

New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions

Summary Minutes

Meeting of July 28, 2021

I. Call to Order

Chairman Buckley called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and acknowledged that a quorum of the membership was in attendance. He explained that two members have requested that they be allowed to participate remotely since it would not be practical for them to attend today's meeting in person. He asked for a motion to allow remote attendance and noted that all votes would need to be conducted by roll call to meet the requirements of 91:A.

Motion: To allow Barbara Kravitz and Michelle Moren-Grey to participate in today's meeting remotely.

Motion by Larry Robinson, seconded by Peter Griffin. Approved by unanimous vote.

Members introduced themselves as follows.

Barbara Kravitz (RPC), remote; Michelle Moren-Grey (NCC) remote; Peter Griffin, Sylvia von Aulock (SNHPC); Steve Buckley, Mike Tardiff (CNHRPC); Larry Robinson, Tim Murphy (SWRPC); Jen Czysz (SRPC); Meghan Butts (UVLSRPC); Jeff Hayes (LRPC); Jay Minkarah (NRPC); Becky Baldwin (staff).

Guests: Cordell Johnston (NHMA); Mike Klass (NH BEA/OPD).

Chairman Buckley called for a moment of silence in honor of Dave Danielson who passed away in May. He noted that Dave had been a valuable member of the planning community and will be missed. Having served in the capacity of both Chair and Vice-Chair of NHARPC for multiple years, several members recalled fond memories of his interaction with our group.

II. Minutes of March 18, 2021 Meetings

Motion: To approve the minutes of March 18, 2021 as submitted.

Motion by Larry Robinson, seconded by Barbara Kravitz. Approved by unanimous roll call vote with Peter Griffin and Sylvia von Aulock abstaining.

III. NHARPC - NHMA Partnership

Chairman Buckley referred to the schedule for articles being submitted to Town and City magazine, noting that today is the deadline for the September/October edition which will contain an article on *Local Master Planning* being authored by CNHRPC. The November/December issue will feature an article on *Sidewalk Planning* that will be co-authored by NRPC, RPC, and LRPC and has a deadline of September 29th.

IV. 2021 Legislative Session

Chairman Buckley asked Cordell Johnston if he had any information that he would like to share on either the current or the upcoming legislative session. He added that Cordell will be retiring effective January 1, 2022. Members expressed their appreciation for all the knowledge that he has shared with the Association over the years.

Cordell Johnston reported on the status of several bills of potential interest as follows:

HB 108: Relative to minutes and decisions in nonpublic sessions; an exemption for items falling within the attorney-client privilege or the attorney work product doctrine under the right-to-know law; and remote access to public meetings under the right-to-know law. Although not signed into law yet, this bill has been passed by both the House and Senate and is scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2022.

HB 154: Relative to community revitalization tax relief incentives. This bill has passed and been signed into law.

HB 586: Relative to training and procedures for zoning and planning boards and relative to financial investments and incentives for affordable housing development. This bill has been retained which Cordell Johnston explained means that it could come back again next year.

SB 85: Relative to establishing a broadband matching grant initiative and fund. This bill has been passed by both the House and Senate and is expected to be signed into law.

SB 86: Relative to adopting omnibus legislation relative to planning and zoning. This bill has been passed as amended by both the House and Senate and is expected to be signed into law.

Regarding the upcoming legislative session, Cordell Johnston explained that the window for the House to submit LSR's runs from September 13 -17, 2021. The time period is longer for the Senate to submit LSR's. He noted that during election years there are two periods in which to file that take place both before and after the general election.

Peter Griffin asked about a potential bill to move the NH Primary to August and Cordell Johnston replied that although the bill has passed the Governor intends to veto it.

Chairman Buckley asked if Mike Klass had anything that he would like to report regarding current or future legislation and he provided the following:

HB 322: Relative to deadlines for consideration of developments of regional impact by planning boards. This bill has passed and been signed into law.

HB 2: Mike Klass reported that with the passing of this legislation NH OSI has now become the NH Office of Planning and Development (NH OPD) within the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA). The transition is on-going and the physical move to BEA will take place sometime between late August and early September. In addition to their regular duties, NH OPD will be working on broadband issues. A new website similar to the current one is also being developed.

