

North Country Council Representatives Meeting

August 24, 2016

Mt Eustis Commons, 1st Floor Meeting Room, 262 Cottage Street, Littleton, N.H.

Minutes

Present:

Earl Sires, Conway
Rob Nadler, Albany
Vicki DeLalla, Stratford
Carl Martland, Sugar Hill
Linda Lauer, Bath/Grafton County
Jo Lacaillade, Haverhill
Charles Goulet, Stratford
Sam Chase, Whitefield
Sandra Butson, Lisbon
Neil McIver, Plymouth
Bill Andreas, Randolph
Elizabeth Ruediger, Dummer
Chris Thayer, Sugar Hill
Barbara Robinson, Executive Director
Regan Pride, staff
James Steele, staff
Tara Bamford, staff
Michelle Moren-Grey, staff
Kevin McKinnon, staff
Kaela Gray, staff

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:05 by President Bill Andreas and introductions made. Barbara introduced NCC's newest planner, Kaela Gray.
2. The minutes of March 30, 2016 were approved as presented by motion of Chase/DeLalla.
3. The Proposed Bylaws dated 8-07-16 were adopted unanimously by motion of Sires/Chase with the following edits:
 - Delete last sentence Section III.01 regarding map, b/c different subregions are used for different purposes.

- In Section IV.03 change “towns” to “communities” or “municipalities” b/c the region also includes one city, Berlin.
- In Section IV.06 change “towns” to “communities” or “municipalities.”
- In Section V.02 add “if any” so the third sentence will now read: “In counties, Commissioners are nominated by the Planning Board, if any, and appointed by the County Commissioners.” (Only one county has a planning board.)
- Change the first sentence in Section V.04 to read: “The terms of office of each Commissioner shall be four years.” (To be consistent with state law.)
- In the first sentence of Section VII.02 add “and” after the comma.
- In Section VII.05 change the word “responsibility” to “oversight.” Vicki suggested this was a more accurate word for the Treasurer role since what she does is verify that all of the right steps have happened before she signs checks. Bill noted that all four officers are authorized check signers.
- In Section IX.01 add North Country Scenic Byway Council to the list of committees not appointed by the Board. Tara explained that the Byway Council had historically been an NCC committee.

4. The FY17 workplan and budget was discussed. Barbara presented the budget and explained that it reflects the scenario where all possible projects come in. Spending is adjusted with the amount of work. The budget provides for additional staff capacity in case it is needed. She showed the organizational chart and said the goal has been to reduce the administrative staffing level and put more emphasis on planning staff to maximize service to communities.

Staff briefly described each of the projects they are responsible for in the proposed workplan. Michelle reported that she has been exploring the opportunity to partner with an area educational institution to continue working with the region’s businesses to promote economic resilience and sustainability. A new activity is administration of Northern Borders grants by serving as the designated local development district. Six grants were awarded in the region in this round. Barbara and Bill gave an update on the success of the Dartmouth Regional Technology Center of which NCC is part owner. Tara reported on the Coos County Trails Project being funded by USDA and Tillotson, and said discussions are underway with DRED to fund a portion as well. James reported on transportation. Ten towns are submitting applications to NHDOT for Transportation Alternatives Program funds. Next they will be ranked by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The 154 traffic counts for NHDOT are almost completed. This summer staff inventoried culverts throughout the Ammonoosuc watershed in partnership with NH Fish and Game and Plymouth State University. Regan reported that USDA solid waste grant funds have been awarded to enable those services to be continued. Tara and Kaela reported on several planning projects for towns.

On the budget handout, James explained that a correction had been made in the budget after it was sent out. It was noted that the loan payments weren't shown. James explained that NCC's accounting consultants Crane & Bell had given the direction that they should not be included in the budget. Bill noted that while the CDFA line of credit reflect cash flow timing, the BFA loan and payments to NHDOT through the Attorney General's office are significant. He suggested that the budget adoption wait until the next meeting after staff have a chance to ask Crane & Bell why they recommended not showing the loan payments on the expense side of the budget when they need to be paid from the revenue side.

To enable the Executive Director to sign any agreements needed before the next meeting, the workplan was approved as presented by motion of DeLalla/Nadler with the deletion of the Haverhill hazard mitigation plan which went to a private consultant.

5. Barbara announced that the annual dinner meeting will be held on Thursday October 27 at the Common Man in Plymouth. The speaker will be Donald Birx, the new President of Plymouth State University. A brief business meeting may be needed as well to continue the budget discussion.

6. Regan gave the attached presentation on solid waste management in the region and the services NCC provides to members with the USDA funding. Regan emphasized that the current generation rate is expected to exceed capacity in the state by 2022. No new landfills are planned in N.H. This makes waste reduction through things like recycling and composting critical. Regan also reported that although costs vary a lot from town to town, they are in general going up, making it even more important to be creative and work together.

7. Bill invited Commissioners to suggest future roundtable topics and said they should guide future agendas. Neil reported that Plymouth has been trying to plan for economic development but transportation is a stumbling block in his opinion. The incubator needs an associated business park for businesses to grow into. James mentioned that a pilot safety study may be possible on Tenney Mountain Highway. Sam reported that Whitefield is working on getting the airport operating at a higher level. It hasn't been working like a regional airport. A fly-in event is planned in October. Earl reported that 2 Northern Borders grants have been awarded to the projects at the Fryeburg airport, one for each state served, but N.H. needs to recognize Fryeburg as the major airport serving east-central N.H. Carl gave an update on the North Country Scenic Byway Council and plans to apply next time for Northern Borders funds for signs and pull-off improvements. He said the committee has intervenor status in the Northern Pass SEC process and his assessment of the viewshed analysis is going to be taken into account in the EIS process for the Presidential Permit.

Bill reminded members that we need to know what the needs are so we can focus our project development accordingly. He noted that as a large area with few people it helps to have a unified voice. Barbara added as a reminder that she or other staff can be available to visit planning and selectboards to discuss opportunities and issues of concern to the community.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tara Bamford.

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