

**New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions
Annual Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2025, 1:00-3:00 PM
Bow Municipal Offices, 10 Grandview Road, Bow NH**

1) Welcome and Introductions

Chair Jerry Coogan called the meeting to order and asked for introductions:

Members present: Jen Czysz, SRPC; Michael Tardiff, CNHRPC; Sarah Wrightsman, SRPC; Jerry Coogan, UVLSRPC; Tim Moore, RPC; Peter Griffin, SNHPC; Sandy Crystal, CNHRPC; Shanna Saunders LRPC; Steve Buckley, CNHRPC; Sandy Crystal, CNHRPC; Tim Roach, RPC; Todd Horner, SWRPC; Christine Robidoux, SWRPC

Members attending on Zoom: Meghan Butts, UVLSRPC; Riley Stafford, CNHRPC

2) Action items

a. Review and Approval of the March 26, 2025

T. Moore motioned to approve the March 26, 2025 minutes.

Discussion: S. Buckley stated that on page 6, paragraph 5, the correct legislative number is SB-456 not 455. P. Griffin stated that his name was spelled incorrectly.

S. Buckley seconded the motion to approve the minutes with amendments.

Following a roll call vote with all members voting unanimously in favor, the motion passed.

3) Minutes Legislative Updates

Tim Moore presented his and Noah Hodgetts top ten list:

1. HB224: Relative to rebates to ratepayers from the renewable energy fund.
2. HB296 : Relative to issuing building permits along private roads.
3. HB382: Prohibits municipalities from requiring more than 1 space per dwelling unit.
4. HB399: Establishing a commission to study the New Hampshire zoning enabling act and relative to the effective date of the C-PACER program.

Discussion: S. Saunders stated that the NH Planners Association (NHPA) reached out to the bill sponsors; there are no planners on the commission and NHPA was not included in discussions. NHPA is organizing to attend meetings and can provide feedback as more is learned. Typically, NHPA is invited to the hearings to participate and collaborate.

5. HB413: Relative to subdivision regulations on the completion of improvements and the regulation of building permits.
6. HB457: Relative to zoning restrictions on dwelling units
7. HB504: Relative to the state energy policy
8. HB577: Relative to modifying the definition of ADUs
9. HB631 Permitting residential building in commercial zoning.
- 10.HB682: relative to the office of offshore wind industry, the offshore and port development commission, and the office of energy innovation.
- 11.HB685: Permitting in all residentially zoned areas by right the construction of manufactured housing. Discussion: J. Czysz stated this is now dead
- 12.HB690: Directing the department of energy to investigate the state's withdrawal from ISO-New England and other strategy decisions that impact ratepayers in relation to New England's environmental policy.
- 13.SB78: Relative to the zoning board of adjustments appeal period.
14. SB84: Relative to zoning procedures concerning residential housing.
- 15.SB174: Prohibiting planning boards from considering the number of bedrooms a given unit or development has during the hearing and approval process.
16. SB188: Relative to the state building code.

Discussion: S. Saunders stated that the other thing that this bill does is make the timelines for municipal review of building permits and certificates of occupancy very short. That would put a burden on municipalities on their planning and building departments and boards.

17. SB272: Relative to electric vehicle charging station funding.
18. SB281 Prohibiting municipalities from denying building or occupancy permits for property adjacent to class VI roads under certain circumstances.

Discussion: S. Buckly stated it does not prohibit a town from having a zoning ordinance that mandates frontage on a class V road, which would still require a variance from the ZBA. Anyone who wants to build on a class VI road and does not meet the frontage requirements may no longer have to get special permission from the select board, but they still have to get a variance from the ZBA.

19. SB282 Relative to stairway requirements in certain residential buildings

Discussion: A lot of urban areas only require one stairway. The state fire Marshall testified sprinkler systems are doing their job and mitigating risk.

20. SB284: Relative to authority for municipalities to regulate mandatory on-site parking requirements.

Discussion: S. Saunders explained that the New Hampshire Planners Association (NHPA) had offered to assist the drafters of the two bills in resolving technical issues. However, both NHPA and the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) were excluded from the process, which contributed to several technical problems. One notable issue is that some of the effective dates in the legislation do not align with town meeting schedules. As a result, many municipalities may find themselves without local regulations that comply with state law, placing them in a difficult position. These communities will likely require technical support from RPCs. Unfortunately, RPCs currently lack funding to provide this kind of technical assistance. J. Czysz stated that SRPC is working on a legislative toolkit.

It was noted that the Governor might veto the proposed state budget, and a continuing resolution would take effect. If this were the case would a “default budget” include the target block grants? Could the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) speed up the contracting process, allowing funds to be spent in the first month? Concerns were raised about the likelihood of the Commissioner approving the processing of those contracts or invoices.

Additionally, it was noted that in the House version of the budget, BEA lost both tourism funding and targeted block grant dollars. When Commissioner Caswell testified before the Senate, he advocated for the restoration of \$4 million in tourism funding.

4. Annual Business Meeting Items

a. FY2025 Financial Report

J. Czysz reported that the current checking account balance is \$7,461. The financial reports were prepared one week prior to this meeting. Since then, two payments have been processed—one for staff administration and one for website maintenance—totaling \$4,750.

