

New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions

Summary Minutes

Meeting of December 14, 2017

I. Call to Order

Chairman Glenn Coppelman called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. Members introduced themselves as follows.

Glenn Coppelman, Tim Moore, Tim Roache (Rockingham RPC); Peter Griffin, Sylvia von Aulock (Southern NH RPC); Mike Tardiff (Central RPC); Jay Minkarah (Nashua RPC); Alex Belenz (North Country Council); Bob Snelling (Lakes RPC); Larry Robinson, Tim Murphy (Southwest RPC); Becky Baldwin (staff).

Guests: Tim Fortier, Cordell Johnston, NHMA.

Chairman Coppelman recognized the recent passing of Tom Young who represented Nashua RPC and called for a moment of silence.

II. Minutes of October 12, 2017 Meeting

The minutes of October, 2017 were approved as submitted by unanimous vote with Alex Belenz, Sylvia von Aulock, and Bob Snelling abstaining.

III. Featured Topic: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Study Commission Report

Tim Murphy explained that the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Study Commission formed by SB 121 has recently completed and released their report. He noted that Bob Snelling, in addition to being a member of NHARPC, served as the NH Lakes Association and NH Rivers Council representative on the Commission.

Bob Snelling provided background information on the charge given to the Commission noting that NH is one of only four states, the others being Idaho, New Mexico and Massachusetts, that is not delegated to administer the NPDES Program. The NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) currently reviews and certifies that the federal permit issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency meets the NH water quality standards. They do not have statutory authority to issue stormwater permits. Of the 116 currently permitted discharges in NH, 69 of them are issued to municipalities. The Study Commission was charged with making a recommendation as to whether NHDES should request delegation of the NPDES from the EPA and if so recommend a fee structure that would pay for the Department to hire the required employees to manage the issuance of permits and administer the program. Bob Snelling reported that municipalities in the Great Bay area are concerned about how the current procedure affects their economy and feel they are in a position to work more closely with state rather than federal entities. The Commission felt the timeframe given to them did not allow them enough time to properly address the issues and have suggested that a 2018 Advisory Committee be formed to further address the issues. Bob Snelling noted that LSR 2863 has been drafted but bill text is not available at this time. He added that he has requested that wording be added to the potential bill that will allow a space for regional planning commissions on the Advisory Committee. Chairman Coppelman asked if the work of the NPDES Study Commission has been completed and Bob Snelling replied that it was. He added that if

a new Advisory Committee is formed it may include additional members such as regional planning commissions, NH Fish and Game, industrial representatives, NHMA and communities. Bob Snelling said that he would be willing to remain on the new committee as well. Chairman Coppelman thanked Bob Snelling for his presentation.

IV. 2017 NHMA Conference Update

A. NHARPC Exhibit Table

Chairman Coppelman announced that we were able to staff the NHARPC booth at the NHMA conference and thanked those who participated and asked if they had any feedback. Jay Minkarah observed that people seem to struggle to understand who we are and what we do and Chairman Coppelman agreed this is an ongoing problem. Sylvia von Aulock suggested that in the future, each RPC should bring materials for the booth that focuses on promoting one thing that they do. She added that you need something to catch people's attention and suggested having some sort of a giveaway and an interactive map where people could pin the region they come from. It was agreed that there is value in having an exhibit table but the group acknowledged that it would be best to decide earlier what our focus will be. Chairman Coppelman asked who would be willing to work on a proposal for the group to consider and Sylvia von Aulock, Jay Minkarah and Tim Moore volunteered. Chairman Coppelman thanked the volunteers and asked them to notify staff when they are ready to bring a proposal to the membership for consideration.

B. NHARPC Sponsored Sessions

Those in attendance agreed that there is value in continuing to sponsor topic-related sessions at future NHMA conferences.

V. NHARPC Education Efforts - Update

A. Town and City Articles

Tim Fortier provided a handout that depicted the Town and City Articles and webinars that NHARPC has conducted in partnership with NHMA to-date and those planned through November/December 2018. He also reviewed the deadlines that have been set for the Town and City Articles. He stated that he feels the collaboration between his organization and NHARPC has been a successful one and he looks forward to continuing it into the future. Chairman Coppelman noted that he feels the partnership has been beneficial to NHARPC as well since NHMA being a larger organization is able to reach more of our constituents than we would be able to on our own. It was noted that we still need to identify a topic and webinar in conjunction with the September/October 2018 Town and City edition. Chairman Coppelman asked if the proposed article for the November/December 2018 issue could be broken down into smaller parts. It was agreed that rail transportation should be an article of its own and could feature the Downeaster. Tim Roache and Jay Minkarah agreed to work on this article for the September/October issue of Town and City and Tim Murphy offered to assist as well in order to feature the Vermonter service as well. It was agreed that Jay Minkarah would take the lead on preparing a transportation article for the November/December issue. Sylvia von Aulock suggested that the topic of water supply issues might be a good one to consider for future articles. (Copy of updated schedule attached).

B. Webinars

Tim Fortier explained that the webinars do not necessarily need to be a direct tie-in to the articles that are published in Town and City for a given month. Tim Moore noted that in dealing with transportation issues there could easily be a series of webinars. Tim Fortier noted that in that case we might want to consider doing several 30-minute webinars rather than one 60-minute one. Sylvia von Aulock, Jay Minkarah and Tim Roache agreed to work on creating a series of transportation related webinars for

November/December 2018. Sylvia von Aulock noted that the volunteer driver program and up and coming innovative transportation solutions to problems would be good topics to cover for the mini-series.

