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

FINAL Meeting Minutes
March 15, 2019

Committee members present: Vice Chair Peter Nelson, Newmarket; Secretary/Treasurer Tom Crosby, Madbury; Donald Hamann, Rochester; David Landry, Dover

Staff members present: Jen Czysz, executive director; Shayna Sylvia, communications and outreach planner

Committee members absent: Chair Victoria Parmele, Northwood; Marcia Gasses, Dover; Michael Bobinsky, Somersworth

1. Welcome/Introductions

The meeting began at 8:01 a.m.

2. Action Items

a. Approval of the Minutes of February 15, 2019

P. Nelson asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the Feb. 15, 2019, Executive Committee meeting. Donald Hamann **MOVED** to accept the minutes. David Landry **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

b. Acceptance of Draft February Financials

Jennifer Czysz reviewed the draft February financials.

J. Czysz updated committee members on the status of the current indirect rate. She explained that recently there were a larger number of hours billed to indirect due to preparation and execution of SRPC's strategic planning retreat and in part to grant writing

activities. J. Czysz commented on SRPC's pending EDA grant and how it's affecting the budget and billable hours. She added that SRPC is awaiting reimbursement from a contract consultant and will also receive payment from NHDOT in March. T. Crosby shared that situations like these, where SRPC is awaiting payments, isn't out of the ordinary. D. Landry asked about payments from partners and consultants and whether SRPC receives funds in a lump sum or in increments. J. Czysz responded that it depends on the contract.

J. Czysz referred to the aging summary and noted that payments are current with only a limited number of payments to SRPC past due. She commended Kathy Foster on her monthly review of the aging summary.

J. Czysz reviewed the profit and loss statement. She reiterated that there are contracts where SRPC does not get reimbursed until the end of the project, which effects the profit and loss statement.

J. Czysz explained that hazard mitigation plans are tasked based. J. Czysz stated that SRPC doesn't have secured funding each year for hazard mitigation plans as funding occurs on a five-year cycle. She added that in fiscal year 2020 there will be no FEMA funding for hazard mitigation plans as there are no plans within our region expiring that year.

A discussion ensued concerning invoice processing from NHDOT. J. Czysz explained that NHDOT is very timely.

P. Nelson asked about the profit and loss statement, addressing consultant lines items such as engineering services, which include payments to Geosyntec for the Lee Floodplain study, and changes in accounting and bookkeeping. J. Czysz commented that our bookkeeper is under budget.

A discussion ensued concerning tasks that are under budget, and how these funds will be used. The money is allocated through the end of each project timeline.

P. Nelson and T. Crosby commended K. Foster on her work. J. Czysz explained that her and K. Foster will be focusing their attention on the indirect rate in the coming weeks. P. Nelson suggested a one-page analysis about how SRPC's overhead and indirect rate are calculated could be helpful. J. Czysz responded that this exists and shared it with the group.

J. Czysz commended K. Foster on following the federal regulations.

J. Czysz reiterated that indirect billing was high last month due to grant writing, the strategic planning retreat and staff leave time. D. Landry asked if there were other funding sources that grant writing work could be charged to. J. Czysz explained that there are limited options. Dues funding is reserved for technical assistance. J. Czysz said that grant writing and other administrative costs, under the federal regulations are billable to indirect, and the SRPC recoups these costs if it stays within the current indirect rate.

J. Czynsz stated that SRPC will be proposing our FY 2020 indirect rate to NHDOT in the coming months. In FY 2019 there was an increase in the indirect rate from the previous year. P. Nelson asked about SRPC's indirect rate in comparison with the other regional planning commissions (RPCs). J. Czynsz responded that SRPC's is in the middle. She added that SRPC's indirect rate for FY 2019 year worked when we planned to have the EDA grant, but the absence of this funding has reduced our direct billable salaries against which those indirect funds can be assessed.

P. Nelson asked about the possibility of an operational grant. J. Czynsz responded that New Hampshire Charitable Foundation used to offer these types of grants to RPCs, but no longer does.

D. Hamann asked if there was still a chance to receive EDA funding for the end of the year. J. Czynsz explained that she is not optimistic. She said that she talked with SRPC's EDA representative, and that while they are moving funds forward, SRPC doesn't know its place in the queue. Additionally, there is still administrative processing that needs to happen in the Philadelphia EDA office before SRPC can receive its funding.

