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MINUTES
STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
August 21, 2015
Community Center Conference Room #1A
Strafford Regional Planning Commission
150 Wakefield Street, Suite 12
Rochester, NH

Members Present: Chairman Brian Tapscott, Somersworth; Vice Chair Victoria Parmele, Northwood; Secretary/Treasurer Tom Crosby, Madbury; Bill Connor, Somersworth; Kenn Ortmann, Rochester; Sandra Keans, Rochester; Alternate Judy Nelson, Rollinsford

Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland, Executive Director; Shayna Sylvia, Communications & Outreach Specialist

Members Absent: Bob Jaffin, Rochester; Alternate Wayne Burton, Durham

1. Welcome/Introductions

Chairman Brian Tapscott welcomed the group. The meeting began at 8:00 AM.

2. Actions Items

a. **Approval of Minutes of July 17, 2015**

B. Tapscott asked for a motion to approve the minutes of July 17, 2015. K. Ortmann **MOVED** to approve the minutes. B. Connor asked about the changes the group had discussed regarding a list of SRPC organizational documents and how these changes would be reflected in the individual documents and in the bylaws. C. Copeland explained that any of the proposed changes to the bylaws would be brought before the full Commission for input and a vote to amend the bylaws. It would be on the agenda at a future Commission meeting. The Executive Committee will be able to review these amendments prior to going to the full Commission.

K. Ortmann mentioned that there was no second on the motion to write a recommendation letter concerning SRPC representation on the NH Rail Transit Authority. It was consensually decided that a second was not necessary. B. Connor **SECONDED** the motion to approve the July 17, 2015 minutes, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

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b. Acceptance of DRAFT July Financials

C. Copeland reviewed the July 2015 financials juxtaposed with the July 2014 financials for comparison. She explained the aging summary including the billable amounts from current contracts. She explained the process of billing for dues from the cities of Dover, Somersworth, and Rochester and that SRPC has billed these communities in June. SRPC is awaiting dues for Northwood and Rollinsford as well.

C. Copeland reviewed the Profit and Loss statement and explained the difference between 2014 and 2015.

C. Copeland explained the income by customer sheet. She shared contract specifics with the Committee.

K. Ortmann **MOVED** to accept the DRAFT July Financials. T. Crosby **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

c. Recommendation of Amended FY2016 Budget

C. Copeland explained that the FY2016 Budget has been amended with the addition of two large contracts SRPC received after the start of the fiscal year. She explained the updates with smaller municipal contracts. C. Copeland further noted potential revenue changes with funding sources SRPC may receive throughout the year. K. Ortmann and S. Keans asked for clarification about the amended items. The two new contracts are the EPA Brownfields grant, and the SHRP2 grant program. For the SHRP2 contract, SRPC will also be a project manager partnering with and funding other MPOs in the state. The funding will support additional temporary hires. C. Copeland explained the SHRP2 project in detail.

C. Copeland noted a change in the budget concerning the financial consultant. This change will be made before the budget is presented to the Commission. K. Ortmann asked about office and meeting expenses that have gone down. C. Copeland explained that since funding for this area is limited, the budgeted amounts have decreased.

B. Connor asked about a prior discussion on provision of resources for staff writing and presentation skills. This service has been offered to staff, but has not been provided at this time.

K. Ortmann **MOVED** to recommend the Amended FY2016 Budget with the proposed changes. T. Crosby **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

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d. Approval of the FY2017 Dues

C. Copeland explained the color coding on the proposed dues sheets. She shared that due rates are calculated using the 2010 census population counts. The per capita rates for populations under and over 5,000 were explained. S. Keans asked for clarification on the distinction between towns and cities with full time planning staff and those without. C. Copeland shared that this formula would be explained later on.

C. Copeland stated that the per capita rate changes from year to year taking into account the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for "US City average, all items" from June to June. This year the change was only .1%. S. Keans asked what resource is used for the CPI change. C. Copeland shared that she uses data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). S. Keans suggested using the CPI data for the New England region. C. Copeland shared that the dues formula uses the "US City average, all items" which has been used every year.

S. Keans asked why the communities with full time planning staff were identified on the draft dues sheets. C. Copeland explained that before her time at the Commission the concept was that communities with full time planning staff should not have to pay as much for SRPC services. This could be explained by the fact that the municipalities were already putting funds towards planning with their own staff, and therefore the funding for SRPC would be for additional services. S. Keans opined that municipal planning staff should not be taken into account. C. Copeland agreed that this may no longer be relevant. A discussion ensued concerning the best way to calculate dues. C. Copeland shared that one objective is to recommend dues that will encourage non-dues paying communities to rejoin the Commission. She shared three options for dues, and reviewed the changes with each option.

