

# **New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions**

## **Summary Minutes**

Meeting of February 8, 2018

### **I. Call to Order**

Chairman Glenn Coppelman called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Members introduced themselves as follows.

Glenn Coppelman, Tim Moore (Rockingham RPC); Sylvia von Aulock (Southern NH RPC); Steve Buckley, Mike Tardiff (Central RPC); Mike Fimbel (Nashua RPC); Michelle Moren-Grey (North Country Council); Bob Snelling, Jeff Hayes (Lakes RPC); Larry Robinson, Gus Lerandeau, Tim Murphy (Southwest RPC); Steve Schneider (Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC); Becky Baldwin (staff).

Guests: Tim Fortier, NH Municipal Association (NHMA); Michael Klass, Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI); Scott Osgood, NH Planners Association (NHPA).

### **II. Minutes of December 14, 2017 Meeting**

The minutes of December 14, 2017 were approved as submitted by unanimous vote with Mike Fimbel abstaining.

### **III. NHARPC Education Efforts - Update**

#### **A. Town & City Articles**

#### **B. Webinars**

Tim Fortier shared a copy of the most recent NHARPC Town and City article entitled *Rising Seas: Impacting More than Just the Ebb and Flow of the Tides*, that was prepared by the Rockingham and Strafford RPC's. He asked if we would be planning on doing a webinar on this subject, noting that we don't seem to be doing one for each article we provide. Steve Buckley reminded members that the intent is to do an article and webinar for each topic selected as part of our education and outreach activities and noted that this needs to be communicated with the authors of each article. Tim Fortier suggested that both the articles and webinars should be posted on the NHARPC website and offered to provide the links to Central RPC who maintains our site. He noted that we have prepared four articles to date and the next one scheduled is due on March 7<sup>th</sup> and will be on the subject of brownfields. The webinar for this article should take place anytime during May or June after the article has been published. Tim Fortier asked who will be doing the article on ATV's/Trail Planning that was to be provided by Barbara Robinson now that she is no longer with North Country Council. Tim Murphy noted that we have been advised that North Country Council and Strafford RPC will be partnering on this article. They have requested that the title of the article be changed to Trail Planning but noted they will still mention the controversial issues involving ATV's. Tim Fortier noted that the last two articles for the calendar year will both be on different aspects of rail transportation. It was noted that both Nashua and Rockingham RPC's will be working on these two articles. Sylvia von Aulock suggested that Nate Miller from her office would be available to assist as well. Chairman Coppelman noted that it is time to start thinking about topics for articles and webinars for the next year and asked that this item be placed on the upcoming meeting agenda. Tim Fortier and Steve Buckley both commented that any of the articles/webinars we present would be good topics for sessions as part of the annual NHMA conference.

Chairman Coppelman asked that agenda item V. be brought up next since Scott Osgood from NHPA is planning on joining us for agenda item IV and Scott has yet to arrive.

## **V. 2018 Commissioners Convening**

General discussion took place regarding past commissioner convening's. In 2012, the Association suggested sponsoring an event that could bring Commissioners from around the state together for a forum that would involve networking and the sharing of ideas. The first convening was held in 2015, followed by a second one in 2016. A convening did not occur in 2017 and it has been suggested that we hold one in 2018. Over the past several meetings there has been some positive feedback with everyone agreeing that these events are important. If we are planning to hold a convening in 2018, we need to begin work on determining a date, venue, and program/topic. The last two events were held in the spring and included a social, presentation/display of projects, dinner, and a featured speaker. Those in attendance agreed that we should sponsor a commissioners convening in 2018.

Steve Buckley suggested that the event be kept to having displays of work projects, a social with a dinner and a guest speaker. He noted that although breakout sessions at prior events were fine, they made the event last too long and noted the intent should be to provide information that participants can take away with them. Larry Robinson agreed noting that prior events were too long and although ice breakers are fine they are not necessary to the success of an event. It was agreed that the entire event should be kept to 2½ hours between the times of 4:00 - 6:30 p.m.

