

Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 6th 2021 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Hybrid Meeting

Chiar Woodruff called the meeting to order at 9:05am. A roll call was taken:

1. Attendance:

Committee Members present in person:

Bruce Woodruff, (Milton) Wayne Burton, (Durham), Michael Williams (COAST), Michelle Mears (Somersworth), Becky Ohler (NHDES), Glen Davis, (DOT) Christopher Parker (Dover), Marshall Goldberg, (Brookfield), Arthur Capello (Farmington),

Committee Member via Zoom: Leigh Levine (FHWA), Katrin Kasper (Lee)

Staff Present

Jen Czysz, Colin Lentz,

Staff via Zoom: Jackson Rand, Rachel Dewey and Megan Taylor-Fetter

2. Staff Communications

C. Lentz informed the Board that intern Zuzzy Duffy is working on various projects remotely as she will be studying abroad in Norway. Staff started the next 2-year UPWP and is looking forward to getting those projects off the ground.

J. Czysz announced that the Economic Development recovery team, Zuzzy and Natalie, have sent out communications to businesses promoting consulting services SRPC now offers which is fully funded under the CARES Act. Businesses can receive up to 3 hours of technical assistance. There are contracts in place with consultants.

J. Czysz stated that SRPC received news on Monday that 9 regional planning commissions will be receiving American Rescue Plan funds through GOPHER to cover the cost of regional housing needs and assessment updates. The nine regional planning commissions will be working in collaboration with the Office of Planning and Development under the Business and Economic Development Affairs.

J. Czysz updated the Committee on the scanning services SRPC will be offering. Staff is working on how to structure the process and to make it cost effective for digitizing past records.

3. Action Item

a. Minutes from June 4th 2021

Chris Parker motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Michael Williams Vote: Arthur Capello abstaining otherwise unanimous in favor.

4. Discussion Items

Review of Public Transit and Economic Development study – what local action steps can be developed from the study results?

C. Lentz began the presentation by stating that SRPC recently completed a study with NHDOT to study the economic impacts of public transit in SE New Hampshire and Maine. The study focused on fixed routes and the federally funded fixed route operator Coast Bus. It included qualitative results developed from interviews and quantitative results from an economic impact model developed by the American Public Transit Association.

C. Lentz continued by saying that this study was started in part because there is good research on the economic impact of public transit with a large focus on large urban areas, some focus on rural areas, but there is not a good reflection on SE NH and Maine areas in that research. This study will also be a useful tool to communicate with decision makers about public transit and its value to the people of the state.

C. Lentz communicated the results of the study during his presentation and outlined the study recommendations.

M. Goldberg asked what the Coast budget, how is it split and is and is there state funding?

M. Williams replied that the budget is 6 million with roughly 25% to managed response and 75% to fixed routes. M. Williams continued with details on Coast budget and funding.

Discussion ensued on funding for coast Bus, the economic benefits of public transportation, funding and affordable housing.

5. Other Business

C. Parker noted that Dover had received notice that Senator Shaheen had selected two local projects as earmarks for potential funding: 1) to improve Central Avenue between Stark/Central Ave and Silver St intersections with a lane diet and better transit access, and 2) upgrade the Chestnut Street bridge over the Cocheco.

B. Woodruff said Milton was making progress on their local MS4 planning efforts with the help of SRPC.

R. Ohler noted that since the Office of Strategic Initiatives had been moved, it was no longer the trustee and manager of the Volkswagen Settlement funds. Those funds need to be spent on electric vehicle infrastructure, replacing older state-owned diesel vehicles, and for matching other

state grants for improving transportation-related emissions. She said NHDES will be publishing an RFP for local diesel vehicle and equipment replacement.

M. Goldberg asked how many electric vehicle chargers were in the state. B. Ohler didn't know the exact number but noted recent and current projects around the state to build them. She noted that NHDES will be posting a solicitation for new electric vehicle charging stations. C. Lentz showed a statewide map of existing chargers. C. Parker noted a local effort to build new chargers in partnership with grocery stores.

6. Adjournment

C. Parker made a motion to adjourn

Seconded by M. Mears

Vote: unanimous in favor

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30am