

ARRINGTON
WOKFIELD
R
DURHAM
FARMINGTON
LEE
MADBURY
MIDDLETON
MILTON



NEW DURHAM
NEWMARKET
NORTHWOOD
NOTTINGHAM
ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
Conference Room 1A, 150 Wakefield Street
Rochester, NH 03867

FINAL Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2018

Members present: Chair Victoria Parmele, Northwood; Vice Chair Martin Laferte, Farmington; Secretary/Treasurer Tom Crosby, Madbury; Peter Nelson, Newmarket; Marcia Gasses, Dover; Fred Kaen, Lee; Donald Hamann, Rochester

Staff present: Jen Czysz, executive director; Shayna Sylvia, communications and outreach specialist; Rachel Dewey, data analyst

1. Welcome/Introductions

Chair Victoria Parmele began the meeting at 8:04 a.m. M. Laferte shared an anecdote about his involvement with the Strafford MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and how it led to his community of Farmington receiving grant funding.

Introductions were given around the room.

2. Non-Public

a. RSA 91-A

A Non-Public session was not needed. This item does not need to be reoccurring on the agenda.

3. Action Items

a. Approval of the Minutes of June 15, 2018

V. Parmele asked for comments or corrections on the minutes of June 15, 2018. There were none. Marcia Gasses **MOVED** to approve the minutes of June 15, 2018. Peter Nelson **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

b. Acceptance of Draft June Financials

Jen Czysz explained that a new dashboard handout was included in the current meeting packet. It was modeled after a similar handout that was used at Nashua

Regional Planning Commission. J. Czynsz reviewed the timeline for the organization's audit processes. She explained how the working budget will function and how she will update the E.C. each month on any changes. An updated budget will be presented to the Commission at the December meeting.

J. Czynsz noted staff activities including meetings and presentations. She gave an update on the hiring processes for the GIS planner. Victoria asked about staff contracts. J. Czynsz reviewed staff contracts for the fiscal year and noted foreseeable shifts or changes.

J. Czynsz explained that SRPC is waiting to hear back on a few outstanding grant applications, but has also secured some new contracts which were not reflected in the adopted budget. She added that a contract with Nottingham is being finalized, which will allow the data collection staff to do Road Surface Management Systems assessments and an associated report. Other contracts that are being finalized include one supporting plan development for the Tri-City Homelessness Coalition and one for a GIS analysis build-out with New Durham. She reviewed the current UPWP budget and the carryover from Fiscal Years 2018–2019.

J. Czynsz shared the status of other potential projects such as a Durham groundwater modeling project, work with Dover supported by a coastal resilience grant, work with HEAL NH funded through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and a project with the Rockingham Planning Commission and the Conservation Law Foundation focused on groundwater rise. V. Parmele asked about the timeline for hearing back about these applications. The organization should know in the coming months.

P. Nelson asked about the Lamprey Advisory Committee (LAC) Map Geo-MS4 project. J. Czynsz responded that she would get the specifics of the project and follow up. A discussion ensued concerning MS4 rules and regulations. P. Nelson said SRPC's work with Newmarket related to protection of water resources and MS4 should be highlighted as an example other communities can use. J. Czynsz explained what the stormwater coalition is.

J. Czynsz reviewed budget conditions at the closeout of FY 2018. She explained that a pending payment affected the year-end budget. A discussion ensued concerning a plan to address the pending payment.

M. Laferte asked about the status with the organization's credit card. J. Czynsz responded that there are currently operating policies in place that were previously approved by the Executive Committee. A discussion ensued concerning the credit card. J. Czynsz noted that the organization's account at Citizen's Bank has been closed out, and the organization is waiting for the new credit card, which should arrive soon.

J. Czynsz explained that Kathy Foster, financial consultant, included notes in this month's financial statements. The main item to keep track of is the pending contract payment. V. Parmele said the notes were helpful for Committee members.

P. Nelson commented on the consultant services that are budgeted as part of the Brownfields project. J. Czysz explained that Strafford EDD's Brownfields program has been extended, and there is potential for future assessments. Marcia Gasses suggested Landry's in Barrington, which burned down. P. Nelson suggested a well in Dover that had been shut down, but that well is already being examined.

