Mont Vernon recently lost one of its selectmen to cancer. Elmer noted she was reappointed at the Merrimack Council meeting. Roache noted he had a good meeting with the Merrimack Town Council regarding the Strategic Plan.

The December Commission meeting will either be all transportation or a mix of transportation and economic development agenda items. The Committee recommended keeping the December meeting short.

4. Adjourn

The next regular Executive Committee meeting will be December 21, 2016.

Motion to adjourn was made by Langdell with a second by Young. The motion passed 8-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:22.