C. Copeland additionally shared that a portion of the dues received go toward the UPWP and other contract match. This means that municipalities paying dues are responsible for covering a larger share as all municipalities are not paying into the Commission. A solution to this situation is charging non-dues paying municipalities for transportation planning services that would normally be covered under the UPWP contract. Non-dues paying municipalities would be charged for their share of local cash match. S. Keans asked how other MPOs assess their dues. C. Copeland shared that that other MPOs use a flat rate, a pro-rated rate based on population, and pro-rated rate based on population and assessed value. S. Keans shared that we need to have a clear specific formula. She shared that using assessed values is a good way to calculate equitable dues rates. A discussion ensued concerning dues paying communities and how to balance dues income with the number of communities choosing to pay. J. Nelson asked C. Copeland if she had an understanding of why non-dues paying communities are not joining the

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organization. C. Copeland shared that the total dues amount is a concern for the more rural communities. V. Parmele shared that presentations to communities concerning SRPC's services would be helpful. C. Copeland discussed changes in funding that affect the way the organization operates and how dues are gaining importance due to decreased income from the state. Further discussion ensued regarding the use of LTA funds for UPWP match, and for other federal contracts.

C. Copeland thanked S. Keans for her comment concerning the relevancy of communities with full time planning staff and how this became a factor in calculating dues. A discussion ensued concerning the number of projects occurring in growing communities and how these communities have a greater need for services. S. Keans opined that the smaller communities should not be paying as much as a larger community which has a greater need for services. Further discussion ensued concerning dues amounts and the best way to calculate dues. K. Ortmann opined the following factors could be considered in the future: population, estimated vehicles trips through a community, economic development activity. B. Connor shared that the amount of land area that can be developed could be factored in. S. Keans shared that assessments could instead be measured. C. Copeland discussed the real funding need and the difference between what SRPC is receiving and the need. C. Copeland shared her perceptions on the value of SRPC work for the region and municipalities.

For the purposes of discussion K. Ortmann **MOVED** to recommend to the full Commission the current dues structure with the calculated CPI change. S. Keans **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

K. Ortmann opined that creating a subcommittee to work with staff in deciding factors for calculating dues could be useful. C. Copeland added that Commission members should be included on this subcommittee. This will be covered at the next meeting. C. Copeland suggested that the subcommittee include five members. T. Crosby volunteered to be included on this subcommittee.

e. **Concurrence with August Monthly Minors**

C. Copeland shared that she attended the interagency call with GIS and Technical Analyst Chris Scheiner. C. Copeland explained the different members involved during these calls including NHDOT, NHDES, EPA and FHWA. She described that there are two parallel database systems running and how minor and major amendments are processed to maintain fiscal constraint.

A discussion ensued concerning conformity and fiscal constraints. K. Ortmann asked about changes in funding for projects as reflected in the minors and amendments and how this is

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detailed. C. Copeland explained the process. K. Ortmann opined that there is still information lacking as to why funding is changing. C. Copeland responded that this is reflected on the new minor and amendment sheets in the packet.

C. Copeland reviewed individual projects and why the funding is changing for the projects. C. Copeland shared that the Executive Committee's continuing concerns have been conveyed to NHDOT, and NHDOT has responded.

K. Ortmann **MOVED** to concur with the Executive Director's approval of the August monthly minors with a note of his appreciation to NHDOT for listening to the concerns of the Executive Committee in their request for reasoning behind funding changes as expressed in the monthly minors, and continuation of this process. T. Crosby **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

f. Executive Director Review Calendar

C. Copeland expressed that she made the requested changes and included when the Executive Director would like to be present for review activities. B. Connor asked for clarification. K. Ortmann responded by noting the places where the E.D. would be present. A discussion ensued concerning when the Executive Director should be present during the review process, i.e. during the actual review or at the sub-committee meetings. B. Connor opined that the whole Executive Committee should be members of the Executive Director review committee. B. Tapscott agreed with this idea. T. Crosby, K. Ortmann and S. Keans suggested a smaller sub-committee for the Executive Director review. A discussion ensued concerning the best way to structure this review group and how many meetings are necessary to complete an evaluation

J. Nelson opined that the evaluation of the Executive Director should be based on the goals. She agreed that a small committee would be a much better way to set goals and review the Executive Director. V. Parmele suggested that the entire group could work on the review. K. Ortmann opined that there were two different discussions going concurrently - one about the goals, and one about the review. B. Connor shared that other Regional Planning Commissions have more members and opined that we could recruit more members for the Executive Committee and that this would provide more members to be on a review committee for the Committee. S. Keans suggested that bylaw changes could be addressed at a future Commission meeting.