T. Crosby addressed Portsmouth's water supply, explaining that Madbury supplies 65 percent of Portsmouth's water. M. Gasses noted that the headwaters of that water supply are in Barrington. A discussion ensued concerning water supply issues in Madbury. J. Czysz said the local sourcewater protection grant program is now open for applications. A discussion followed concerning wells in Madbury. M. Gasses noted communities have different capacities to deal with these types of issues.

P. Nelson noted the importance of water supply planning and how SRPC should be marketing its services. He added that SRPC should engage communities, expressing what issues they should be thinking about and what can services SRPC can provide. A discussion ensued concerning better advertising for SRPC's ongoing and completed projects. Shayna Sylvia responded that the organization is working on better identifying its services and including more project descriptions on the website. This is something staff are aware of and working to improve. Completed projects are included in each year's annual report.

J. Czysz explained that contract overages are now being identified as such for easy tracking purposes. She added that very few contract go over budget.

P. Nelson **MOVED** to accept the Draft June Financials. T. Crosby **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

S. Sylvia noted that the website statistics in the new dashboard will be changing slightly moving forward. They will then be tracked consistently from that point on.

c. Concurrence with the Draft July Monthly Minors

J. Czysz reviewed the changes for the FTA-5310 project, which focuses on capital, mobility management, and operating funds for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Funding changes are based on the updated FTA apportionments and prior year carry over, and are proposed in the sum of \$405,813.

P. Nelson asked for the regional connections of this project. R. Dewey explained that COAST set a good example with their transportation coordination efforts so NHDOT decided to allocate money for the other Regional Coordination Councils (RCCs) in the state to fund similar work. NHDOT has proposed reallocating dollars so that other RCCs can model their processes after what worked well for COAST in the Strafford region and the seacoast.

R. Dewey explained that child project reports, or the explanation of the regional outcomes of a larger project, will soon be integrated and provided to E.C. members.

M. Gasses **MOVED** to concur with the July Monthly Minors. Donald Hamann **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

d. Approval of FY 2019 Billing Rate Structure

J. Czynsz reviewed the Draft FY 2019 Billing Rate structure. She explained that an extra tier was added to better capture actual salary levels. Each level has increased five dollars from last year, which captures salary increases and the change in SRPC's indirect rate. V. Parmele asked Jen to explain the indirect rate. She noted that the indirect cost rate is set by NHDOT, because it is SRPC's cognizant agency, and includes fringe costs and rent, office supplies, etc. Kathy and Jen reviewed past indirect rates and projected budgets and submitted a rate, which was approved at 128 percent.

P. Nelson suggested increasing the billing rate for non-dues-paying communities. A discussion ensued concerning billing rates for these communities.

T. Crosby **MOVED** to approve the FY 2019 billing rate structure. M. Gasses **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

4. Discussion

b. IT Plan (SRPC Equipment Overview Enclosed)

This item was addressed before item a. Rachel Dewey explained her process in documenting current uses and practices related to information technology (IT). J. Czynsz explained that this process occurred so the organization can begin to have a conversation about future needs. R. Dewey reviewed the organization's current technology and updated the committee on upcoming needs.

A discussion ensued about cloud storage versus server and backups. P. Nelson offered to volunteer his services in assisting with the IT plan process. He added that he could recommend cloud-based vendors. P. Nelson shared that he could do a cost comparison between providers.

R. Dewey explained her concerns with the organization's current bandwidth and how it might not support cloud backup. P. Nelson responded that this is why a cost-benefit analysis could be beneficial.

P. Nelson asked about the organization's internet connection. R. Dewey responded that she wasn't sure what type of connection it is. P. Nelson suggested it might be useful to see what types of connections other organizations in the building have.

A discussion ensued concerning the IT plan. J. Czynsz explained that the organization would soon need to go out to bid for contract IT services. M. Gasses said that Barrington just went through this process using a subcommittee, which was helpful.

P. Nelson asked about the phone system. A discussion followed concerning options for the phone system.

J. Czysz offered to send P. Nelson changes to the working IT plan that he could review. He suggested providing a sample plan and noted that SRPC's plan could be shared with other RPCs in the future. He suggested there may be ways for the RPCs to save money as a group by bundling software.

a. FY2019 Executive Director Organizational Goals

J. Czysz reviewed her organizational goals for FY 2019. She said one of her goals is to address staff turnover, and one way to do that would be to use a step process for salaries for each position. This would provide transparency for the staff. J. Czysz explained that staff will soon be setting performance goals. Merit-based increases would take place each July. Other retention strategies include changing personnel policies to create flexibility for staff, such as the option to telecommute regularly.

