

**Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee Meeting
150 Wakefield Street, Suite 12, Conference Rm. 1A
Rochester, NH 03867**

FINAL MINUTES

**Friday December 16th 2016
9:00 AM-11:00 AM**

1. Introductions

Members Present: Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Jon B. Hotchkiss (Middleton), Gary Anderson (Nottingham), Wayne Burton (Durham), Bill Connor (Somersworth), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Judy Nelson (Rollinsford), Peter Nelson (Newmarket), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Michael Williams (COAST), Robert Jaffin (Rochester), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Peter Nelson (Newmarket), Suzanne Huard (Rollinsford)

Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Rachel Dewey (Data Analyst), Lynn Cherry (Regional Planning and Communications Assistant), Rachael Mack (GIS Planner), Colin Lentz (Regional Transportation Planner), Alexa Gozdoff (Transportation Planning Assistant)

Guests:

Elizabeth Strachan (NHDES)

The meeting was called to order with a quorum at 9:02 am.

2. Staff Communications

C. Lentz announced that James Burdin had been hired as the Regional Economic Development Planner position and will be performing tasks for the Strafford Economic Development District.

3. Action Items

3.1. Minutes from November 18th 2016

T. Crosby made a motion to approve the November 18th 2016 Meeting Minutes

Seconded by B. Tapscott

Vote: Unanimous in favor

3.2. Review and Accept 2016 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

C. Lentz presented the 2016 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects which reports on all funds committed (or "obligated") to projects in the Strafford region during the 2016 federal fiscal year.

B. Jaffin made a motion to accept the 2016 Annual Listing of Obligated Projects

Seconded by J. Hotchkiss

Vote: Unanimous in favor

4. Discussion Items

4.1. Project Solicitation Process (Project Selection Criteria Review)

C. Lentz explained that he is working on the project solicitation process so that he can help municipalities develop projects that are eligible for inclusion in the Statewide Ten Year Plan. Following the project solicitation process, projects proposed by municipalities and agencies in the region will be scored and ranked prior to being submitted to NHDOT for final selection for the draft Statewide Ten Year Plan. All RPCs and NHDOT will be using a common set of criteria to rank proposed projects.

C. Lentz said he was working with NHDOT on methodology for developing cost estimates and scopes of work for proposed projects, which will increase their feasibility and eligibility. He added that he would be meeting with RPCs, NHDOT, NHDES, and FHWA in late December for a final discussion about the scoring criteria. C. Lentz reviewed the scoring criteria and weightings used for the previous project solicitation process in order to get input from the TAC prior to this meeting.

C. Lentz reviewed the baseline eligibility for project proposals:

- Is the project feasible?
 - Project addresses a clearly defined transportation need
 - Proposal is a reasonable approach in scope and cost given existing resources
 - Project is likely to receive required state/federal Resource Agency permits and approvals
- Does it have local and/or regional support?
 - Project has demonstrated local support and matching funds if necessary
 - Project conforms to regulations and plans for affected areas
- Does the proposed project take place on a federal aid-eligible highway, and is it eligible for specific funding sources under the TYP [e.g. FHWA, FTA, FAA, Betterment, Turnpikes, State Aid Bridge]?

C. Lentz explained that the current scoring criteria [used in the previous Ten Year Plan development process] were heavily discussed by the rural RPCs, MPOs, NHDOT, NHDES, and FHWA. At this point these agencies agree that these criteria represent the most straightforward approach for scoring projects given factors like data availability, expertise, etc. C. Lentz stated RPCs have the ability to adjust the weightings of the criteria to best represent their region. C.

