

STRAFFORD

Regional Planning Commission

Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
150 Wakefield Street, Conference Room 1A
Rochester, NH 03867
April 21, 2023
Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome/Introductions

Chair Dave Landry called the meeting to order at 8:05A.M.

Members attending in person: Dave Landry, Dover; Bill Fisher, Farmington; Barb Holstein, Rochester; Katrin Kasper, Lee; Don Hamann, Rochester; Peter Nelson, Newmarket

Members attending on Zoom: Joe Boudreau, Rochester

Staff attending in person: Jennifer Czysz

Staff attending remotely: Megan Taylor-Fetter

2. Action Items

a. Acceptance of the March 17, 2023 Minutes

D. Hamann motioned to accept the meeting minutes of March 17, 2023 as written. B. Fisher seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All members voted in favor.

b. Acceptance of the Draft March Financials

J. Czysz reviewed the March financials as follows:

Balance Sheet: It is the end of the quarter so the bank account balances are back down and will be replenished with funds from contracts that bill quarterly in advance. Under the fixed assets and current liabilities, you will a new method of accounting has been implemented for the building lease. This is a new requirement of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board.

Aging Summary: \$80,753 of the \$148,365 total receivables is for the current billing period. Payments totaling \$54,210 were received in April, leaving a past due balance of \$13,402.

Profit and Loss: March shows a larger net loss due to the implementation of the new building lease accounting methodology. As Kathy just implemented this, March shows a \$21,076 amortization expense for the year to date instead of the typical \$2,000 rent. As a result, the monthly net loss is inflated to \$20,980.55. However, the YTD net loss only grew by \$2,778.05 since February, now at \$41,618.24.

D. Hamann motioned to approve the March 2023 Financials as presented. B. Fisher seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All members voted unanimously in favor. The motion passed.

c. Approval of the Updated Employee Handbook

J. Czysz stated that the employee handbook has been updated to list the recently approved NH Paid Family Medical Leave to the document's section on Benefits. She stated that the benefit is administered through Metlife on behalf of the State of NH.

D. Hamann motioned to accept the Updated Employee Handbook as presented. B. Fisher seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All members voted unanimously in favor. Motion passed.

3. Updates

a. Executive Committee Member Renewals

J. Czysz stated that we would like to confirm E.C. members' intentions to renew their position on the committee and discuss the slate of officers for FY2024. Under the bylaws there are 3 officers: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer. The Executive Committee consists of 3 officers, 4 members elected by Commission, and any alternate. Elections occur at the Annual Meeting. J. Czysz asked if the current officers would like to continue their positions and if anyone else was interested.

The members discussed the positions and current officers. D. Landry said he would be happy to continue as chair unless anyone else was interested. P. Nelson said he would continue as vice chair if asked.

b. Annual Meeting

J. Czysz stated the Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held on June 22nd. We are currently making preliminary plans and looking at venues. For three years now we have split the annual meeting to conduct all business items in a split meeting with the June Policy meeting. Like last year, we propose to hold a luncheon event with guest speakers and recognitions. This past year the Regional Housing Needs Assessment has been a significant focus area for the Commission. This could be a theme for the annual meeting. Another thought might be to shift toward the upcoming Comprehensive Regional Plan update of the environmental resource plan sections. J. Czysz asked if either of these resonate or do members have other suggestions?

B. Fisher suggested solar power as a topic. The members discussed the many facets of solar power including benefits to the community; the pushback from some residents; how it affects business and the planning and zoning that is involved. D. Hamman stated that Rochester is drafting a solar power ordinance. K. Kasper suggested contacting CleanEnergyNH's executive director.

The members were in agreement to split the annual meeting into two meetings, one a joint meeting with the Policy Committee for business matters and the second on June 22 for a luncheon.

c. Preliminary FY2024 Budget

J. Czysz stated that SRPC hired two regional planners and did some shuffling to match candidates and to fit their salaries into the budget. Both planners have many years of experience and will be able to jump right in without much training.

