

BARRINGTON
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MIDDLETON
MILTON



NEW DURHAM
NEWMARKET
NORTHWOOD
NOTTINGHAM
ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

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

May 21, 2021

FINAL Meeting Minutes
Zoom Meeting

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

Staff members present: Jen Czysz, executive director; Kyle Pimental, principal planner

Excused: Chair Victoria Parmele, Northwood; Bill Fisher, Farmington

1. Welcome/Introductions

The meeting began at 8:07 a.m.

Peter Nelson called the meeting to order. He shared that due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's 2020 Emergency Order #12, issued pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, and as extended by Executive Order 2021-08, this Committee is authorized to meet 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 Kyle Pimental, Jen Czysz, Donald Hamann, David Landry, Tom Crosby, Peter Nelson, and Barbara Holstein. Each attendee

introduced themselves and shared that they were home or in their office, and all were attending the meeting alone.

M. Bobinsky joined the meeting at 8:15 a.m.

2. Actions Items

a. Approval of the Minutes of April 16, 2021

D. Hamann **MOVED** to approve the April 16, 2021 minutes. T. Crosby **SECONDED** the motion.

The motion to approve the minutes with the correction **CARRIED** via roll call vote of D. Hamann, D. Landry, T. Crosby, P. Nelson, Michael Bobinsky, and B. Holstein in the **AFFIRMATIVE**.

b. Acceptance of the Draft April Financials

J. Czynsz reviewed the Draft April Financials. She explained that the balance sheet is on target and ahead of last year. She elaborated that in the past dues invoices usually go out in April but that this year they went out in May. Therefore, they do not show up in this month's financials. J. Czynsz noted that she will be monitoring vacation requests, and that the NHDOT invoice is slightly late due to a payment delay. J. Czynsz commented on the SRPC's profitability, explaining that the organization will move forward with equipment upgrades, including replacing desk chairs. This will help balance the indirect cost rate.

M. Bobinsky asked if SRPC could apply for state bids for potential lower costs. J. Czynsz responded yes and explained that she would look into this.

P. Nelson suggested that excess office supplies could be in high supply as many companies are downsizing. He suggested using social media to ask for donations.

T. Crosby **MOVED** to accept the Draft Financials. M Bobinsky **SECONDED** the motion.

The motion to approve the minutes **CARRIED** via roll call vote of D. Hamann, D. Landry, T. Crosby, P. Nelson, M. Bobinsky, and B. Holstein in the **AFFIRMATIVE**.

c. FY2022 Budget

J. Czynsz shared the final draft of the FY2022 Budget. The budget has not changed much, with minor adjustments on the revenue side. She reviewed planned changes

to the SRPC staff including replacing Stefanie Casella's regional planner position and hiring for an office coordinator. She added that there are three interns on staff currently that are working on data collection, environmental projects, and land use projects. J. Czysz noted that the FY22 budget will take into consideration changes in insurance options (e.g., single user to family) based on staff changes.

D. Landry asked about in-person meetings with circuit riders. J. Czysz responded about virtual meetings cutting down travel costs. She added that Middleton is interested in hiring SRPC as a consultant for its ZBA needs; however, our organization does not have the capacity currently. J. Czysz added that these municipal circuit rider contracts are a good revenue source and use flat rates for any staff working in that community. This creates equity and allows staff to swap out and keeps billing rates equal.

K. Pimental provided a staff perspective on how circuit riding is a good opportunity for professional growth and allows staff to learn about local policy. He noted that this has been a great learning experience for him with his role in Farmington.

M. Bobinsky asked about office coordinator position moving forward. J. Czysz has a short list of four candidates and will begin scheduling interviews soon.

A vote on the FY2022 budget was tabled and will be voted on in June.

3. Updates and Discussion

a. Executive Committee member renewals and officers

J. Czysz shared that Shayna Sylvia sent out a slate of member renewals and in doing so also opened recruitment for the alternate seats on the Executive Committee. There was no response from other Commissioners.

P. Nelson suggested adding more information about Executive Committee membership on the SRPC website. He suggested that the process of appointing and renewing membership should be done online. J. Czysz stated this will likely be a task for the new office coordinator.

