

STRAFFORD

Regional Planning Commission

Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
150 Wakefield Street, Conference Room 1A
Rochester, NH 03867
October 21, 2022
Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome/Introductions

Vice Chair Peter Nelson called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. and asked for introductions.

Committee members present: Bill Fisher, Farmington; Tom Crosby, Madbury; Peter Nelson, Newmarket; Mike Bobinsky, Somersworth; Dover; Barbara Holstein, Rochester; Don Hamann, Rochester

Staff members present: Jen Czysz; Executive Director SRPC

Staff attending remotely: Megan Taylor-Fetter,

2. Action Items

a. Approval of the Minutes of September 16, 2022

D. Hamann motioned to approve the September 16, 2022 minutes as written, seconded by T Crosby. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

b. Acceptance of Draft September Financials

J. Czysz reviewed the Draft September Financials:

Balance Sheet: The checking and savings register totals remain healthy. The big difference to last year comes down to a handful of contracts that book revenue in advance. The result is higher bank balances (assets) and total equity.

Aging Summary: \$64,645.59 of the outstanding \$102,939 is the current month's billings. Payments totaling \$24,702 were received in October, leaving a past due balance of \$13,591 Milton is the only community that has yet to pay their dues. Other past due items have been sent reminders.

Profit and Loss: September had a net loss of \$8,715 which is wholly attributable to the EDA CARES Record Digitization program contract coverage. We were able to pay for the coverage with dues and apply those funds to match our EDA Planning Partnership grant that requires a 50% match. Year-to-date (YTD) we are still operating at a net loss, \$11,90. This is expected to even out.

D. Hamann motioned to accept the draft September Financials seconded by M. Bobinsky. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

c. Approval of Simple IRA Employer Contribution for CY 2023

J. Czysz explained that Strafford RPC has offered a Simple IRA retirement plan option since 2000. The plan has been unchanged since it was amended and restated in 2004. Retirement benefits are available to SRPC employees who earn at least \$5,000 a year. SPRC offers a matching contribution equal to each employee's contribution up to a limit of 3% of their annual

compensation. Each year the executive committee is asked to approve the contribution limit, before completion of the annual Participant Notice that must be distributed to all eligible employees.

D. Hamann motioned to approve the Simple IRA Employer contribution seconded by T. Crosby. Discussion: Budget item-yes. M. Bobinsky asked if recommend we adopt this with no change. Jen yes. The decision is up to the EC. The motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

d. NHARPC Appointment

Leslie Schwartz, Durham, has expressed interest in joining the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions, serving in the currently vacant alternate seat. Under the bylaws, the E.C. can appoint members to fill vacancies. There is still a vacant regular member seat.

D. Hamann motioned to appoint Leslie Schwartz as an alternate on the NHARPC seconded by M. Bobinsky. Discussion: reason to be an alternate-Megan will check if she wants to be a regular member and if so that can be adjusted next month. The motion passed with all in favor.

3. Updates and Discussion Items

a. Commissioners Handbook and Orientation

J. Czysz explained that the Commissioner's Handbook has traditionally been included with the Annual Report and now has been edited to be a separate document. The handbook goes hand in hand with orientation which in the past would be scheduled when new Commissioners came on board.

We are considering holding an annual event, open to all commissioners. to provide a refresher for existing commissioners, an introduction for new members, and an informal opportunity to network. J. Czysz asked for feedback and suggestions.

The members engaged in discussion on the role of a commissioner and ways to improve communication and bridge the gap with town officials. The members also discussed the drop in in-person attendance since the Covid pandemic.

Suggestions for the handbook included moving the timeline section towards the back of the handbook and move the role of the Commissioners and the organization at the beginning.

The members discussed options for orientations and came to an agreement that a breakfast event was the best option.

J. Czysz asked the members to submit their comments and suggestions by November 4 either in an email to Megan or to bring a marked-up copy to the Joint TAC/Policy meeting.

b. NH Paid Family Medical Leave

J. Czysz explained that NH PFML is a new, voluntary, state-sponsored paid family and medical leave insurance plan, established by state law, where NH employers and eligible NH workers, must be a NH resident working for a NH employer. Employees can access 60% wage replacement for absences related to life events such as:

- Serious health condition when disability coverage does not apply, including childbirth
- Bond with a child during the first year of birth, including adoption or fostering
- Care for a family member with a serious health condition or injury
- Military deployment or service and caring for a qualifying military service member

NH PFML insurance is designed to coordinate with other types of leave and worker benefits:

- Short-Term Disability (STD) and NH PFML cannot be used for the same days absent
- If eligible to receive workers' compensation, cannot use NH PFML benefits
- Any other paid benefit coordination is based on employer policy, NH statute and rules of the MetLife agreement

Employers may fully fund the premium cost on their workers' behalf, split the premium cost with workers, or pass the full cost on to workers. As a small employer, should SRPC elect to offer this benefit, we will need to work directly with MetLife, the state's selected insurance provider. MetLife offers a 6-week coverage plan and a 12-week coverage plan.

Employers can enroll their workers beginning December 2022 and thereafter. Should we decide not to offer this as an employee benefit, for 2023, individual plan open enrollment will be in December.

A short discussion ensued with members agreeing this insurance would be an attractive benefit to attract and retain employees. The consensus of the board was to seek more information on costs and revisit at the next meeting for a vote.

J. Czysz added that the cost is potentially up to \$5 per person a week.

c. Awards, Contracts, and General Business

J. Czysz reviewed the awards, contracts and general business:

J. Czysz explained that we keep the office open with a few people in each day with a mix of telecommuting. The budget continues the \$25/pay period Covid stipend each staff member receives to offset their personal phone and internet expenses through December 2022.

Awards and Contracts:

J. Czysz highlighted awards and contracts:

Contract Completed:

- Economic Development Projects Implementation through BEA CEDR funding (contract pending G&C approval)
- InvestNH Housing Navigator for Farmington and New Durham

Awarded Pending Contracts:

- Congressional Appropriation request for an update to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Plan
- CommuteSmart Seacoast
- Town of Milton Nitrogen Source Identification Plans - SRF
- Town of Rollinsford Nitrogen Source Identification Plans - SRF

Submitted Pending Decision:

- Sunrise Lake Watershed Plan Implementation (TBD) - 319 grant – LOI submitted
- Milton Three Ponds Watershed-Based Plan - 604b – LOI submitted
- Cocheco River Management Plan - 604b – LOI submitted
- Safe Streets for All - FHWA

In Development:

- Fiscal agent support to a CLF Septic System Retrofit Pilot Project in the Great Bay watershed
- Lamprey River Local Advisory Committee Watershed Plan Update
- Brownfields

- NHDES Source Water Protection

Other Items on the Horizon

- NHDES Coastal Resilience grant – early 2023
- PREP Watershed Grants – early 2023

Indirect Rate and Dues: On October 5, 2021 EDA approved our predetermined rate of 117% for FY2022 and 2023. As of the end of September the rate was 110.5%.

d. September Monthly Minors

C. Lentz reviewed the monthly minors and explained that all of these minors do not have an impact on the funding itself.

4. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

5. Adjourn

M. Bobinsky motioned to Adjourn seconded by D. Hamann. Motion to adjourn passed with a unanimous vote in favor.