VI. 2018 Legislative Session

A. Input from Partners

Tim Murphy reported that Scott Osgood from NHPA was unable to attend today's meeting but had previously shared his legislative watch list with the RPC executive directors. He added that the listing is in no particular order at this point and of the 800+ initiatives filed to-date, only some of them have text.

Cordell Johnston from NHMA reported that he will be busy with the legislative process for the next six months. He explained that as a general rule, NHMA follows approximately 250-300 bills each legislative session dealing with all aspects of municipal legislation. Hearings on proposed legislation are scheduled to begin on January 8th. To-date the House has released 700 bills and it is anticipated that the Senate will add another 200-300. He noted that this does not include the approximately 300 bills that were retained from last year. Voting on retained bills is scheduled to take place on January 3rd.

Cordell Johnston noted that retained bills that might be of interest to NHARPC include:

- HB 121 - Relative to the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements charged by municipalities when collecting motor vehicle registration fees. Cordell Johnston explained that this bill proposes to increase the allowable maximum fee from \$5 to \$10. He noted that Town Meeting vote would still be required to implement the fee.
- SB 170 - Relative to the authority of towns to issue bonds for the expansion of broadband infrastructure. Tim Murphy reported that Senator Kahn from his region realizes the importance of having the industry on board and has restructured the bill to assist with this. Cordell Johnston noted that the Senate Committee for this bill has voted 5-0 that it ought to pass and he believes it is on the consent agenda for January 3rd.

B. Legislation of Interest

Cordell Johnston noted that the following new bills might be of interest to NHARPC:

- HB 1211 - Relative to presite built housing.
- HB 1215 - Relative to voting on variances.
- HB 1233 - Relative to preempting local regulation of seeds and fertilizer.
- HB 1244 - Relative to applicability of local zoning ordinances.
- HB 1616 - Relative to requiring legislative approval for regional planning commissions to accept money from governmental sources other than the state of New Hampshire or its political subdivisions.
- HB 1634 - Relative to regulating disorderly houses.
- HB 1635 - Relative to allowing a license for short-term rentals.
- HB 1763 - Relative to establishing a road usage fee and making an appropriation therefor.

- SB (No # has been assigned to this as yet) - Relative to establishing a board of housing development appeals. Tim Murphy noted concern has been expressed that this bill would allow a State level board to take action on municipal decisions. Cordell Johnston noted that NHMA will be discussing this bill further when they meet tomorrow.

In addition, Chairman Coppelman reported that SB 169 - Relative to the definition of agritourism, which NHARPC submitted a letter of support for, came out of Committee on 10/20 with a unanimous vote to find it inexpedient to legislate.

Chairman Coppelman thanked Cordell Johnston for the information he provided and asked if he would be willing to provide additional updates as the session progresses. Cordell Johnston replied that he would be, provided our meetings don't conflict with his legislative schedule.

C. Legislative Breakfast

Chairman Coppelman noted that for the past several years the Association has hosted a legislative breakfast and asked if there was interest in continuing this practice. He acknowledged that once the event is scheduled we are at the mercy of the legislative calendar as to whether or not the Legislature will be in session on the day we pick. It was the general consensus to continue this practice because even if the turnout is small, connections with legislators are always made. Tim Roache suggested that we may want to host the event earlier in the session rather than waiting for a date sometime after cross-over. It was agreed to have staff work on scheduling this year's event.

VII. Next Meeting

Sylvia von Aulock suggested that the next NHARPC meeting be scheduled for February 8, 2018 following the executive directors meeting. Tim Murphy agreed noting that the membership would be polled if there is a need for a January meeting.

VIII. Other Matters

A. NHARPC Annual Commissioner's Convening

Chairman Coppelman recalled that at an earlier meeting members agreed to forgo an Annual Commissioner's Convening for 2017. They had been previously conducted in 2015 and 2016. He asked if members wanted to have one in 2018 and if so now is the time to start working on the logistics. Tim Murphy provided background information on the event for new members to the Association. He noted that in 2015 the event featured DES Commissioner Tom Burack and in 2016 then newly-appointed DOT Commissioner Victoria Sheehan was the guest speaker. He noted we received a lot of positive feedback on both events and in general Commissioners from around the state appreciated the chance to come together, share ideas and network. The only real negative comments were that the event was too long considering the distance some of the Commissioners had to travel to attend. He suggested that if we were to have an event this year, we make it more concise, focus on a display of projects from each RPC, conduct a social hour and have a dinner with a guest speaker. Tim Moore suggested that each RPC have someone at their display during the social hour so people can mingle and ask questions about their individual projects. Sylvia von Aulock agreed that the meeting should be kept to about three hours and questioned the need for a guest speaker. She asked if it would be better to have a series of breakout sessions. Those that attended previous meetings noted that having a guest speaker was what made them successful. Tim Murphy noted that this event was included in this year's budget. He added that past events have been conducted in the Spring and if we plan to proceed we need to consider logistics such as venue and announcements in the near future. Jay Minkarah noted that late Spring would be a good time for the event. Those in attendance unanimously agreed to look into logistics for conducting an event in 2018. Tim Murphy reminded members that when preparing the budget, it was determined that each RPC

would be responsible for covering the costs for their individual Commissioners rather than having the Association cover the cost. Staff was asked to put this item on the next NHARPC agenda.

IX. Public Comment

No public comments were made at this time.

X. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin
On behalf of NHARPC