

MINUTES
STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

April 22, 2005
SRPC Office
2 Ridge Street, Suite 4
Dover, NH

Members Present: Tom Fargo, Chairman, Dover; Edmund Jansen Jr., Vice Chairman, Rollinsford; Al Dixon, Secretary-Treasurer, Newmarket; Tom Crosby, Madbury; Bruce Woodruff, Alternate, Milton; Kenn Ortmann, Rochester; Rod Cools, Wakefield.

Members Absent: Heidi Seaverns, Nottingham.

Proxy Vote: Heidi Seaverns, Nottingham.

Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland, Linda Osburn.

Chairman Fargo called the meeting to order at 7:35 AM.

1. Minutes

Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2005 Executive Committee meeting. Cools made the motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2005 as written. Jansen seconded the motion. The motion passed, and Dixon abstained.

2. Financial Issues

- a. Copeland reviewed the receivables listed on the draft March financial reports and the Income by Customer report.
- b. Copeland reviewed the Income and Expense Proforma. She stated that SRPC had spent 74% of the budgeted expenses and had received 69% of the budgeted income. Copeland stated that expenses within the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) budget had been reallocated and that the staff had been working on the next UPWP contract. She stated that SPRC must request an extension to the current UPWP contract by May 30, 2005 if all work would not be completed by June 30, 2005. Copeland distributed a fourth quarter project management time guidelines worksheet. Ortmann joined the meeting at 7:50 AM.
- c. Osburn noted that the NH Department of Transportation (DOT) completed audit of the UPWP contracts for FY 00-01 and FY 02-03 was distributed to the Executive Committee members in their April 22, 2005 meeting packet.
- d. Osburn stated that the DOT audit had been distributed to Melanson, Heath & Company, PC, who is completing the SRPC audits for FY 01, 02, 03 and 04. She stated that the SRPC auditors had completed the audit fieldwork, that a draft audit would be available in mid-May, and that a presentation would be made to the Executive Committee at the June 10, 2005 Executive

Committee meeting. Osburn asked for a motion to approve repayment to NH DOT for the outstanding items in the amount of \$16,660.56 from FY 00 and 01.

Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to approve the repayment of \$16,660.56 to NH DOT for the outstanding of audit items from FY 00 and FY 01. Dixon made the motion, and Crosby seconded the motion. The motion passed.

- e. Copeland discussed the first draft of the FY 06 budget expenses. She stated that she used a 3% increase for salary expense and a 25% increase for health insurance expense. Copeland stated that SPRC was making arrangements for a basic 125 plan to enable employees to pay their health insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars.

Woodruff joined the meeting at 8:20 AM. Copeland discussed the January and July renewal differences. Chairman Fargo asked for the employee level of contribution. Copeland answered that employees with single coverage contribute 10 % and that employees with two-person or family coverage contribute 25%. Fargo asked how the percentages compare with other organizations. Dixon answered that the percentages were in line with other municipalities. Copeland stated that health insurance expense in 1999 was \$10,000 and would be \$56,000 in 2006. Ortmann stated that SRPC was not the only organization to see the increases. Chairman Fargo stated that it was SRPC's philosophy to pay for benefits as part of a total compensation package.

Chairman Fargo stated that the municipalities were in the process of completing budgets and stated that it was important to touch bases with the budget decision makers. He stated that Dover had a vacancy on the Strafford Regional Planning Commission.

Copeland stated that she did not complete the draft income budget as several contracts are still in the review process. Osburn stated any changes to the health insurance would be an issue of great concern to the employees. Woodruff asked if one choice would be to keep the current health plan. Copeland answered that the current plan was one of the four choices available. Chairman Fargo stated that the health insurance provider should meet with the employees to provide descriptions of the plan choices for employees to make their own decisions. Ortmann asked if the issue should be forwarded to the Commission members. Dixon stated that it did not need to be forwarded to the Commission members.

3. Operational Issues

- a. Copeland reviewed the Executive Director Update and Notes. She stated that the annual retreat of the Executive Directors would be held on May 11-12 and that Alice Chamberlin, a member of the governor's staff, would be attending along with staff from the Office of Energy and Planning (OEP). Copeland invited two commissioners to the luncheon session on May 12.

Copeland stated that SPRC had provided an exhibit on conservation planning and conservation subdivisions at the annual OEP Land Use and Zoning Conference on April 9, 2005.

Copeland discussed alternative sources of funding to complete a County Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document for Strafford County.

