



**APPROVED MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
May 17, 2017**

Present:

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

Staff:

Tim Roache, Executive Director
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director

Guest:

Jenny Maxwell

1. Call to Order:

Hennessey called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Business

a. Minutes – April 19, 2017

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the April 19, 2017 meeting. Czysz noted that the names of the committee members that made the motion to exit non-public session were missing. Motion to approve the minutes as amended by Battis, seconded by Young. The motion passed 7-0-1.

b. March/April Dashboard and Financial Reports

Roache reviewed the Dashboard noting that it has been a good month. He had a chance to have a one-on-one meeting with Senator Shaheen prior to her town hall meeting in Nashua. Siskavich organized and hosted an NRPC brown bag lunch LiveMaps training that was well attended. Roache intends to acquire software for NRPC to enable Siskavich to redo the presentation at her desk and record it for an on-demand video training. This technology could be utilized for other NRPC presentations and trainings to bolster online trainings.

Czysz and Siskavich participated in a meeting among the 5 RPCs with communities regulated under the new MS4 permit with the goal of identifying means of collaborating to provide cost effective municipal services. Czysz provided a training session for the Mont Vernon planning board as well as participated in the OEP conference's session for new board members. Siskavich participated in a training for ArcGIS for server on site configuration and administration. Additionally, NRPC is in the process of hosting a Synchro training session for RPC and municipal transportation staff. Lastly, Roache noted that he and Czysz participated in the NHARPC legislative breakfast that was not very well attended. Langdell asked if it was advertised. Marchant replied it was noticed in the legislative calendars.

Web utilization rates are up with increases in both the number of sessions and unique users. Elmer asked what the difference is between users and sessions. Users are individuals that may conduct one or more web visits or sessions. The Constant Contact open rate remains great and social media has been steady.

Bank balances remain strong and receivables remain ahead of payables. Looking at the profit and loss, March was a good month and had an extra pay period that increased reimbursables. On the expense side, there is nothing out of the ordinary. There have been some legal expenses associated with an attorney contracted to assist with the update to the NRPC Personnel Policies. Ruch requested that the updated draft be placed on the June agenda for review. Roache anticipates that the year will end in the black.

Langdell asked about the DOT settle-up associated with FY12-13 indirect rate. Roache has had several conversations with NH DOT, however, there is no forward progress to report. Ruch suggested that we just keep holding the funds until requested.

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

c. NTS Transit Asset Management Performance Targets

Czys presented the Nashua Transit System's transit asset management targets with a brief background. As part of the FAST Act, NRPC is required to adopt transit asset management performance targets 6 months after any transit agencies in the region do so. As Nashua Transit is the only transit agency in the region, NRPC proposes to adopt the NTS performance targets. There are three different measures included: useful life of rolling stock and equipment as well as the condition of buildings and facilities.

Langdell asked about the useful life standards. Marchant explained that NTS stock is older than its useful life. In the past the City purchased nearly all buses as a single purchase which has led to all simultaneously being in service beyond their useful life.

Ruch made a motion to adopt the NTS Transit Asset Management Targets as the Nashua MPO targets, second by Elmer. The motion passed 7-0-1.

d. Passenger Rail Discussion

The discussion on passenger rail was last before the Commission shortly after the Capital Corridor Study was released a few years ago. The NRPC TTAC had recommended supporting the scenario that would extend the rail to Manchester. Commission declined to act at that time citing a need for more information.

There is potential interest in commencing the preliminary planning required to extend the rail to Nashua. Roache referred committee members to a request to NRPC from the Mayor of Nashua that included a quote from Governor Sununu. It is rare when a rail corridor is fully extended and not completed in phases.

The City is looking to the commission for support in taking an incremental approach. Marchant stated the City is looking to assess the feasibility of initially getting rail to Nashua. Roache noted there was some caution raised by TTAC that if an incremental approach is implemented, Nashua may not have strong ridership and as a result may lead to disinterest in extending northward when past studies have shown that Manchester is essential to ridership.

Marchant reiterated that the City is not looking to build now, just to move the ball forward to assess costs to extend rail from Lowell to Nashua. It is worth noting that the Manchester Airport

stop is in Merrimack with which a significant proportion of future rail stops would be in the NRPC region.

Fimbel asked if the Mayor was looking at just getting over the border to Spit Brook or extending to East Hollis St/Crown Street. He noted that this second stop is important to economic development. Marchant replied that the City is building a park and ride at Crown Street and would want the train go to East Hollis.

Roache stated that TTAC did vote to express their support to Nashua's intent to look at the feasibility of bringing rail to Nashua. Marchant said the Environmental Impact Statement and preliminary design will be the first steps. There is time to allow Nashua to have a discussion with the MBTA in the interim. The City's focus is on what Nashua can be doing now to keep the ball moving without a state commitment to fund the next phases.

Ruch was in support of this approach, but was looking for clarification on what forums NRPC would "vocally advocate" for the rail? Marchant – thinks the motion should be narrow; NRPC supports the City of Nashua exploring a Nashua first approach, simply looking at the first steps.

Hennessey inquired whether we need a vote from the full commission in June; all agreed that a vote would be best. Ruch, noted that past conversations didn't have adequate time to allow the commissioners an opportunity to discuss the request with their community. She requested that Roache draft a letter to the Commissioners as soon as possible.

