

**New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, August 25, 2022**  
**NH Municipal Association**  
**John B. Andrews Room**  
**25 Triangle Drive, Concord, NH**

**I. Call to Order and Introductions**

Chair Jerry Coogan called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked for introductions.

Members present: Jen Czysz, SRPC, Don Hamann, SRPC; Michele Morin-Grey, North Country; Steve Buckley, Central; Peter Griffin, Southern; Jerry Coogan, Upper Valley, Bill Chaisson, Upper Valley; Matt Baronas, Central; Sylvia Von Aulock, SNHPC; Jay Minkarah, NRPC.

Members attending remotely: Barbara Kravitz, Rockingham; Tim Murphy, Southwest.

Guest presenters: Noah Hodgetts, NHOPD;

**II. Review and Approve the Minutes of June 30, 2022**

Chair J. Coogan asked for a motion. S. Buckley motioned to accept the minutes of June 30, 2022 as written, seconded by P. Griffin. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken: B. Chaisson, P. Griffin, J. Coogan, J. Czysz, M. More-Grey, voted in favor. S. Von Aulock, P. Griffin, D. Hamann abstained. Motion passed with all votes in favor.

**III. Discussion Items**

**A. The Future of the NHARPC:**

**Survey Results**

J. Coogan read the results of the brief survey that was sent to the NHARPC membership asking for their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions on how the NHARPC should proceed in FY23, and in future years; how to best conduct the meetings to make them interesting and valuable for all. Additionally, the survey asked for preferences and regarding for the FY 2023 Commissioners convening.

The members discussed the survey questions and responses. A summary of the discussion:

- Should the committee go back to working with a lobbyist
- Suggestions for meetings included:
  - To engage speakers,
  - hold presentation series,
  - host state agency commissioners, municipal department heads, non-profit organizations, and partner with Industries with land use interests.
  - Update the audio and video technology
  - Feature presentations from each RPC
  - Allow for speakers to present virtually.
  - Separate business meetings from presentation meetings
  - Record presentations
  - Continue the virtual option for attendance
- Create a YouTube Channel to post recordings of meetings
- Create additional outreach materials describing what RPC's do

- Continue updates/upgrade the website; add a job seekers category.
- Work with the Council of New Hampshire Humanities/History of Planning
- Discussion for a commissioner convening included
  - holding an afternoon session
  - part social part presentation.
  - Provide a virtual option for presenters and members.
  - Convening has a twofold purpose; an opportunity for both networking and educational purposes. Does a virtual meeting meet the social purpose of the meeting.

SRPC administrative staff will create a poll with options for the FY23 meeting schedule. The consensus was that quarterly meetings are the best option.

**Review website and see <https://www.vapda.org/>**

There was a brief discussion on review of the website and ideas for updates. A suggestion was made to add a job seekers section to the website.

Matt Baronas who maintains the website, offered his contact information so that members can send their suggestions to him.

J. Coogan asked members to review the NHARPC website in the next 30 days and provide feedback.

**B. How Can RPC's Best Position Themselves to Leverage New Opportunities such as...**

- Invest NH grants
- Housing Needs Assessment implementation
- Comprehensive Plan updates

J. Czysz stated there is abundant funding available. How can we make best use of funds and work together to make funding sustainable in the future; to carry forward the work under the ARPA Grant and NHHNA The current market climate makes it difficult to find staff. If we are ramping up staff to work on projects, what happens when projects are completed and the funding ends? This is an opportunity for planning commissions to shine and show their value.

Members discussed how to approach their municipalities to assist with obtaining funding opportunities and to establish relationships with agencies.

**IV. Commissioner Convening: Time, venue, and format**

Members shared their ideas and concerns for holding a FY2023 commissioner convening.

Ideas:

- Host a panel presentation which would provide different perspectives on a topic
- Offer a hybrid option

Concerns:

- Travel time for members; where is the most central location for all RPC's
- Covid exposure
- Staff time required to organize

Further discussion on this topic will continue at the next RPC meeting. In the interim J. Czysz will talk with staff at Rockingham, look at what portable technology is available then report back at the next meeting. The consensus was that the convening will most likely be a hybrid event.