Steve Buckley suggested that he could provide a presentation if we wanted something he has already developed. He also noted that bringing in a speaker would be a good idea. Another suggestion was a social followed by short presentations from each of the RPC's as an alternative to a guest speaker - the thought being that this would provide an opportunity for each RPC to highlight some of their programs that commissioners from other areas might want to consider for their own RPC as opposed to setting up displays. It was the general consensus of the group that we should have a guest speaker rather than presentations from the RPC's. Steve Buckley suggested that perhaps Nate Miller could present a shortened version of the information he provided about RPC's at the 2016 convening. Sylvia von Aulock noted she would discuss this with Nate.

Gus Lerandau asked where we would hold the event that would be centrally located for everyone to attend. Steve Buckley responded that we could hold a late afternoon/early evening event at NHMA free of charge. He added that the event would need to be limited to 70 people, we would need to find an available date and alcohol would not be allowed. Tim Murphy asked if we could do a meal and Steve Buckley noted that this could be arranged using a caterer of NHMA events. Steve Buckley offered to check with the NHMA scheduling personnel and provide a list of possible dates and approved caterers to Becky Baldwin.

An announcement for the event needs to be developed and distributed to all the RPC Commissioners. Upper Valley RPC has done this in the past and expressed willingness to assist.

It was noted that, as previously agreed, each RPC would pay for the cost of meals for their attendees.

Regarding a date for the event, it was noted that there is a lot of planning that needs to be completed and we need to give ourselves adequate time to prepare. Chairman Coppelman noted that we will do our best to try to accommodate everyone and will pick a date that will provide the greatest participation.

**Motion: To conduct the commissioners convening at the NHMA facility during late spring/early summer depending on availability.**

Motion by Steve Buckley, seconded by Larry Robinson. Approved by unanimous vote.

#### IV. 2018 Legislative Session

##### A. Partner Updates

Chairman Coppelman explained that NHARPC has partnered with other organizations such as NHMA and NHPA to receive legislative updates from their representatives that frequently attend our meetings. A copy of legislation currently being tracked by NHMA was distributed. Chairman Coppelman thanked Mike Klass from the Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) for joining us today.

Tim Murphy introduced Mike Klass from OSI who served as a planning and land use attorney prior to joining their staff. He explained that in the past when NHARPC was more involved in the legislative process they used to meet on a regular basis with other organizations such as NHMA, NHPA and OEP/OSI to discuss various pieces of legislation on their individual radars since the volume of bills in any given session can be overwhelming. NHARPC used to track 35-40 bills with the assistance of a legislative consultant and provide position letters and testimony on several bills per session. Mike Klass asked if there would be interest in conducting legislative monitoring meetings of this nature again. It was agreed that this would be very valuable and the question arose as to what we would need to do to participate. Mike Klass noted that he would host the meetings at OSI and people could either attend or participate by conference call. Meetings would last a couple of hours per month and would provide the opportunity for participants to gain insight regarding opinions on pending legislation. He suggested that if we are interested in participating that we appoint a NHARPC representative for this legislative session. Tim Moore volunteered to serve in this capacity. Steve Buckley asked if the role of the representative would be to attend meetings and gather information. Chairman Coppelman agreed that it would be and that if a decision needed to be made, the representative could report back to the membership for further discussion.

**Motion: To appoint Tim Moore as the NHARPC representative to the legislative monitoring meetings hosted by OSI for this legislative session.**

Motion by Steve Buckley, seconded by Gus Lerandean. Approved by unanimous vote.

Chairman Coppelman asked that Tim Moore share his contact information with Mike Klass.

There was a brief discussion on how we can better educate legislators as to who we are and what we do. It was noted that at the recent hearing on HB 1616, the bill sponsor thought that RPC's were staffed by planning board members. Concern was expressed as to how we can dispel the various mis-conceptions that are associated with RPC's. It was noted that we need to do something more than just conduct an annual legislative breakfast. Mike Tardiff noted that he believes that the members of the House County and Municipal Government Committee that hear most of the bills pertaining to us know who we are. Tim Moore noted that after the election there is a training session for new legislators that we might be able to provide materials for. Gus Lerandean explained that those sessions are more in line with teaching legislators how to file bills and the protocol of being a legislator. Jeff Hayes noted that his RPC sponsors an event each year for legislators to explain what they do and it is well attended. It was noted that other RPC's conduct similar events in their individual regions. Chairman Coppelman suggested that we might want to consider preparing an informational piece about the RPC's for distribution to legislators and noted this could be discussed further at a future meeting.

