

## Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee

### Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> 2020      9:00 – 11:00 AM

Strafford Regional Planning Commission  
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom  
Rochester, NH

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am  
Prior to beginning the meeting, the Chair read the following statement:

As Chair of the Strafford MPO Policy Committee I have found that, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-21, this Committee is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is 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, this is to confirm that we are:

*a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;*

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Committee have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 and meeting ID 852 4088 7267, or by clicking on the following website address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85240887267>

*b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;*

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the SRPC website at [Strafford.org](http://Strafford.org), and clicking on the link for the May Policy Committee.

*c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;*

If anybody has a problem, please call 603-559-3500 (ext. 102) or email Colin at:  
[clentz@strafford.org](mailto:clentz@strafford.org).

*d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.*

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

### **1. Attendance:**

#### Committee Members

Don Hamann (Rochester), Tim White (NHDES), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Michael Williams (COAST), Mark Richardson (Somersworth), Bill Fisher (Farmington), Peter Nelson (Newmarket), Glenn Davison (NHDOT), David Landry (Dover), Wayne Burton (Durham), Joe Boudreau (Rochester).

#### Staff

Jennifer Czysz, Rachel Dewey, Colin Lentz, Natalie Moles, Stephen Geis, Stephanie Casella, Alaina Rogers

### **2. Staff Communications**

C. Lentz said SRPC staff would be reverting to fully working from home because of the increased rate of COVID-19 infection rates and the mask mandate announced by the Governor the previous night.

J. Czysz announced introduced Natalie Moles, SRPC's new Economic Recovery Coordinator.

### **3. Public Hearing for the Draft Public Participation Plan update**

M. Richardson made a motion to open the public hearing

Seconded by D. Hamann

Vote: Unanimous in favor via roll-call vote

C. Lentz gave a presentation highlighting the updates to the Public Participation Plan. He explained that the primary reason for the update was to update the language related to remote meetings under emergency scenarios like the COVID-19 pandemic. The new language demonstrated compliance with federal requirements for MPO public transparency and state laws regarding public bodies. In New Hampshire, public decision-making bodies are required (under RSA91-A) to have a quorum of members present in a physical location, but that was suspended under the current emergency and executive orders. C. Lentz said the new language enabled the chairs of Strafford RPC's committees could declare an emergency to enable people to participate electronically. In the future this could be during a snowstorm or other event that made it dangerous or impossible for members to meet in a physical location.

W. Burton suggested SRPC reach out to various advocacy groups that work with special interest groups. C. Lentz said SRPC staff had a good list of contacts with regional groups but were always on the look-out for additional ones.

Members discussed various opportunities to reach advocacy groups and individuals.

P. Nelson noted that SRPC could help augment NHDOT's communications about transportation projects happening in the region. Construction schedules and opportunities to provide input or avoid construction disruptions are not readily accessible through usual NHDOT methods. He suggested SRPC could provide a more accessible and comprehensive source of updated information. J. Czysz agreed, but noted NHDOT already provides this information and is already seen as the primary source, so SRPC would just be duplicating efforts that would not likely have an larger impact. She explained that SRPC is not involved directly in projects once the planning phase is complete and does not have complete up-to-date information beyond NHDOT.

C. Lentz said the final formatted version will be posted on the website soon following Policy's approval.

M. Richardson made a motion to close the public hearing

Seconded by M. Bobinsky

Vote: Unanimous in favor via roll-call vote

#### 4. **Action Item(s)**

##### 4.1 **Minutes from September 18<sup>th</sup> 2020 [VOTE]**

D. Landry and J. Boudreau said they were listed with the attendees but had not been at the meeting.

C. Lentz said he would make that change.

M. Bobinsky made a motion to approve the minutes as written; Seconded by S. Diamond

Vote: D. Landry abstained, otherwise unanimous in favor via roll call vote

##### 4.2 **Approve the draft Public Participation Plan**

V. Parmele made a motion to approve the draft Public Participation Plan; seconded by D. Hamann

Vote: unanimous in favor via roll-call vote

#### 5. **Commissioner roundtable – Updates from your community - What should SRPC be focused on for COVID-19 recovery planning that would help your community?**

W. Burton said Durham residents would be joining the Mayor's conference on nitrogen control (an international organization) related to local nitrogen output. He noted that Durham has the highest number of cases in the state (total number), primarily due to the presence of UNH.

M. Bobinsky described Somersworth's recent COVID-19 response efforts, including discussion of possible mask mandates and coordination with neighboring public works and city staff on mitigation and contingency plans moving into the winter.

V. Parmele asked about SRPC's involvement on regional recovery planning. J. Czysz said James Burdine and Natalie Moles had weekly calls with economic development staff and professionals around the region and state. Most of the discussion has focused on preparing for winter (which will

reduce or eliminate the possibility of things like outdoor dining) and how SRPC can support communities and businesses.

W. Burton asked if regional and local surge centers had been set up for the increased cases. N. O' Connor said she hadn't heard about surge centers, but the emphasis was on producing and distributing a vaccine.

**6. Other Business**

No other business was brought before the committee.

**7. Citizen's Forum** – Citizens of the Strafford region are invited to speak on the subject matter of the meeting. Statements should be limited to three minutes.

No members of the public were present to provide comments

**8. Adjournment**

D. Hamann made a motion to adjourn; seconded by W. Burton

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05am