Invoices have been sent to the Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to cover convening expenses for a total of \$971.18.

S. Buckley motioned to accept the FY2025 financial reports as presented. T. Moore seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote. The motion passed.

b. Annual Dues Assessment (\$1,000/RPC?)

S. Buckley motioned to approve the proposed \$1,000 annual dues assessment for each RPC \$1000.00. P. Griffith seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote. The motion passed.

- c. Contracts for Services for FY2026
 - Administrative Support (\$8,000)
 - Website/Communications (\$1,500)

J. Czysz stated the contracts are the same as FY25 with SRPC contracted for the administrative services for \$8,000 annually and CNHRPC contracted for the website and social media services for \$1,500 annually.

S. Buckley motioned to award the Administrative and Website/Social Media Contracts for FY2026 as stated. P. Griffith seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote. The motion passed.

d. FY 2026 Budget

J. Czysz stated the budget is the same as in the last few years:

NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions Proposed FY2026 Budget

Income:	
Membership Dues	\$9,000.00
Annual Convening RPC payments	\$1,250.00
Total	\$10,250.00
Expense:	
Staff Support	\$8,000.00
Website/Communications Support	\$1,500.00
Conferences/Support of Affiliate Activities	\$500.00
Annual Convening	\$1,250.00
Legislative Breakfast	\$0.00
Incidental Expenses	\$250.00
Total	\$11,500.00

<i>Check Register Balance as of 6/16/2025</i>	<i>\$7,461.39</i>
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S. Buckley motioned to approve the proposed FY2026 budget as presented. S. Saunders seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote. The motion passed.

Discussion ensued about the \$250 put aside for a legislative breakfast. S. Saunders stated the NHPA has partnered with NHARPC in the past on legislative breakfasts and the events were successful. Scheduling conflicts have been an issue. Staying within budget remains a consideration.

Some representatives are interested in knowing who we are; we need to build relationships with legislators, so they understand our value to communities. S.

Buckly suggested engaging with Denis Parker, former RPC Director and former lobbyist, who has strong connections. A presence at the beginning of the legislative session in January would help to get our message out. S. Saunders stated that the NHPA has used lobbyists, but the costs have quadrupled; they are currently exploring alternatives due to limited options.

The group was at a consensus to revisit the matter at the September meeting.

e. Election of Officers

S. Buckley presented the proposed slate of officers for FY 2026:

Peter Griffin-Chair

Bill Chaison-Vice Chair

Katrin Kasper-Treasurer

J. Czysz stated that Katrin Kasper is stepping down. SRPC commissioner Sarah Wrightsman, a new member to the NHARPC, accepted the nomination for the treasurer position.

S. Buckley announced he will be stepping down from the CNHRPC as of June 30.

S. Buckley motioned to nominate P. Griffin as Chair, Bill Chaison as Vice Chair, and Sarah Wrightsman as Treasurer. C. Robidoux seconded the motion. All members voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote. The motion passed.

f. Re-cap of Commissioner Convening

P Griffin stated he thought the Convening was a success and thanked the planning group and all involved for organizing. It was well organized, and the speakers were great.

4) Priorities for FY 2026

The group discussed priorities for fiscal year 2026:

- Build relationships.
- Show up as directors to the meetings.
- Members update their commissioners on the Association on what we talked about and the legislative updates.
- Presentations:
 - Present at conferences like NHMA, Primex, Housing, Field Events
 - Demonstrate a visual example of our projects and end product successes at conferences like the;
 - make the invisible visible.

- Partner with other organizations, to be more front and center in presentations and projects.
- Each RPC present a year in review.
- Submit 2 Town and City articles Resources for Volunteer Planners and How Investing in Regional Planning Gets Results to NHMA sessions.

The group discussed breaking up the location for meetings and was in consensus to keep the meetings centrally located in Concord

5) NHARPC - NHMA Partnership

a. Town & City Articles and Webinars

Investment and transit and mobility management is due July 25. Megan sends out reminders a month before and will start to send reminders a week before.

J. Czysz stated that the RPC directors come up with a list and present it at the NHARPC meeting.

Suggestions for 2026 articles:

- SRPC's Housing and Habitats Webinar
- Highlight work of RPC's
- Public engagement generally, surveys
- Hazard Mitigation/current funding opportunities
- Natural resources inventory/story maps
- Household hazardous waste
- Help communities to keep up to date on ordinances; wetlands
- Transportation/ TAP grants
- Follow up to a 10-year plan article from May/June; other grants available other than the Ten Year Plan
- Other types of circuit riders like housing navigators, resilience coordinators.

J. Czysz stated that she will present this list of ideas at the next RPC directors' meeting and come back with a revised list at the September NHARPC meeting.

6) RPC Updates

M. Tardiff reported that CNRPC is receiving more requests for circuit riders. He is also seeing towns are having difficulty retaining recording secretaries. The group discussed how the pool of skilled and trained planners is thin; less are entering the field. Often Land Use Clerks make up for the lack of planners. Suggest we look into a shared pool of planners.

The committee thanked Jerry Coogan for his run as Chair.

7) Public Comment

There was no public comment

8) Adjourn

Following a motion and a second, all members voted in favor of adjourning. The meeting ended at 2:50PM.