

**New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 8, 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, NCCRP; Steve Buckley, CNHRP Peter Griffin, SNHPC; Jerry Coogan, Upper Valley, Bill Chaisson, UVSLPC; Sylvia Von Aulock, SNHPC; Jay Minkarah, NRPC; Larry Robinson, SWRPC; Jeff Hayes, LRPC; Mike Tardiff, CNHPC; Meghan Butts, UVLSPC; Tim Roache, RPC; Tim Moore, RPC;

Guests: Bill Cass, Commissioner for NHDOT; Jim Maggiore, State Representative, North Hampton;

Members attending remotely: Matt Baronas, Central;

Guest presenters: Noah Hodgetts, NHOPD;

II. Action Items

A. Review and Approve the Minutes of August 25, 2022

Chair J. Coogan asked for a motion. S. Buckley motioned to accept the minutes of August 25, 2022 as written, seconded by S. Von Aulock. J. Coogan stated he would like further discussion on the future of NHARPC. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

B. B. Nomination to RPC rep to the SCC

S. Sylvia gave a brief explanation for her interest in joining the SCC. P. Griffin motioned to appoint Sylvia Von Aulock to the SCC seconded by S. Buckley. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor. The chair will send a letter to the SCC to confirm the appointment.

C. Set Meeting Schedule/Review Poll Results

The results of the poll showed a majority of votes for the 3rd and 4th Wednesday of each quarter. The committee was in consensus to hold the meeting on the 4th Wednesday of each quarter, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. The next meetings will be March 22 and June 28, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. Motion by P. Griffin to approve the FY 2023 meeting schedule as agreed upon seconded by S. Buckley. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

D. Legislative Liaison

Tim Moore has agreed to continue to work with NHMA and NHPA to monitor legislation. L. Robinson motioned to appoint Tim Moore as legislative liaison seconded by D. Hamann. Motion passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

E. Guest-State Representative Jim Maggiore-NH Housing Needs Assessment

J. Maggiore spoke about budgeting and funding opportunities for Regional Planning Commissions and the importance of RPC's partnering with Towns. A brief discussion ensued.

III. Guest Speaker, Bill Cass, NHDOT Commissioner

J. Coogan introduced Bill Cass, newly appointed NHDOT Commissioner. Commissioner Cass gave a summary of his experience and the numerous roles he has served within the NHDOT

since 1986. Chair Coogan presented B. Cass with a variety of questions with topics including the Infrastructure Bill, the future of transportation in New Hampshire, priorities for the department and the development of passenger rail service linking NH to the MBTA's network

B. Cass stated the department is focusing on core programs, including funding for bridges: the discretionary grant programs have been a challenge and they are looking at different ways to approach that. The department is placing an emphasis on preservation, maintenance, and safety improvements and the modernization of existing infrastructure. RPC's can help move things forward by continuing to advocate and work with DOT.

DOT is supportive of the development of passenger rail service linking NH to the MBTA's network. The areas with the most direct economic benefit like Nashua and Manchester are essentially the facilitators and should advocate to build support to move forward. How the program is implemented and funded is a public policy issue. DOT would develop a plan if a service is implemented. DOT is looking at a contract extension with CSX.

B. Cass stated talked about how covid had a big impact on overall transportation planning as well as traffic patterns. DOT is looking at long range changes in transportation and is monitoring traffic patterns. Commuter traffic has rebounded to below pre-pandemic levels 9-10 percent. Congestion and delays are back, and bus ridership continues to rebound. Transit, technology, and further capacity continues to be a main focus.

The group thanked Commissioner Cass and invited him back to a meeting in the future.

J. Maggiore asserted that solutions are long term. Towns rely on RPCs to help develop master Plans. We have to look at the long range. We have body of evidence and need to come up with a plan for something sustainable, Think long-term.

The members agreed to encourage a NH Legislature a Planning Caucus, focusing on funding for RPCs J. Czynsz, J. Hayes, T. Moore and J. Maggiore will coordinate to arrange this.

IV. Discussion Items

A. NHARPC Website Feedback

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

Updates have been made since the last meeting. Members were directed to forward any suggestions for content to M. Tardiff. M. Taylor-Fetter will check the contacts.

B. Commissioners Convening: Time, Venue, and Format

J. Czynsz suggested to form a committee for the planning of the convening and to present their results at the March meeting. S. Van Aulock and Steve Buckley volunteered. M. Taylor-Fetter will organize and participate in the planning. The consensus at the last meeting was to hold a late afternoon social/hybrid type of event, with a speaker. J. Czynsz suggested reaching out to Tim Murphy for input.

V. NHARPC-NHMA Partnership

A. Town and City Articles and Webinars

J. Czysz asked for suggestions for the future NHMA articles. The schedule was decided as follows:

- January/February, due December 1, 2022: Municipal Natural Resource Inventories Authors are UVLSRPC/NRPC/CNHRPC to submit next Monday, December 8.
- March/April, due February 1, 2023: Community Transportation. Authors: SNHPC, SWRPC, NRPC
- May/June, due April 2, 2023: Planning Development/Housing Final RNHA-snippets from everyone
- July/August, due June 1, 2023: Solid Waste Planning. Authors: UVLSRPC

Ideas for the remainder of the year included clean energy, natural resources, and housing. J. Czysz suggested the Importance of Planning for the final issue of the year.

VI. 2023 Legislative Session

The members reviewed the current legislation including a list of potential bills supported by NHMA that RPC's should keep their communities apprised of. J. Czysz stated that contract clauses prohibit lobbying unless it is something that directly impacts NHRPC's. J. Coogan mentioned RPC's can provide comments on proposed legislation

As an educational effort.

VII. Other Matters

VIII. Updates

A. What's new in your Region?

- M. Butts reported that UVLSARPC has been working on a handful of community environmental projects and public education with topics on green cleaning and products, composting, lead fishing tackle, school art and science.
- J. Czysz reported that SRPC staff has been chatting with folks in the environmental field in the coastal areas that have received funding to identify projects that look at how to protect water quality in the great bay. Completely separate but it ties with a statewide group that helps promote and recruit new land use board volunteers.
- For SWPC, J. Czysz read an email from. Murphy stating the following:
 1. SWRPC recently completed a *Digital Literacy Needs Assessment*.
 2. SWRPC is conducting a *Microtransit and Shared Ride Feasibility Study* which is scheduled for completion/release during Summer 2023.
 3. SWRPC serves as Mobility Manager for RCC Region 5 (Monadnock).
- For RPC, T. Roache reported that they are working on the East Coast Greenway project and Coastal Resiliency.
- M. More-Gray reported for NCCRP high level on maternity budgets with an analysis on the lack of maternity and pediatric care in the region. Also working on the environmental process, northern borders, and CEDARS,
- Jay Minkarah reported for Nashua: CEDARS, wrapping up a volunteer driver visibility study; have an in-house mobility manager, there has been a significant increase in public engagement.
- Bill Chaisson stated that UVLSRPC has a Styrofoam recycling program along other recycling programs, and they have hired a part-time land use manager,
- Mike Tardiff: CNHRPC has received calls for natural resources, they are working on adaptation mapping, CEDARS, and local economic development support.

- Sylvia Von Aulock reported that SNHPC is now fully staffed, they have a new senior planner with experience, they are working on an adaptation action plan, mobility management, a transit training program, and an EV station charging plan.

IX. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2023.

X. Adjourn

Chair Coogan asked for a motion to adjourn. With a motion by P. Griffin and a second by S. Buckley t and all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 3:05 P.M.