Figure 1. 2015 Ten Year Plan project scoring criteria

Mobility	16%
Reduce Congestion (72.5%)	
Freight Mobility (27.5%)	
Alternative Modes	9%
Network Significance	15%
Traffic Volume (28.9%)	
Facility Importance (71.1%)	
Safety	25%
Safety Measures (52.7%)	
Safety Performance (47.3%)	
State of Repair	20%
Roadway Surface Life (50.%)	
Bridge Asset Condition (50.%)	
Support	15%

Lentz reviewed each of the scoring criteria and their sub-categories in the presentation. See Figure 1. 2015 Ten Year Plan project scoring criteria

5. Project Update(s)

5.1. SHRP2 Project Updates

L. Cherry gave an update on the SHRP2 Project. The SHRP2 workgroup was able to narrow the list of measures to 24 from the 650 measures proposed at the start of the project. The next step in the project is to draft methodology for implementing each measure. She said the potential measures had been divided into subject areas and assigned to workgroup experts in each field for feedback on whether the measures were relevant to the overall transportation planning process. L. Cherry said the next Performance-Based Planning Workgroup meeting is in January. She added that the team has moved on to Phases III and IV and are on target and budget for completing the project. She explained that each Transit Provider will have to set targets starting in January and also be working on a Transit Asset Management Plan for October of 2020. If anyone has any more feedback they should contact her or other staff on the SHRP2 team.

5.2. 2018-2019 UPWP Budget and Scope of Work Development

C. Lentz explained that staff are working on the next Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) agreement which will comprise the next two fiscal years 2018-2019. The document is required to delineate staff tasks and hours for fulfilling the core mandates of the Strafford MPO. The draft will be submitted to NHDOT in January of 2017; no major changes from the last agreement are anticipated other than to add specific tasks for performance-based planning and additional planning factors and planning emphasis areas.

6. Other Business

E. Strachen notified the committee members that funding would be available in the near future (through a statewide program) as a result of the large-scale Volkswagen settlement. C. Lentz said he was communicating with NHDES staff to schedule a time for them to give a presentation about the Volkswagen settlement.

E. Strachen explained that NHDES is currently accepting proposals for funding through the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) through January 6th 2017. The program supports replacement of diesel engines and vehicles greater than 20 years old. J. Nelson asked if the funding was available to both private vehicles and municipal vehicles. E. Strachen confirmed that private and public vehicles were eligible. She said all the information was available on the NHDES website.

W. Burton provided an update about the Seacoast Reliability project [lead by Eversource] to install high-capacity power transmission lines through Madbury and Durham and across Little Bay into Newington. He said testing and environmental review for the project was still ongoing, which includes plowing a trench through the marine sediment across Little Bay in which the transmission cables will be buried. W. Burton described Durham's efforts to restrain Eversource's efforts to speed through the project review and permitting process, noting that many people had concerns about potential environmental impacts of disturbing the sensitive marine organisms and habitat. He explained that Durham residents and experts have raised

concerns about contaminants in the marine sediment that could be released into the water if disturbed. W. Burton added that the project is disturbing archaeological sites that were previously unknown.

B. Connor asked about the project's right-of-way challenges. W. Burton said there were definitely siting issues with the 100-foot transmission poles that were involved, and many abutters were not happy with them going through their backyards or disturbing the places they have used for recreation and enjoyment. B. Connor mentioned that Eversource had given a presentation about the project at a 2015 SRPC Commissioner's meeting. W. Burton stated that the relevant laws require Eversource to give public presentations, but does not require them to answer any questions.

P. Nelson asked if opponents of the project had engaged the local Nature Conservancy chapter. W. Burton said yes, and that The Nature Conservancy had provided much of technical environmental information related to the project. He added that he was in the process of developing legislation that would require chemical testing prior to project approval. W. Burton emphasized the wide ranging value and importance of the Great Bay estuary: it is the largest inland tidal system north of the Chesapeake; it directly supports the local economy; and is a key part of the landscape that makes the region unique. W. Burton noted that the science used to describe the ecosystem is extremely complex. He noted that Eversource's profits are based partially on how many miles of transmission lines they own.

B. Connor thanked the staff of SRPC for a great year of work, and said he was proud to be associated with the commission. C. Lentz thanked B. Connor and the committee, saying he enjoyed working with them.

7. Citizen's Forum –

Citizens of the Strafford region are invited to speak on the subject matter of the meeting. Statements shall be limited to three minutes

No citizens brought comments forward.

8. Adjournment

J. Hotchkiss moved to adjourn

Seconded by B. Tapscott

Vote: All in favor

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 am.

Minutes submitted by,
Colin Lentz & Alexa Gozdoff

Approved by

Name Printed:

Victoria Parnell

Signed

Victoria M. Parnell

Date: 1/20/17