Chairman Buckley noted that due to a change in his town's membership, Tim Moore will no longer be able to be a member of NHARPC or our representative at legislative partner meetings conducted by NH OPD. He added that we may want to consider appointing a replacement at a future meeting.

Chairman Buckley announced that Margaret Byrnes, Executive Director of NHMA will be joining us for a discussion under Agenda Item V and suggested we continue with the remaining agenda items until she arrives.

VI. Annual Meeting Business Items

A. Financial Report

Becky Baldwin presented the NHARPC financial report as of June 30, 2021. She noted that we began the fiscal year with a balance of \$6,645.74 and during the year we added income from dues and interest for a total of \$9,001.65. Expenses during the year totaled \$9,775.00 including administrative contracts and support of an affiliate group. Taking the above into account we ended the fiscal year with a bank balance of \$5,872.39. Sylvia von Aulock questioned the amount used for administrative contracts given the fact that meetings were held virtually. Mike Tardiff pointed out that although the meetings themselves were virtual what was being asked and accomplished by staff represented a normal year. He added that he appreciates the work done by the administrative staff. Chairman Buckley explained that the only savings would have been for driving time which was outweighed by needing additional staff to conduct a virtual meeting and the added time for coordinating and conducting the meetings themselves.

Motion: To accept the NHARPC financial report as presented.

Motion by Larry Robinson, seconded by Jen Czysz. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

V. ARPA - Assistance to Municipalities

Margaret Byrnes provided members with a description of the funding that will be made available to NH cities, towns and counties through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). In order to be eligible to receive funding applications must be submitted no later than August 18, 2021. NHMA has conducted educational presentations and outreach and hopes to have 100% of the 229 cities and towns in NH apply to receive the ARPA funding. Stakeholders have been identified including NHMA, Community Development Finance Authority, NH Association of Counties, NH Charitable Foundation, NH Center for Nonprofits, and the RPCs to determine what level of support can be provided to municipalities in applying for and administering the federal funds.

Peter Griffin asked if all communities are eligible to receive ARPA funds and if they need to be expended by a specific date. Margaret Byrnes replied that all communities are eligible for the distribution that was determined by the U.S. Treasury. Barbara Kravitz asked if a work plan is required to apply for the funding and Margaret Byrnes explained that a community does not need to identify how they will utilize the funding until 2024, but if they don't submit an application by the August 18th deadline, they will no longer be eligible for receiving funds.

NHMA has asked the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief & Recovery to provide a list of municipalities that have already applied for the funding. To date approximately 50% of the State's municipalities have applied. Margaret Byrnes noted that she would provide the listing to Chairman Buckley for distribution to the RPCs who are currently reaching out to their municipalities to encourage them to submit applications.

Once applications have been received there will be training and guidance on how to proceed with administering the funds so the RPCs can be in a position to offer assistance to any of their municipalities that might be in need. Jeff Hayes inquired if the RPCs would be providing this service through a contract with a state agency or with the individual municipalities. Margaret Byrnes stated that she envisions individual technical assistance agreements directly between the RPCs and municipalities requesting their assistance.

It is anticipated that sometime around the end of August, the U.S. Treasury will release a user's guide on how to meet any reporting requirements associated with the funding distribution. Sylvia von Aulock asked if the funds can be used as match to offset other grants and was told that it could not be used for that purpose. Chairman Buckley inquired if existing RPC staff have the capability to assist in

administering federal funds. Jen Czysz replied that the skillset exists but some training may be necessary since requirements for federal contracts can vary.

Chairman Buckley thanked Margaret Byrnes for providing the information and asked what the next steps would be once the deadline for submitting applications for the ARPA funds has passed. Margaret Byrnes indicated that once that has happened she will be scheduling a follow-up meeting with the RPCs.

VI. Annual Meeting Business Items (Continued)

Chairman Buckley stated that he would combine discussion and action under Agenda Items B & C due to their connection to one another.