**B. HB 1616 - Requiring legislative approval for regional planning commissions to accept money from governmental sources other than the state of New Hampshire or its political subdivisions.**

It was noted that the House Municipal and County Government Committee has voted unanimously that this bill be found inexpedient to legislate.

### **C. HB 2018 - Relative to the state 10-year transportation improvement program.**

Tim Moore cautioned that we might not want to take a position on this piece of legislation. Tim Murphy explained that it was asked we put this on the agenda for discussion purposes and we have not chosen to take a position on it. Jeff Hayes noted that rather than taking a position, we might choose to provide educational comment on portions of the bill. Tim Murphy observed that we haven't provided responses to similar legislation on 10-Year Plan updates in the past and that the RPCs/MPOs have already played a role in development of the draft Plan. It was agreed that we continue to track this bill at this time.

### **D. Other Legislation of Interest**

#### **SB 450 - Establishing an advisory commission for the department of environmental services relative to the delegation of authority of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Program.**

Bob Snelling reported that this bill is the result of the report of the advisory commission he served on last year and will be heard next week. He noted that the bill calls for a representative from an affected regional planning commission, appointed by NHARPC, to serve on the advisory commission created by this bill.

#### **HB 121 - Relative to increasing the maximum optional fee for transportation improvements that may be charged by municipalities when collecting motor vehicle registration fees.**

Scott Osgood reported that this bill was killed by one vote.

#### **HB 1436 - Relative to providing that certain developments within the protected shoreland will be considered developments of regional impact and grants appeal rights to abutters of a development of regional impact.**

Jeff Hayes reported that Lakes RPC is keeping a close watch on this bill.

#### **HB 267 - Relative to establishing a NH transportation council.**

Tim Murphy noted that should this bill pass, it calls for representatives from RPCs, one urban and one rural, to serve on the council.

#### **SB 170 - Relative to permitting municipalities to issue bonds for the purpose of providing or expanding broadband infrastructure.**

Tim Murphy reported that similar legislation has failed in the past, but this bill contains an amendment that includes input from the industry so it may fare better this time around.

#### **SB 557 - Relative to establishing a board with concurrent, appellate jurisdiction with the superior court regarding municipal decisions on housing and housing developments.**

Mike Klass asked if any position has been taken on this bill and it was noted that NHMA is monitoring it but hasn't taken a position at this time.

### **E. 2018 Legislative Breakfast**

Staff member Becky Baldwin reported that she has communicated with the person in charge of scheduling and provided several dates that are available. It was agreed to schedule our event to take place on Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> with a snow date of April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Staff was asked to confirm those dates and notify the membership. Tim Murphy reminded members that each RPC will have a table at the event to display samples of recent projects and suggested that we coordinate what will be displayed. Sylvia von Aulock

stated that we need to do a better job of deciding what materials are displayed at various events and suggested it be discussed at an upcoming meeting. Chairman Coppelman noted that this was brought up at the last meeting and at that time it was agreed that Sylvia von Aulock, Tim Moore and Jay Minkarah would discuss this as a subcommittee and bring suggestions back to the group as a whole at a future meeting.

## **VI. Next Meeting**

Chairman Coppelman explained that we have budgeted for a certain number of meetings and we only have allowed for two more this year. He suggested that those meetings take place the second week in April and again in June for our annual meeting. A suggestion was made that if we are having both the legislative breakfast and the commissioners convening we should meet in March to prepare for both of them. Another suggestion was that we can't do everything and may need to focus on fewer items in a given year to stay within our meeting budget. Larry Robinson suggested scheduling the next meeting for April 12<sup>th</sup> with the idea that if the Chairman felt a meeting was needed in March, members would be notified. It was further suggested that once potential dates for the commissioners convening are established, staff initiate a poll of the membership to choose a date for the event.

**Motion: To schedule the next NHARPC meeting for April 12, 2018 with the need for a meeting prior to this date at the call of the Chairman.**

Motion by Larry Robinson, seconded by Tim Moore. Approved by unanimous vote.

## **VII. Other Matters**

No other matters were brought before the Association at this time.

## **VIII. Public Comment**

No public comments were made at this time.

## **IX. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin  
On behalf of NHARPC