B. Holstein noted that Don Hamann's term is expiring soon.

b. FY2020 Annual Meeting

J. Czysz expressed uncertainty about how the Commission will proceed with in-person meetings. She explained that the annual meeting will be virtual, and that staff will remain remote for the month of June, other than the field work staff. J.

Czys explained that the business portion of the annual meeting will be on June 18, in combination with the Strafford MPO Policy Meeting. The presentation portion of the annual meeting will take place as a webinar on June 24.

J. Czys shared the topic for this year's webinar, advancing local projects and preparing for post-COVID communities. Speakers include Alan Brigham, U.S. EDA, and Katie Easterly Martey, NH CDFA. They will be discussing funding opportunities and history of coming out of past recessions. SRPC will be reaching out to a local planner to get the municipal perspective on project selection and development of projects on the local level and in municipal CIPs. James Burdin will be facilitating the discussion.

B. Holstein shared that a SRPC communication had the wrong date. It should say Jun. 24.

c. May Monthly Minors

J. Czys reviewed the May Monthly Minors which included one regional project, and three statewide projects.

She explained that in Lee, the project to construct up to an 80 space Park and Ride lot near the junction of US4 and NH125 experienced a decrease in construction and right of way funding in 2022.

B. Holstein asked why Lee has no commissioners. J. Czys responded that Commissioners from other communities are welcome to approach Lee. She explained that the town's local budget was cut several years ago. J. Czys explained that she did go before the Board of Selectmen to ask the Town not to cut SRPC dues, but they decided to do so. She added that Lee has not paid dues in several years. Prior to this, Lee had engaged Commissioners.

J. Czys shared that statewide maintenance & preservation of tier 1 & 2 bridges project is being adjusted to accommodate necessary changes in children project fund amounts. There are no child projects in the SRPC region.

D. Landry asked about children projects. J. Czys replied that the state lumps "parent" funding into smaller "children" projects.

J. Czys reviewed changes to the CMAQ: Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program-FTA: Federal Transit Administration project, which is being adjusted to accommodate necessary changes in children project fund amounts. This funding is used in the region to support the purchase of 2 new compressed natural gas buses by UNH Wildcat.

She added that the FTA5539 project supports capital bus and bus facilities for statewide public transportation, and that changes affect federal, state, and other (local) funding increases in 2021 and 2022. In the SRPC region, this funding is used by COAST for capital bus replacement.

d. Awards, Contracts, and General Business Update

J. Czysz shared that SRPC remains busy. Rachel Dewey, Stephen Geis, and J. Czysz have started to think about how best to bring staff back. Currently the priority is hiring and field data collection interns. Staff would like to remain remote but also look forward with seeing one another again.

J. Czysz noted that several new contracts are moving through approval including targeted block grant and UPWP, which will head to Governor and Council in June. Both should proceed in July. Several other contracts, including homelessness shelter for Strafford CAP, local source water protection (MS4 updates in Milton and Rollinsford), Strafford circuit rider, FTA 5305e funded regional coordination plan update (rolled into UPWP), and PREPA grants (Dover wetlands and New Durham shoreland protection) are all signed.

J. Czysz added that SRPC also recently submitted funding applications to AARP to supplement the CHAT project and to the NHDES Coastal Project of Special Merit. Several other contracts that are in development include: EDA partnership program setting up contracts (three-year award) starting on July 1, 2021. SRPC will submit earmark application to fund a housing needs assessment and comprehensive plan.

M. Bobinsky commented on how all the projects for earmarking will be competitive. He gave his perspective at the local level on priority projects. J. Czysz stated that SRPC has provided some municipalities with letters of support.

J. Czysz explained that the FY 2021 indirect rate has fluctuated because of billable hours and will be lower next year. She reminded members that \$30,000 of FY2021 dues remain unspent.

D. Landry asked about software tools to be presented as referenced in the previous minutes.

4. Other Business

P. Nelson has been communicating with NHDOT on an online project portal. He has been working on a tool that could be beneficial to SRPC.

D. Landry asked when the best time would be for Peter to present.

M. Bobinsky suggested a separate meeting.

D. Landry agreed more time is needed (at least 30-minutes) and should be on a future agenda.

5. Adjourn

D. Landry MOVED to **ADJOURN** the meeting. M. Bobinsky **SECONDED** the motion.

The meeting ended at 9:01 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Kyle Pimental
Principal Regional Planner