B. FY 2021/2022 Budget and C. Annual Dues Assessment

Becky Baldwin reviewed the proposed FY 2021/2022 Budget. She noted the bank balance as reported on the financial report and suggested if membership dues were to be kept level funded at \$9,000 (\$1,000 per RPC), the total anticipated income for the upcoming FY would be \$14,872.39. Staff is also proposing level funding for expenses including staff support, communications, conferences/support of affiliate activities, legislative breakfast and incidental expenses in the amount of \$11,900. Proposed expenses deducted from anticipated income would leave us with a positive bank balance of \$2,972.39 at year end. Jay Minkarah pointed out that if we adopt a level funded budget for the upcoming fiscal year, in a couple more years we may be faced with an increase in dues. Mike Tardiff suggested that we address that possibility either next year or the year after. Sylvia von Aulock expressed the need for a grant writer and questioned if that should be considered now or a year from now. She added that her commission has difficulty finding grants to apply for and a service of this nature could benefit all of the RPCs. Chairman Buckley noted that having an individual dedicated to finding and writing grants could have merit but could also more than double annual dues. Mike Tardiff shared that from his perspective all of the RPCs are quite busy now and this type of conversation might be better to have during a future budgeting process. Jen Czysz agreed noting that her RPC does not have the capacity to take on any additional work this coming year. She added that a venture of this nature would need to be relevant and have value for each of the RPCs. Jeff Hayes asked if additional funds are needed to further enhance the website or conduct other outreach activities at this time. Mike Tardiff noted that CNHRPC would be able to maintain our current level of support at the proposed budget price. Chairman Buckley noted that we may want to revisit this at some point in the future. Tim Murphy suggested that modifications to the budget should be considered in advance of the Annual Meeting to assist in budget preparation for any given year.

Motion: To adopt the proposed FY 2021/2022 and assess dues at \$1,000 per RPC for the year beginning July 1, 2021.

Motion by Sylvia von Aulock, seconded by Jeff Hayes. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

D. Contracts for Services

Administrative Support:

Chairman Buckley acknowledged that administrative support has been provided by SWRPC for many years and last year they expressed an interest in having another RPC step-up and take over those duties. Tim Murphy noted that SWRPC is in a position to provide administrative support for another year but the best way to have a smooth transition would be for another RPC to be identified now so they could transition and be prepared to take over beginning this time next year. He added that he has had communications with SRPC who were the only RPC to express consideration for playing this role. Jen Czysz stated that SRPC has recently hired an office coordinator who by this time next year should be in a position to take on this responsibility. Tim Murphy suggested working with SRPC during the coming year to assure a smooth transition. Chairman Buckley asked if that would mean sharing the contract

funds for FY 2021/2022 and Tim Murphy suggested that the contract be awarded to SWRPC and they work out the details with SRPC to subcontract a portion of the total.

Motion: To enter into a contract with SWRPC to provide administrative support services for NHARPC for the upcoming year in the amount of \$8,000 with the understanding that they will work with SRPC regarding an equitable distribution of the funds as they prepare to assume administrative support duties beginning with FY 2022/2023.

Motion by Jay Minkarah, seconded by Mike Tardiff. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Website/Communications:

Chairman Buckley asked if CNHRPC is willing to continue to provide website and social media services for NHARPC for the budgeted amount of \$1,500. Mike Tardiff replied that they are.

Motion: To enter into a contract with CNHRPC to provide website and social media services for NHARPC for the upcoming year in the amount of \$1,500.

Motion by Sylvia von Aulock, seconded by Jeff Hayes. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

E. Election of Officers

Chairman Buckley presented a proposed slate of officers for NHARPC for the year beginning July 1, 2021 as follows:

Steve Buckley - Chairman
Peter Griffin - Vice-Chairman
Larry Robinson - Secretary/Treasurer

Motion: To approve the proposed slate of officers for NHARPC for the year beginning on July 1, 2021.

Motion by Sylvia von Aulock, seconded by Jen Czysz. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

VII. Other Matters

No other matters at this time.

VIII. Next Meeting

It was suggested that the membership might want to consider holding meetings in the morning rather than 1:00 p.m. now that they are no longer held in conjunction with the executive directors monthly meetings. It was further suggested that the next meeting be held in October on either a Wednesday or Thursday. Staff will conduct a poll to determine the best date and time for a meeting.

IX. Public Comment

No public comments at this time.

X. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin
On Behalf of NHARPC