## **V. Updates**

### **A. What's new in your Region?**

Each member was asked to share 1 or 2 items their region is working on.

Bill Chiasson reported that the Housing Needs Assessment is in process. There are more housing developments happening. Now that the UV corridor studies are complete, the next step is to get communities to respond and start planning.

S. Buckley reported there was an excellent presentation on trail and trail development in central NH. The presentation provided an overview of which trails are developed and extended, refurbished made more accessible.

S. Von Aulock reported that as part of the Ten Year Plan project proposal, there are two proposed trail projects. SNHPC recently completed a regional trails plan. She reported that there is an extra 10 million coming down the pike.

J. Czysz reported that SRPC has a records digitization project under way funded by the CARES Act. The POP project was completed with a story line containing over 350 recreation sites mapped out. SRPC is looking to implement a new interactive data base on the website.

M. Morin-Grey-reported for NPC. There were 12 awards for technical assistance to municipalities in the region. One of the projects is for trails and the focus will be on outdoor recreation and bike friendly trails.

J. Minkarah reported for Nashua Region. Of the 14 applications submitted for projects in the Ten Year Plan all but 2 are bike/ped. Two projects awarded direct discretionary funding; in the process of figuring out how those funds work. The commission is finally full staffed and has 6 circuit writers working in their region.

Barbara Kravitz reported that the Rockingham planning commission has several projects in the works in Hampton. One of the projects is an Age friendly Community project.

Hampton is in the process of negotiating with the state liquor commission for two major developments on the 95 plazas. Hampton Beach has two housing developments proposed for the Center. The Commission is in process of updating the Hampton Beach master plan and in is working on a feasibility study for an ADA compliant pier off of Hampton beach.

Tim Murphy reported for Southwest. There are new Brownfields assessment awards. The commission is updating CEDS and is in the homestretch with RHNA. They are working on a watershed grant and there are now 4 digital literacy needs assessments. Working on a grant to improve broadband tech assistance to municipalities. The commission has new staff and has a position open.

## **VI. NHARPC - NHMA Partnership**

### **A. Town & City Articles and Webinars:**

Jen Czysz reported everything is on track; there is one more article in the que for this year. The most recent article on the RHNA will be coming out soon. The Economic Resiliency Planning article for the November/December issue is due Oct 5. The committee needs to come up with

something for January/February issue due in December. This will be a discussion at the next meeting.

## **B. NHMA Annual Conference**

### **Workshop Proposals NHARPC present proposal?**

T. Murphy reported that 2 proposals have been submitted. One on how municipalities can take advantage of RPC's services for roads and the second on support with hazard mitigation plans. S. Buckley reported there should be news soon on which proposals were accepted.

### **NHARPC Booth**

The members discussed the difficulty involved in getting people to attend a booth. There was consensus that presentations hold more value.

J. Coogan asked for a vote by a show of hands in favor of hosting a booth at the NHMA annual conference. Jerry raised his hand and T. Murphy said he was agreeable to either option. Vote failed due to lack of a consensus.

## **VII. 2022 Legislative Session**

Noah Hodgetts reviewed the summary of changes pursuant to HB 1661 and provided a brief explanation of each section. The new law will have significant effects on how municipal land use boards conduct business.

## **VIII. Other Matters**

There were no other matters discussed.

## **IX. Next Meeting**

### **A. Proposed FY2023 Schedule**

The results of a poll taken in July showed the majority of respondents could attend meetings held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of even months. A brief discussion took place with several members stating that this would not be a convenient schedule for them. SRPC administrative will send out a new poll with several choices for dates.

## **X. Public Comment**

There was no public comment

## **XI. Adjourn**

J. Czysz motioned to adjourn seconded by S. Buckley. All members in favor. Meeting adjourned.