J. Czysz shared another goal involving IT. She said creating an IT plan would enable the organization to think about and identify ways to schedule and deploy different technology, software, and hardware improvements.

She added that she would also like to look back at the regional master plan as the basis for where the organization would like to go. This would take shape as a strategic plan for the organization. This process would be open to Commissioners, staff, the E.C., and other relevant stakeholders.

J. Czysz's next goal was to introduce herself to the Strafford region's municipalities and work to build strong relationships with them. She plans to schedule meetings with select boards and town/city councils. J. Czysz envisions spreading these meetings out and making them an annual check-in process. She added that she would encourage Commissioners to attend the meetings with their municipalities.

M. Gasses recognized staff for volunteering on city boards in Dover and commended their level of engagement both at and outside of work.

J. Czysz elaborated on her goal to meet with municipalities and said she would like to compile a list of municipal projects that could be referred to when relevant grant funding becomes available. Nancy O' Connor, program content coordinator, will assist with this.

J. Czysz asked for next steps with her goal-setting processes. V. Parmele explained that the executive director subcommittee used to work with the former executive director. She asked whether this subcommittee was still necessary. S. Sylvia reminded members that the organizational calendar calls for the E.C. to approve the executive director's goals in September.

M. Gasses and P. Nelson opined that there is no longer a need for the E.D. subcommittee and that the E.C. as a whole could work on process and organizational issues together.

J. Czynsz addressed her E.D. goals, sharing that these would be approved by the E.C. only. She asked the E.C. to bring back suggestions or comments at the next meeting.

c. Strategic Planning

F. Kaen asked how the other Commissioners would be involved in the strategic planning process. He suggested having a workshop to work on setting strategic goals. Commissioners should be involved in that.

J. Czynsz agreed that this process should involve all Commissioners. She noted examples of this process working successfully with other organizations she's been involved with. J. Czynsz suggested also involving the staff in the process. She noted that surveys could also be a useful tool, as well as using a facilitator. F. Kaen recommended the agenda or goals for this could be set up by the E.C., then taken to the whole Commission. He suggested contracting with the Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics at UNH. The strategic planning process will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

d. Non-Profit Designation

V. Parmele explained that the E.D. subcommittee previously looked into being a non-profit. She said that she, former E.C. member Bob Jaffin, and the former E.D., Cynthia Copeland, attended a training on becoming a non-profit.

J. Czynsz explained that non-profit status was discussed at the RPC executive directors' retreat. She said several regions are also looking at non-profit status. At the retreat, the executive directors began to look into whether the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions (NHARPC) can become a non-profit, under which the RPCs could operate. While this would make administration more complex, it would help save costs. The frequency with which the non-profit status would be used may not warrant nine separate RPCs becoming non-profits. Sylvia von Aulock, executive director of the Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC), will be discussing whether the nine RPCs could be joined under one non-profit with her board, since SNHPC already has a non-profit. The hypothetical NHARPC non-profit would need a separate board of directors, which would have oversight of the non-profit. A discussion ensued concerning this option. T. Crosby asked whether there would be one filing for the state, which there would be. P. Nelson gave an example of a non-profit he works for.

J. Czynsz explained that a non-profit makes sense, but wouldn't want it to be cumbersome on the RPCs. V. Parmele added that she will share a diagram that the previous E.D. made, laying out how she envisioned the non-profit fitting within SRPC.

e. Office Lease

J. Czysyz explained that the organization is on its third lease at the Rochester Community Center and half way through its two-year term. She noted that the current arrangement with rent and conference room space is a great deal. M. Gasses suggested J. Czysyz look into space at the McConnell Center. A discussion concerning office space followed.

5. Updates

a. Contract Updates – J. Czysyz

This was covered during the review of the financial statements.

6. Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Adjourn

T. Crosby **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. D. Hamann **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

The meeting adjourned at 10:02 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,
Shayna Sylvia
Communications and Outreach Specialist

Minutes approved on 8/17/18
By: Victoria N. Parmele
Victoria Parmele, Chair – SRPC Executive
Committee