J. Nelson suggested moving forward by working on the goals and letting things play out to see if there is a need for a sub-committee. B. Connor asked for input on whether the rest of the group was interested in soliciting more E.C. members. K. Ortmann suggested that this item be added

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to the agenda for the next meeting. C. Copeland asked that suggested changes to the bylaws be submitted in writing. A discussion ensued concerning the timeline for the approval of goals.

g. NH Rail Transit Authority Board Recommendation Letter

V. Parmele asked if there was competition for the RPC representation on the NH Rail Transit Authority position. C. Copeland shared that B. Jaffin would know the answer to this question, and that he could address this at the next meeting. K. Ortmann **MOVED** to authorize staff to submit the letter. T. Crosby **SECONDED** this motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

3. Discussion

a. FY2016 Executive Director Organizational Goals

C. Copeland shared that for this meeting she prepared the organizational goals, and requested the group's input on the goals and performance measures. Suggestions were made concerning the performance measures for the goal items and ideas to refine and combine the proposed goals. Stemming from the draft goals conversation a discussion ensued concerning non-profit status, state designation of RPCs, bills for the elimination of RPCs, and the purposes of succession and emergency plans. K. Ortmann suggested identifying priority goals. J. Nelson suggested that everyday goals be taken out of the Executive Director goals. The goals will be revised and brought to the Committee at the next meeting.

C Copeland covered **Contract Updates (Item 4a.)** at this time (see below).

b. Executive Director Review Committee.

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting and will be addressed again at the September meeting.

c. SRPC Quarterly Meetings

S. Sylvia shared the schedule for the quarterly E.C. meetings. S. Sylvia will be putting together a survey concerning Commissioner preferences for meetings. K. Ortmann suggested asking the new NHDOT Commissioner to be the guest speaker for the SRPC Annual Meeting. K. Ortmann **MOVED** to endorse the tentative schedule. V. Parmele **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

d. Veteran's Recognition

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This item was tabled.

B. Tapscott introduced the next agenda item

4. Updates

a. **Contract Updates**

C. Copeland shared that the Executive Committee decision to increase the billing rate has affected a current contract with the Town of Northwood. C. Copeland asked that the Executive Committee consider allowing the billing rate for the Matt Sullivan to remain at his FY2015 rate until the end of the 2015 calendar year. The Town of Northwood is very pleased with the work of M. Sullivan. C. Copeland explained that other contracts have been adapted to provide fair alternatives to the FY2016 increased billing rates. S. Keans asked about contract dates and specifications. The current Northwood contract allows for changes in the billing rate at the start of the Commission fiscal year. The contract can be terminated at any time by either party. K. Ortmann asked if SRPC could provide the service at a cheaper rate by using another staff member. There is no other staff member with appropriate experience to provide the requested services.

K. Ortmann shared that as Northwood is a dues paying member accommodations should be made. C. Copeland explained staff compensation increases for FY2016 and that newer staff are working in UPWP and don't have the expertise to work on other projects at this time. S. Keans asked if development of these staff could be one of our goals. K. Ortmann asked for C. Copeland's recommendation. She recommended that the old billing rate be used for a limited time frame. The group suggested a break until December 31, 2015. S. Keans suggested writing a letter to the Town to express why this temporary hold is being allowed, and what the Town is getting as part of SRPC waiving the clause in the contract. T. Crosby **MOVED** to waive the clause in the Northwood contract, which allows SRPC to change their billing rates at the beginning of the fiscal year, until December 31, 2015. K. Ortmann **SECONDED** this motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

b. **NH Rail Transit Authority**

B. Jaffin was not present to give the update. K. Ortmann reminded the Committee that the group is currently having their last official meeting, and that the SRPC Executive Committee approved the recommendation letter to be sent to NHDOT.

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c. **NHARPC Committee Update**

K. Ortmann shared that he recently attended the NHARPC meeting. The NHARPC group discussed upcoming bills. The next meeting will be in October. The NHARPC will be releasing a report on the bills they supported and opposed to the RPCs and member communities.

5. **Other Business**

There was no other business

6. **Adjournment**


T. Crosby **MOVED** to adjourn. B. Tapcott **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,

Shayna Sylvia
Communications and Outreach Specialist

Minutes approved on 9/18/2015

By: 
Brian Tapscott, Chairman – SRPC Executive Committee