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

FINAL Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2020

Committee members present: Chair Victoria Parmele, Northwood Vice Chair Peter Nelson, Newmarket; Secretary/Treasurer Tom Crosby, Madbury; Donald Hamann, Rochester; David Landry, Dover; Barbara Holstein, Rochester; Michael Bobinsky, Somersworth

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

1. Welcome/Introductions

The meeting began at 8:05 a.m.

V. Parmele called the meeting to order and as Chair of the SRPC Executive Committee declared that due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Committee is authorized to hold an emergency meeting electronically. There was no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order: each member in attendance (via Zoom) confirmed their participation and name, and that they were the only one in the room (if connecting with video), or on the phone (if connecting with audio). Those in attendance at the start of the meeting included Victoria Parmele, Peter Nelson, David Landry, Michael Bobinsky, Barbara Holstein, Shayna Sylvia, and Jennifer Czysz.

2. Action Items

a. Approval of the Minutes of February 21, 2020

V. Parmele asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the February 21, 2020 Executive Committee meeting. D. Landry **MOVED** to accept the minutes. B. Holstein **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**. The motion carried via roll call vote of V. Parmele, D. Landry, M. Bobinsky, B. Holstein, P. Nelson and V. Parmele in the affirmative.

b. Acceptance of the Draft February Financials

J. Czysz reviewed the Draft February Financials. She shared that bank balances are steady, while also explaining that the organization is reaching the point in the year where balances are expected to decline as dues funds have been expended. J. Czysz added that dues invoices for the 2022 fiscal year will be sent out in the coming weeks, but that they will not be due until July 1.

J. Czysz noted that the aging summary is in a good place, and that most payments have been timely.

Donald Hamman joined the meeting at 8:10 a.m.

J. Czysz projected that the organization will be in the black for the end of fiscal year 2021.

J. Czysz elaborated on the remaining dues, explaining that the organization's profit is equal to the proportion of the dues we haven't yet utilized. She added that even though the organizational indirect rate is low, from a cash standpoint SRPC is breaking even. The indirect rate must be closely monitored.

J. Czysz shared that the majority of projects are on target; noting that NHDOT billing is slightly under target.

Tom Crosby joined the meeting at 8:12 a.m.

P. Nelson asked for the financial forecast considering the current climate with COVID-19. J. Czysz explained that financial consultant Kathy Foster would be running financials next week. There aren't any current implications to SRPC's functioning in relation to COVID-19. Staff are all telecommuting and remain billable. J. Czysz explained that March should be a good month financially. J. Czysz explained that Brownfield's billing has not been completed.

J. Czysz elaborated on the effects of COVID-19 saying that SRPC is still able to bill our biggest contracts, DOT and EDA. She added that DOT has switched to an all-electronic process for invoice reporting, and that EDA is also electronic. EPA billing functions the same way.

The E.C. covered agenda Item 3a.

3. Updates and Discussion

a. COVID-19 actions and updates

J. Czysz updated E.C. members on staff's new telecommuting processes. She explained that staff have a weekly meeting on Mondays to keep everyone on track and connected.

J. Czysz stated that the traffic count season would be slightly delayed. She elaborated on the reasoning behind the delayed start. M. Bobinsky noted that traffic volumes are down significantly and agreed it would be appropriate to wait. A discussion ensued about traffic counts differences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

M. Bobinsky asked about pricing for SRPC's new Zoom subscription. It is \$149/ year for a single user pro account. It is working well so far.

V. Parmele asked about Policy/TAC meetings and whether they will be held in the coming month(s). J. Czynsz responded that unless there are pressing action items, these will be canceled. There is a forthcoming TIP amendment that will necessitate meeting, however timing has not yet been confirmed.

D. Landry asked if the organization foresees any future needs for Executive Orders that SRPC would require to operate efficiently. J. Czynsz replied by noting that Family First Coronavirus Response Act, while it would give some great benefits to employees, does not allow for reimbursement to public entities. She explained the terms of the Act and the liability involved for SRPC. J. Czynsz added that she has discussed flexibility options with staff allowing them to work on any of the seven days of the week, as long as they are partly available on business days/hours (M-F). She added that the goal is to keep staff billable and working as much as possible and to allow leave time to be used as needed by staff to accommodate family needs.

P. Nelson asked if everyone has resources for remote work. Everyone does have the materials/technology they need. J. Czynsz explained that SRPC setup a good model in a very short amount of time. This model is being used to advise other regional planning commissions (RPCs).

J. Czynsz reviewed what equipment staff took home, sharing the Jackson Rand (GIS planner) had to be setup with external hard drive with GIS data. He is backing up this data to server at the end of the day.

P. Nelson noted that he has resources for storage capacity if we need help with that. J. Czynsz responded that this pandemic has made the need for cloud storage more apparent. She added that for the current purpose our remote connection to the server is working for the organization. J. Czynsz added that Rachel Dewey (data analyst) is going to the SRPC office daily to get the backup tape. Kathy Foster, financial consultant, also has access to the office. Tom Crosby asked for confirmation that we aren't locked out of the building. Staff has a key and limited access.

The E.C. returned to agenda item 2b.