Elmer suggested a key message is to note that there is no cost entailed at this time. Langdell asked if there are some statistics from the regional plan process to show that people in the region support rail. If so, it should be included in the letter. Elmer suggested that the letter be clear that this is simply providing moral support to the City of Nashua. Marchant supported a drafting brief one page or less letter or memo that also notes that TTAC supports the request. Hennessey said the letter needs to go out as soon as possible. Ruch suggested a bullet point memo. Marchant said that it is alright to note that the City is expecting vigorous debate.

Elmer made a motion that the NRPC Executive Committee recommends that the Nashua Regional Planning Commission support an incremental approach to exploring rail feasibility, second by Langdell. The motion passed 7-0-1.

e. Draft FY 2018 Budget

Per the Committee's recommendation, Roache has removed the funding amounts for the grants that have yet to be awarded from the draft budget. NRPC has been invited to submit a full proposal for the EPA Healthy Communities grant that will be decided at the end of June. If awarded the grant would be \$25,000 over 2 years. Langdell asked whether is this a project that is driven by community request or staff identified. Roache said it may be more of the latter; however, the Solid Waste Management District members were highly supportive and recognized benefits that the increased outreach capacity would have on the region's Household Hazardous Waste program. The other pending grant decision, the EPA Brownfields Assessment grant, is a municipal request. The Brownfields grant would provide funding to conduct environmental assessments on several key economic development opportunity sites in Nashua and Milford.

Fimbel inquired about the result under the worst-case scenario. Roache replied that the fiscal year under this worst-case scenario is looking to end \$80 in the black. Roache also highlighted a

couple places where there may be additional funding. The CTAP line item only includes a portion of the funding in year 1 of the project. On the expense side, there are a few items that may change, possibly decreasing. Roache is confident the budget can be balanced.

Elmer asked about staff development budget line. Roache replied under the current scenario that was decreased to go with a more conservative budget. Additionally, salaries have not been adjusted to factor in staff changes or raises.

Hennessey recommended starting the June meeting at 5 pm to be able to get through the full agenda.

f. Nominating Committee FY18 Slate of Officers

Roache noted that we are at the point where everyone has already served in their officer position for the maximum two years.

Boyd arrived late.

Marchant nominated Ruch to serve as chair. Ruch was honored and said she is willing to do so. Langdell asked Elmer if she'd be interested in Vice Chair, Elmer agreed if there were no other committee members interested. Marchant volunteered for a position of vice chair but was uncertain if it was appropriate given the number of proposals she brings to the committee for consideration on the City's behalf. The Committee looked to Battis to serve as treasurer. He said he could do so.

Langdell asked about Committee members' terms of service on the Executive Committee. Roache did not think there were any expiring members. Langdell asked if there was anyone that was looking to retire from the Committee.

Langdell made a motion to nominate Ruch as Committee Chair, Elmer as Vice Chair and Battis as Treasurer, second by Young. The motion passed 9-0-0.

3. Old Business

a. 2019 NRPC Dues Discussion

Roache did not prepare anything new for this agenda item tonight. Looking at the last few years, he did not feel it was appropriate to request a higher dues rate for Fiscal Year 2019. By holding dues constant another year will provide the commission time to develop a more detailed plan to identify community requested projects to support the strategic plan and justify a proposed increase. Further by this time next year the Committee will have three full years of tracking how and where the dues are spent.

Marchant departed the meeting (phone).

Ruch thought we had preliminarily decided to look at the strategic plan and staff development needs. Langdell would like to see the data matrix of what is needed and the potential increase to the bottom line. This will remain a priority item for future agendas. A more detailed conversation will need to resume by January of 2018. Langdell, recommended the full commission maintain the current dues amount.



b. Non-Public Session

RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.

7:07 pm: Langdell made a motion to enter into nonpublic Session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) to consider or act upon “the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee...” seconded by Boyd. Roll call vote:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Jim Battis – yes | Dave Hennessey- yes |
| Bill Boyd – yes | Janet Langdell - yes |
| Karin Elmer - yes | Susan Ruch - yes |
| Mike Fimbel - yes | Tom Young - yes |

Marchant rejoined the meeting by phone.

Boyd made a motion to exit nonpublic Session at 7:43 pm seconded by Battis. Member Roll call vote:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Jim Battis – yes | Janet Langdell - yes |
| Bill Boyd – yes | Sarah Marchant -yes |
| Karin Elmer - yes | Susan Ruch - yes |
| Mike Fimbel - yes | Tom Young - yes |
| Dave Hennessey- yes | |

Elmer made a motion to seal the minutes of the non-public session seconded by Young. Roll call vote:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Jim Battis – yes | Janet Langdell - yes |
| Bill Boyd – yes | Sarah Marchant -yes |
| Karin Elmer - yes | Susan Ruch - yes |
| Mike Fimbel - yes | Tom Young - yes |
| Dave Hennessey- yes | |

4. Other Business

There was no other business.

5. Adjourn

The next regular Executive Committee meeting will be June 21, 2017.

Motion to adjourn was made by Boyd with a second by Hennessey. The motion passed 9-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.