Copeland stated that the Regional Transit Providers met on April 21, 2005 and that the next meeting was scheduled for mid-May. She stated that the report to the Governor's Advisory

Council on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) regarding the Downeaster train's application for Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding had been completed. Woodruff asked who participated in the Regional Transit Providers meeting. Copeland answered that the participants were representatives from the Maine and New Hampshire Departments of Transportation, Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, University of New Hampshire, COAST bus, C&J Trailways, and staff from Rockingham and Strafford Regional Planning Commissions. Woodruff asked if the City of Dover should be considered a transit provider since the City was instituting intercity transit service and operated the transportation center in Dover. He stated that if the plan was to include the communities as a next step that he would favor that process

Copeland stated that the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization split with Rockingham Planning Commission was a work item in the new UPWP Scope of Work.

Copeland stated that regional impact committee was on hold due to her workload. Chairman Fargo asked if there were any requests for regional review. Copeland stated that there were several regional projects that were well involved in the review process. Chairman Fargo stated SRPC would need to be responsive when a community declares a project a regional impact project. Copeland stated that there were no new potential regional impact projects coming up.

Copeland stated that the bus rider surveys were completed and that solar traffic counters had been ordered to complete the traffic counts this year.

Copeland stated that the public notice to adopt the regional master plan was placed last week and the public comment period had begun. She stated that the next technical working group meeting was scheduled for April 26th.

Copeland stated that the Hazard Mitigation Plan for Durham has been started. She requested assistance from the towns of Newmarket, Milton and Brookfield to obtain historic data and complete the critical facilities mapping.

Chairman Fargo stated that the employee handbook had been reviewed once and was applicable to employees other than the Executive Director. He suggested a parallel handbook for the Executive Director. Ortmann asked if the military leave issue from the previous discussion on the employee handbook had been resolved. Woodruff stated that the military leave should be fifteen days instead of two weeks. Discussion followed regarding accrual of vacation and benefits while an employee was using vacation, medical and/or military leave. Dixon stated that if an employee was eligible for a paycheck from SPRC, then the employee was eligible to accrue benefits. Copeland asked about benefits if an employee were on active duty. Dixon responded that active duty personnel were not employees and therefore not eligible to accrue benefits. He stated that employees on workers' compensation or disability were not eligible to receive paychecks or to accrue benefits.

Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to send the employee handbook to the employment attorney with the direction to amend the employee handbook as follows: to amend the active military leave to the number of days as required by statute and to amend the appropriate sections to state that if an employee is eligible for a paycheck, then the employee is eligible to accrue benefits. Cools made the motion, and Dixon seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. Other Issues

- a. Copeland read a list of tasks from FY 00 through 04 that she had compiled. Chairman Fargo stated that the review committee had completed a draft performance assessment of the Executive Director in relation to the business plan and wanted a special meeting to discuss the evaluation. Ortmann stated that he thought the evaluation subcommittee had planned to bring the evaluation to the Executive Committee. Cools and Crosby stated that they agreed with that plan and that a special meeting to discuss only the evaluation should be scheduled. Chairman Fargo stated that the original plan of the evaluation subcommittee was to incorporate Copeland's responses to the draft evaluation and bring the evaluation to the Executive Committee. Woodruff gave his proxy to Chairman Fargo. Chairman Fargo stated that an Executive Committee meeting to discuss the Executive Director evaluation was scheduled for May 6, 2005 at a location to be determined.
- b. Copeland distributed an update of the business plan through 2009. She stated that the next chapters of the regional master plan to be completed were the Water Resources Protection Plan, Economic Development, and Population and Growth Management.

Copeland asked if she should seek a speaker for the annual Commission meeting scheduled for May 26th. Chairman Fargo responded affirmatively and stated the need to increase participation of the Commissioners. He stated that the Commissioners' handbook should be updated. Chairman Fargo mentioned potential speakers and topics such as quality presentations. Ortmann stated that housing was an issue and suggested Bill Ray of the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority or Dr. Lisa Shapiro who completed the document "Housing New Hampshire's Workforce." Discussion on possible meeting centers followed, and Copeland stated that the meeting place had already been announced.

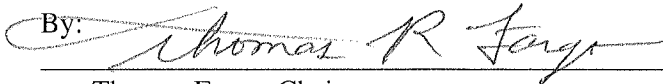
Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to adjourn. Ortmann made the motion to adjourn, and Crosby seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 9:25 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Osburn
Bookkeeper

Minutes approved on May 13, _____, 2005.

By: 

Thomas Fargo, Chairman