

MINUTES
STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

April 14, 2006
Conference Room
Strafford Regional Planning Commission
2 Ridge Street
Dover, NH

Members Present: Tom Fargo, Chairman; Edmund Jansen, Jr., Vice Chairman, Rollinsford; Tom Crosby, Madbury; Bruce Woodruff, Milton; Ken Ortmann, Rochester; Rod Cools, Wakefield.

Members Absent: Al Dixon, Secretary-Treasurer, Newmarket.

Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland, Linda Osburn.

Chairman Fargo called the meeting to order at 7:38 AM.

1. Minutes

Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2006 Executive Committee meeting. Jansen made the motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2006 minutes as written. Crosby seconded the motion. The motion passed with Woodruff abstaining.

2. Financial Reports

Copeland reviewed the draft March financial reports and discussed the projected income and expenses. She stated dues would be taken into income in April and the final billing for the Route 125 study would be in April. Copeland stated that 71% of projected income had been received and 71% of projected expenses had been spent. Osburn stated that NH Department of Transportation (DOT) would need to sign the indirect rate audit scope of work for Melanson Heath & Company to issue the final audit report.

3. Draft FY 2007 Budget

Copeland discussed the draft FY 2007 budget and stated that expenses would be added for a new copier and postal machine. She referred to the Executive Director Report for projected income for FY 2007.

4. Executive Director Report

Copeland discussed context sensitive solutions training and additional potential funding from the NH DOT. Woodruff explained that context sensitive solutions involved bringing the people who lived around a project into the planning process. Copeland discussed Intelligent Transportation System

(ITS) Architecture Plan requirements for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to have in place along with potential funding and training sources.

Copeland stated that she would finalize the outline, structure and scope of work with Dennis McCann of the Strafford Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) to produce a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document for Strafford County with funding from the NH Department of Economic Development (DRED) and the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). Copeland discussed the possible CDFFA funding for data collection, education and outreach regarding barriers to childcare facilities; possible funding to collect data on age restricted housing in each community; decreased funding from the 604(b) Water Quality Planning Grant Program; increased Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) funding to integrate land use and transportation and require a change to the scope of work in the UPWP contract with the NH DOT.

Chairman Fargo stated that the City of Dover would probably not pay dues to SPRC in FY 2007. Copeland stated that she wanted support and would not go down without a fight. She stated that she completed a value sheet demonstrating the value of Strafford Regional Planning Commission to Dover. Discussion ensued regarding air quality, Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) projects, the quality of life in New Hampshire, and the property tax debate. Woodruff stated that the value sheet must be ironclad but cautioned not to exclude the need for the city staff. Copeland stated that Chairman Fargo would take the report to the City Councilors, and that Sam Reid, former chair, was also working to help SRPC.

Chairman Fargo stated that the annual meeting in June was a good time to solicit new commissioners. Discussion followed regarding the possible dates and venues available for the annual meeting with Wednesday, May 31, 2006 selected for the annual meeting. Copeland stated that she would review possible locations for the meeting.

5. Office Space

Osburn discussed her conversations with SRPC's current landlord Dr. Balzano regarding office space. She stated that Dr. Balzano would not begin renovations on the first floor area until January 1, 2007 and SRPC would be able to lease the second floor at a reasonable price dependent on negotiations for any additional accommodations. She stated that the landlord would prefer a three-year lease period and stated that a month-to-month lease would allow SRPC to give one month's notice to vacate but would also allow the landlord to give SRPC one month's notice to vacate. Copland discussed the other regional planning commissions' office space situations that ranged from leased space to owned buildings with space leased to other parties. Cools suggested the three-year lease term should allow SRPC to decide a long-term plan. Ortmann suggested the long-term plan should be discussed at the annual meeting.

6. Executive Director Evaluation Committee

Copeland requested that this item be postponed until the end of the meeting.

7. UPWP Contract status-audit, new contract, MPO process

Copeland stated that the indirect rate audit had been discussed with the Financial Reports with Item 2 and the new contract had been discussed with the Executive Director report with Item 4. She stated that last year Rockingham Planning Commission had initiated the discussion of splitting the Seacoast Metropolitan Organization (MPO) along planning commission boundaries due to their duplication of efforts in administering two metropolitan planning organizations. Copeland cited the UPWP

amendment process and State Planning and Research Applications (SPR) process as administratively challenging. She stated that the item should be placed on the agenda for the May Commission meeting, and if the separation were supported, she would send a letter to Rockingham Planning Commission and NH DOT to begin the separation process. Discussion ensued regarding organizational processes, transportation boundaries, air quality conformity issues, and the regional transportation model. Jansen left the meeting at 8:37 AM. Ortmann stated that he wanted a sheet with the pros and cons of separation to discuss at the next Executive Committee meeting. Ortmann and Woodruff stated that the pros and cons of the separation should be forwarded to the Commissioners for consideration at the May meeting with a recommendation from the Executive Committee. Copeland stated that she would prepare the pros and cons paper and meet with Cliff Sinnott, the Executive Director of Rockingham Planning Commission, before the next Executive Committee meeting. Ortmann suggested the office space long-term plan and the Seacoast MPO realignment discussion be placed at the beginning of the agenda for the May annual meeting.

8. On-Going and Emerging Regional Planning Issues Roundtable

a. Regional Impact Committee

Chairman Fargo stated there were no new regional impact projects received.

b. Commissioner Recruitment Subcommittee

Chairman Fargo stated town meetings were concluded and it was time to begin recruitment of commissioners.

c. Waste Water Project

Copeland discussed the New Hampshire Seacoast Region Wastewater Management Feasibility Charrette held on March 25, 2006 and stated the consultants would begin the process to narrow down the options presented. Copeland stated that technical memoranda on the options could be found at www.coastalclear.org.

d. Regional Economic Development Chapter

Copeland stated that staff was working on data collection and organization of a chapter on regional economic development.

e. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Copeland stated this item was discussed with the Executive Director report with Item 4.

9. Other Business

Ortmann suggested that Chairman Fargo contact Dixon to discuss the Executive Director Evaluation. He stated that the budget process was ongoing in Rochester and asked if Chairman Fargo thought the SRPC dues issue might appear in Rochester. Woodruff suggested considering support letters to the editor of Foster's Daily Democrat or a guest commentary regarding regional planning. Ortmann asked if an editorial written in support of regional planning would make a difference to councilors during the budget approval process. Discussion ensued regarding strategic planning and support for regional planning.

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
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Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to adjourn. Ortmann made the motion to adjourn and Cools seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 8:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Osburn
Bookkeeper

Minutes approved on May 12, 2006.

By: 

Thomas R. Fargo, Chairman