

STRAFFORD

Regional Planning Commission

**Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Executive Committee Meeting**
150 Wakefield Street, Conference Room 1A
Rochester, NH 03867
August 18, 2023
Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome/Introductions

Vice Chair Peter Nelson called the meeting to order at 8:05A.M.

Members attending in person:

William Fisher, Farmington; Don Hamann, Rochester; Tom Crosby, Madbury; Peter Nelson, Newmarket; Barbara Holstein, Rochester; Katrin Kasper, Lee; Joe Boudreau, Rochester; Michael Bobinsky, Somersworth

Staff attending in person: Jennifer Czysz

Staff attending remotely: Colin Lentz

2. Action Items

a. Acceptance of the June 16, 2023 Minutes

D. Hamann motioned to accept the meeting minutes of March 17, 2023 as written. T. Crosby seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion passed.

b. Acceptance of the Draft June/FY2023 YE and July Financials

J. Czysz reviewed the Draft June and July Financials and stated that the June 2023 are the fiscal year end financials as presented to the auditors who have commenced their review.

At the fiscal year end, bank accounts were lower than that at the end of FY2022 due to two primary factors, the year ended with a loss, and there is a substantial outstanding balance from June invoices (accounts receivable). The year finished with a loss of \$25,621. The largest share of this is attributable to contract overages totaling \$15,511 (see detail in the dues update later in this memo). The other factor being the timing of task-based invoicing for the Hazard Mitigation planning grants – a large amount of work was completed but cannot be billed until the towns are available to meet as the required match comes from those meetings.

Balance Sheet: Overall, July's balance sheet looks much like that of June's FY2023 year end. Key items impacting the lower overall assets and liabilities are the much lower bank balances (given current higher accounts receivables and timing of drawdowns against EDA's contract revenue in advance); amortization of rent/building lease liability; decreased accrued payroll, and last year's net loss.

Accounts Receivable: Of the \$296,651 due, \$35,924 of dues payments from the current month's billing were received in August, another \$60,340 in payments were received in August. This leaves \$78,929 due from the current month's billing and \$122,091 that is past

due. Of the past due amount \$112,484 is the June DOT invoice payment that is expected either this week or early next week.

Profit and Loss: July had a loss of \$26,236. This is in part attributable to several new projects just getting underway that are task-based billing. We are behind in invoicing hazard mitigation due to the reasons explained above. And contracts that started on July 1 only billed for time and costs through July 23rd, three weeks of expenses. We make up for this in the last month of the contract (example, June 2023 included 7 weeks of time in the invoice as a 3-payroll period plus time incurred the last week of the month and paid in July).

Reflecting on the \$25,000 loss at the end of FY23 there are several contributing factors. Of projects with contract overages, the majority was CARES Act Grant that was approximately \$9,000 over budget. Given local demand for the record digitization project and that the contract overage could be counted as match to another grant, the decision was made to allow the overage. Also, while there was significant progress made on the hazard mitigation plans at the end of the FY, we were unable to bill as the town's had not yet met and as such we did not have the required match in hand. Also, the Economic Development Planning grant programs running ahead of schedule. The grant provides for a total of \$210,000 or an average of \$70,000 per year. Going into year three of the grant, we have \$63,000 remaining on the grant.

The group engaged in a brief discussion on cashflow and bank reserves. P. Nelson asked about what a healthy cushion should be in the bank accounts. While we are in a much better position than 5 years ago, we tend to have anywhere from 1 to 2 months operating reserve in the bank. At the beginning of the FY, dues provide a healthy cushion.

D. Hamann motioned to accept the June/FY2023 YE and July Financials. T. Crosby seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

c. Authorization of Certificate of Vote

J. Czysz explained that on an annual basis the Executive Committee should affirm, or reaffirm, that the Executive Director is authorized to file applications, sign contracts and implement the annual work program.

M. Bobinsky moved 'that the Executive Director, or in his/her absence, the Acting Executive Director, be authorized to file applications with federal, state and local governmental units, and other agencies and organizations to implement Strafford Regional Planning Commission's work program, and to execute agreements to receive funds for such purposes' D. Hamann seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

3. Updates and Discussion Items

a. Draft FY25 Dues

The group was presented with 3 proposals for FY25 dues including:

- adjusting by population only,
- adjusting by population change and ½ of CPI,
- adjusting by population change and CPI.

J. Czysz stated that a final decision will need to be made at the September Commission meeting. Given increased federal and other grant opportunities with a match component, the

FY 2024 dues budget is tighter than in years past. FY 2023 after accounting for pledged match, we had \$38,300 in unrestricted dues funds. This year that is down to \$26,500. These funds are what we use to cover contract overages and local technical assistance.