A discussion ensued concerning indirect rate.

A discussion ensued concerning expenses and budget cuts, where needed. J. Czynsz explained that technology upgrades are being made, but that the budget is also being balanced in this process.

J. Czynsz shared with members that J. Burdin reduced his hours to 32, and that this will affect the budget. This works in SRPC's favor, as the EDA funding hasn't come in and J. Burdin was the primary staff on that project. D. Landry asked if there are grants for IT improvements. J. Czynsz explained that some IT costs can be billed to current contracts, like UPWP, such as the purchase of datasets. She elaborated, explaining that GIS software cannot be paid for by SRPC's UPWP as it is used for all SRPC services and projects. Other programs like TransCAD can be charged to the UPWP as it is used exclusively for transportation.

T. Crosby asked how executive committee members can assist SRPC. J. Czynsz responded that SRPC needs to follow up on services that were warrant articles built into municipal budgets, as SRPC was considered for those services. J. Czynsz explained that working toward all communities paying dues would also be helpful. D. Landry shared that he has more interest in this and would like to discuss this at a later point.

P. Nelson opined that we need to better advertise what to do for each town. J. Czynsz explained that half of each community's dues go towards matching the UPWP, but that the UPWP supports all communities regardless of whether they pay dues or not. There are exceptions such as RSMS and supplemental traffic counts. J. Czynsz provided an example

sharing that Nottingham, who is not-dues paying, would normally have received their Road Surface Management System (RSMS) assessment for free, but had to pay for the service.

P. Nelson asked who the non-dues paying were. A discussion ensued concerning the non-dues paying communities and the services that have still been provided. J. Czynsz explained that SRPC can leverage additional dollars with dues funding.

P. Nelson asked if we had political legislation intervene regarding the pending EDA contract. J. Czynsz replied that we contacted our state senator to get reimbursement for SRPC's last EDA contract. The pending EDA contract delay was a result of the delay in passing a federal budget.

P. Nelson questioned SRPC's financial position at the closeout of each fiscal year and what could be done to be more secure. J. Czynsz shared that there will always be fluctuations as all non-transportation projects are one-time contracts. She added that there is a continual cycle of grant and proposal writing to add to each year's budget.

J. Czynsz updated members on staff work and contracts.

D. Landry suggested that E.C. and Commissioners advocate for regional planning to their towns, when needed. P. Nelson reiterated his suggestion of commissioners having a list of shovel ready projects, so that SRPC can partner for relevant grants. A discussion ensued.

T. Crosby **MOVED** to accept the draft January financials. D. Hamann **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**.

3. Discussion

a. Current Legislation of Interest

J. Czynsz suggested members refer to the memo. She explained that SB 285 was amended to remove the RPC bonding authority. The bill creates a Coastal Resilience and Cultural and Historic District with representation from both SRPC and RPC. Additionally, the bill enables both SRPC and RPC to either separately or jointly form coastal resilience cooperative agreements with their municipalities and establish a coastal resilience fund.

J. Czynsz updated members on SB 542, which allows RPCs to work with municipalities to update wetlands regulations. J. Czynsz added that Marcia Gasses wrote a letter of support for this bill.

P. Nelson suggested using social media to explain what relevant bills are about. He opined that each week a different bill could be highlighted. SRPC could also provide information on hearings. Alternatively, a website page could be included on the SRPC website.

A discussion ensued cornering legislation and engaging members of the public.

b. Status of Officers and Executive Committee Members for Fiscal Year 2020

All members in attendance agreed to stay on in their current positions for FY 2020.

c. Strategic Planning Preliminary Report

J. Czysz gave an update on the strategic planning retreat report. She explained that some commissioners sent in comments, and that J. Burdin will setup up outline for the plan. J. Czysz shared that many comments addressed the length of the facilitator's report. She explained that it was not intended to be a summary, but to include the full findings from the retreat.

J. Czysz said that SRPC is still taking comments, which can be forward to Nancy O'Connor.

4. Updates

a. Awards, Contracts, and General Business Update

This was already covered or is included in the memo.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

6. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Shayna Sylvia
Communications and Outreach Planner

Minutes approved on 4/17/19
By: Victoria M. Parmele
Victoria Parmele, Chair – SRPC Executive
Committee