J. Czysz stated the budget looks decent. SRPC is working with Lee and Dover on natural resources chapters of their Master Plans. There is work on coastal grant application and there should be news on the Brownfields grants in May.

J. Czysz stated the expense side is pretty consistent. The jump in IT services is due to the new vendor and contracting with an all-inclusive package. This new system relieves IT staff of day-to-day IT work.

A final draft will be presented for adoption at the June business meeting.

d. FY2024 Salary & Hourly Rates Schedule

J. Czysz stated in the past we have set flat billing rates based on rough averages of personnel and indirect costs for all employees at each scenario level. For some staff we make a slight profit, for others a small loss. Moving forward we will be moving away from this method as it requires manual computation of costs to conduct monthly invoicing. Additionally, all state and federal contracts are billed on actual costs – direct salaries, indirect costs, expenses. This method of invoicing is more streamlined and accurate. We propose applying this method to all contracts moving forward – with the exception of circuit rider contracts that are on a flat rate regardless of the staff member providing services.

J. Czysz stated this will be discussed in detail next month.

e. FY2024 Health Plans

J. Czysz stated the original projection for the health insurance rate increase was 20 percent but has come down to just below 17 percent. Currently SRPC offers two plans: an ABO and ABSOS20. The plans are expensive but good. J. Czysz stated she is considering adding a third plan option with a high deductible with an offer to pay up to 50% of the deductible with a health reimbursement plan. This would still be at or below the cost for the other options and would be a savings to staff if they chose this plan.

The group discussed the health plans and asked for more information before a decision was made. J. Czysz stated she would bring more information to their May 19 meeting for a decision. The deadline for submitting any changes to HealthTrust is May 19.

f. Executive Director Review schedule with Dave

J. Czysz will coordinate with Dave on a time to meet for her review.

g. Awards Contracts and General Business

J. Czysz highlighted the awards, contracts and general business as follows:

COVID-19: The budget continues the \$25/pay period Covid stipend each staff member receives to offset their personal phone and internet expenses through the end of the fiscal year. The draft 2024 budget DOES NOT include the stipend.

Recently Completed Contracts:

- Congressional Appropriation request for an update to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Plan (pending Notice to Proceed)
- BRIC21 Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates for Madbury, Northwood and Rochester (pending G&C)
- Barrington Housing Opportunity Grant (InvestNH) Master Plan Update
- Somersworth HOP Grant - Master Plan and Audit
- Rochester Recreation Master Plan Chapter
- FY24 Coastal Technical Assistance (pending G&C)
- FY24-25 UPWP/FTA 5305e Connecting Transit Access and Local Land Use Planning (pending G&C)

Awarded Pending Contract:

- Town of Milton Nitrogen Source Identification Plans - SRF
- Safe Streets for All – FHWA
- Great Bay 2030 Adapt to Climate Change
- COAST CommuteSmart Seacoast Assistance Submitted Pending Decisions:
- Brownfields Assessment

In Development:

- NHDES Coastal Resilience grant (Newmarket project & a Regional Project)
- UNH PREPA Coastal Watershed Grants: Dover and Lee Natural Resource Inventories
- Farmington and New Durham HOP grants
- Fiscal agent for CLF Septic System Retrofit Pilot Project in the Great Bay Watershed
- Great Bay 2030 Initiatives
- Advocacy Bootcamp
- Stream Crossing Signage Project (potential implementation funding in CY2024)

Indirect Rate and Dues: On October 5, 2021 we received our final approval from EDA to have a predetermined rate of 117% for FY2022 and 2023. As of the end of January the rate was 118.6%.

h. April Monthly Minors

C. Lentz highlighted the April monthly minors and reported there are only three minor changes.

4. Other Business

There was no other business.

5. Adjourn

D. Hamann motioned to adjourn y motioned to adjourn at 8:58 AM. P. Nelson seconded the motion. All members voted in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 A.M.