B. Fisher motioned to recommend option 3 to the Commission. M. Bobinsky stated he would like to review the options with his community before making a recommendation. B. Fisher withdrew his motion.

Discussion of the draft FY25 dues was tabled and will be revisited at the September 18 Executive Committee meeting.

b. FY2024 Organizational Goals

J. Czysz stated that these goals are what the organization strives to achieve as a whole and to direct the office to achieve these goals.

J. Czysz outlined the goals for FY24:

1. Expand SRPC's use of new technology to further service offerings.
 - a. Develop staff skills and new projects that employ scenario planning.
 - b. Develop staff skills and new projects that employ planning concepts visualizations.
 - c. Develop staff skills and new projects that employ transportation modeling.
 - d. Expand use of AirTable and/or other online database systems.
 - e. Identify and build out task automations such as was done for the annual update of the SRPC Data Snapshot's data analysis.
2. Update SRPC's organizational policies.
 - a. Establish a Social Media Policy for use of SRPC's accounts.
 - b. Establish a policy or guidelines for use of ChatGPT and similar AI applications.
 - c. Update SRPC's Operating Policies.
3. Finalize and implement the SRPC IT Plan.
 - a. Complete the Disaster Recovery Plan and Continuity of Operations Plan.
 - b. Replace the current server ideally with a hybrid cloud based and physical server (required to host ArcGIS files).
4. Strengthen staff cohesion and in person engagement.
 - a. Implement mandatory in person workdays.
 - b. Plan in person staff development, trainings, and events.
 - c. Encourage staff to attend Commission and other SRPC meetings in person.
5. Strengthen Commissioner engagement.
 - a. Host an annual SRPC 101 training in the evening open to all commissioners and interested individuals.
 - b. Host quarterly new commissioner orientations as needed.
 - c. Discuss and explore the meeting schedule and re-configure the annual calendar to increase engagement, relevance, and opportunities to discuss non-transportation topics more frequently.
 - d. Increase regular communication with commissioners to ensure they are aware of efforts within their and surrounding communities.

J. Czysz stated that the committee does not need to approve the goals today and welcomed members to forward any suggestions and feedback to her.

c. Executive Director Review

J. Czysz stated that Megan is preparing a survey on SurveyMonkey and will send it to EC members directly to collect individual's evaluations. The results of the survey will be forwarded to members once complete along with Jen's self-evaluation. Megan will also send out a Doodle Poll to members to determine a date and time for members to meet with Jen and conduct her review.

d. Awards Contracts and General Business: Brief review

J. Czysz provided a very brief review of the awards, contracts and general business.

Recently Completed Contracts – pending execution:

- Congressional Appropriation request for an update to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Comprehensive Plan (pending Notice to Proceed)
- Farmington HOP grant
- UNH PREPA Coastal Watershed Grants: Dover and Lee Natural Resource Inventories and Somersworth Natural Resources Master Plan Chapter
- Brownfields Assessments, limited pre-award costs allowed now to attend the required brownfields conference and conduct the procurement process. Otherwise, grant starts 10/1/2023.

Awarded Pending Contract:

- Town of Milton Nitrogen Source Identification Plans – SRF (loan materials due 6/30)
- Safe Streets for All – FHWA
- Great Bay 2030 Adapt to Climate Change
- NHDES Coastal Resilience grant (Newmarket Waterfront Design Master Plan Chapter)

Submitted Pending Decisions:

- Milton & Farmington USDA Community Facilities Technical Assistance Grant
- Somersworth – Granite Y Child Care CDBG Grant Application
- NFWF Durham Living Shorelines Phase 2

In Development:

- NHCDFR Transformative Planning Grant
- Newmarket Comprehensive Master Plan Update
- NH DES 604(b) and 319 Grants
- NOAA proposals with CAW and Cameron Wake
- Great Bay 2030 Initiatives
 - Advocacy Bootcamp
 - Stream Crossing Signage Project (potential implementation funding in CY2024)
 - Phase II project solicitations

e. August Monthly Minors

C. Lentz provided a brief review of the minors and stated the For statewide programmatic projects the only change within our region was for a safety project in Durham (inflation only).

The local project changes included:

- Milton-Lebanon Bridge had a fiscal year change.
- US4 bridge replacement in Barrington only had inflation change.

4. Other Business

J. Czysz stated there have been several staff promotions. Kyle Pimental has been promoted to Assistant Director, Jackson Rand and Natalie Gemma were promoted to senior staff members. Mark Davie, Autumn Scott, and Stephen Geis stepped up from Planner I to Planner II.

5. Adjourn

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 A.M.