2. Action Items

b. Acceptance of the Draft February Financials

M. Bobinsky **MOVED** to accept the draft January financials. T. Crosby **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**. The motion carried via roll call vote of V. Parmele, D. Landry, D. Hamann, M. Bobinsky, B. Holstein, P. Nelson and T. Crosby in the affirmative.

c. Acceptance of CY update to Health and Wellness Plan

J. Czynsz explained that the Health and Wellness Plan must be updated yearly. She reviewed the minor changes made, most of which just added references to existing SRPC policies.

D. Landry **MOVED** to approve the CY update to the Health and Wellness Plan. M. Bobinsky **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**. The motion carried via roll call vote of V. Parmele, D. Landry, D. Hamann, M. Bobinsky, B. Holstein, P. Nelson and T. Crosby in the affirmative.

d. Recommendation of the SRPC Strategic Plan to the Full Commission

V. Parmele asked if this item should be tabled. M, Bobinsky suggested a brief update.

J. Czynsz shared that the document is a complete document and is already being implemented. She reviewed goals and actions items providing examples of in-process projects and initiatives in line with those objectives.

P. Nelson asked if there is an opportunity for GIS to be used to map COVID-19 data, or for case reporting within the region. J. Czynsz replied that this was discussed, but that the need is already filled by the NH Department of Health and Human Services.

A discussion ensued about SRPC's role in data and partnering with health organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic. J. Czynsz said that we could reach out to our partners at Greater Seacoast Community Health to see if there is anything they need.

D. Landry suggested using a table to track progress on strategic planning goals. J. Czynsz replied that this is the next step, and that once this is being tracked it can be updated on the new SRPC website.

A discussion ensued about the approval of the SRPC Strategic Plan. It was decided that this document would be adopted by the E.C., and then shared with the full Commission.

J. Czynsz reviewed other examples of implementation of goals from the strategic plan already happening at SRPC. Some important discussion points noted included continuing to build the connection between SRPC and its municipalities through the Commissioners as the go-betweens and changing the Commission Training/onboarding process to be more interactive.

A discussion ensued concerning what people already know about SRPC, if anything; how to best spread the word about SRPC; and the differing engagement levels in each community and how this reflects on project, contracts and other technical assistance.

J. Czynsz shared that we are also moving along with the new website. Shayna Sylvia gave an update about the current status of this effort.

M. Bobinsky **MOVED** adopt the SRPC Strategic Plan and have a communication distribution to the Policy Committee at the next opportunity, building off of future milestone reports. D. Hamann **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**. The motion carried via roll call vote of V. Parmele, D. Landry, D. Hamann, M. Bobinsky, B. Holstein, P. Nelson and T. Crosby in the affirmative.

3. Updates and Discussion

a. COVID-19 actions and updates

J. Czysz noted that most of this was covered previously in the meeting. She added that staff were asked to complete a telecommuting agreement. This allowed her to document equipment taken from the office, and for staff to show that they had a safe office space.

P. Nelson opined that language should be added about staff having equipment plugged in through a surge protector.

b. Awards, Contracts, and General Business Update

J. Czysz reviewed SRPC's recently finalized contracts. She added that the organization is still awaiting contract acceptances through Governor and Council, which is currently on hold. One of these, a project led by NRPC, is now deferred. The projects focus is to create a statewide GIS hub, collaborating with GRANIT.

J. Czysz shared that SRPC recently submitted a grant proposal to the Tufts Health Foundation and is also working on submitting a second grant application to the NH Children's Health Foundation. She reviewed what each of the projects would entail.

V. Parmele shared that it would be helpful to have a list of acronyms that goes along with the monthly dashboard.

c. SRPC Annual Meeting

S. Sylvia explained that she had sent out a survey for input on the upcoming annual meeting. She acknowledged the uncertainty with holding an in-person meeting and assured E.C. members that they would be updated as the COVID-19 situation progresses.

M. Bobinsky shared that he had filled out the survey, opining that resiliency – especially in light of the current situation with COVID-19 – would be an interesting topic. P. Nelson agreed. T. Crosby noted potential shifts in the work environment due to events like this and a general technology shift and how that should be kept in mind.

P. Nelson opined for technology dependent operations to help the organization run in a "lean and mean" manner. He elaborated that the organization has an opportunity to run things more cost efficiently. He recognized Jen and staff for adapting so quickly to telecommuting during this time.

J. Czysz elaborated on some other technology-based efforts currently happening. She shared that Rachel Dewey, data analyst and James Burdin, senior regional planner, are helping business owner Emmett Soldati build a new online business directory. James and Nancy, equity and engagement planner, are also hosting regular calls with economic development professionals across the region.

d. March Monthly Minors

Colin Lentz joined the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

He reviewed the March Monthly Minors, which included two programmatic. There was no funding changes in the statewide bridge project item. He noted that funds through the Highway Safety Improvement Program were used by the traffic systems and operations bureau to update their systems, and that this is money is well spent. C. Lentz explained inflation adjustments.

A discussion ensued about a project in Somersworth and concern with changes to the project as reflected on the minors. C. Lentz worked with M. Bobinsky to forward along these concerns.

4. Other Business

There was no other business.

5. Adjourn

M. Bobinsky **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. D. Landry **SECONDED** the motion, of which all were **IN FAVOR**. The motion carried via roll call vote of V. Parmele, D. Landry, D. Hamann, M. Bobinsky, B. Holstein, P. Nelson and T. Crosby in the affirmative.

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Shayna Sylvia
Communications and Outreach Planner