



Thursday, December 15, 2022, | 2:00 to 4:00 pm

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ben Gaetjens-Oleson, Vice Chair; Jennifer Fish, Treasurer; Mark Decoteau, Secretary; Mark Dindorf

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Moren-Grey, Executive Director; James Steele, Finance Manager & Special Projects Planner

Call to Order

Vice Chair Gaetjens-Oleson, in the absence of Chair Robitaille, called the meeting to order at 12:05. It was noted that Chair Robitaille was participating in the NH OHRV Study Commission and unable to attend the BOD meeting.

Attendance

Roll call was taken.

Minutes Approval

- 10/20/2022 Minutes

MOTION to approve minutes as presented with the correction of the dollar figure under audit review \$250,00 to \$250,000. Member Dindorf moved to approve 10/20/2022 minutes. It was seconded by Treasurer Fish.

The motion carried - 3 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention (Decoteau)

- 11/07/2022 Minutes

MOTION to approve minutes as presented Secretary Decoteau moved to approve 11/07/2022 minutes. It was seconded by Member Dindorf.

The motion carried - 2 in favor/0 opposed/2 abstention (Decoteau and Dindorf)

Financial

- Review of Financials November 2022

James Steele provided an overview and snapshot of the financials. It was noted that this month's dues were used due to large expenses under the UPWP contract for engineering consultant invoices, tires for the van, and investment in software, as well as more unbillable time related to the holiday. Discussion around the Council's fiscal year July to June and dues are invoiced with the calendar year. Dues for next year have been invoiced being due January.

Ms. Moren-Grey commented that the engineering invoice was for Ten Year Plan project submissions. HEB, the selected firm, will review the projects and develop cost estimates for further review and potential submission into the TYP.

Mr. Steele commented that in December, we expect to see the billable time decrease due to vacations and holidays.

Question regarding the current projects: Ms. Moren-Grey gave an overview of large projects.

- RHNA will be wrapping up in the next few months. This will be going to G&C for an extension to allow for the completion of BEA-hired consultant work needing to be integrated into the RHNA.
- EDA Partnership Planning grant is on track, and the 5-year draft CEDS will be completed in the upcoming month.
- NH Housing Employer workforce is on track.
- HOP grants 3 to 4. Anticipate formal contracts next month.
- Dalton's master plan is continuing to move along.
- Contract for mapping for the Tri-Town Bike project.
- Regional Plan work is anticipated to begin in January.
- NBRC LDD contracts.
- Maternity Deserts contract would potentially support work in identifying the economic impacts of the lack of OB, prenatal and pediatric care in the region.
- NBRC Predevelopment Grant will support technical assistance to NBRC grantees. Should have a contract in January.
- Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District Administration contract secured for 2023.
- EDA Collective Impact Project to further EDA CARES Act.
- CDS (Kuster Housing) will begin after HOP grants to continue that work, still pending paperwork and notice to proceed.

Question regarding CDBG: Ms. Moren-Grey commented that we are working on one in Conway. One grant at a time for CDBG's is good currently, depending on the type of project, recipient, and staff capacity.

Follow-up discussion on maternity Desert – Ms. Moren-Grey commented that this contract would be a subcontract, high-level look at the gaps in OB, prenatal care, and pediatric care in the region and potential impacts on economic growth. The only hospitals with a maternity department in the region are Littleton, Berlin, Plymouth, and Conway.

MOTION to accept the financials. Treasurer Fish moved to accept November 2022 financials. It was seconded by Member Dindorf.

The motion carried – 4 in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention.

Other Business

- Annual Commission Meeting January 18, 2023, 4 to 6 pm
Ms. Moren-Grey – meeting is scheduled for 1/18/2023, slate of officers. Treasurer Fish announced that she is leaving Coos County on March 31st, 2023. This will leave a vacancy for North Country Council's BOD, Treasurer.
Question about Commission Quorum and challenges we have meeting this. Can it be changed in the bylaws? – Ms. Moren-Grey commented that the last meeting was canceled due to the weather. The physical quorum is challenging for us and cannot be changed, according to NH RSA. We can look at the bylaws and other RPCs to see how we could change our bylaws to make this easier. A discussion was had about a possible change to a quorum of member municipalities with appointed members vs member municipalities (as it is now). The question was whether we have to have winter month meetings – Ms. Moren-Grey, typically, we have spring, June, August, and an October annual meeting, but we are off schedule this year due to a lack of quorum and weather challenges. We can also look into the timing of the annual meeting. June vs. October and potentially make this a change.
- Update on HB 1188
Steve Jackson from Gorham accepted the position. We have not had a report on activity; however, today may be the first meeting. Ms. Moren-Grey commented that she would reach out to Mr. Jackson for a report on the activity as this was part of the duties in the appointment by the Council.
- Project Update
This was completed earlier under financials.
- Mark Decoteau Commented – Waterville Valley received a HOP grant, and the acceptance letter from the state commended Kaela Tavares, North Country Council's Planner, and Tara Bamford, Consultant in the preparation of the application. Secretary Decoteau thanked Kaela for her work on this application. Additionally, mentioning that Waterville Valley is in continuous conversation with the USFS regarding housing.
- Mark Dindorf – commented on their experience with workforce housing (10 lots to be developed by Habitat for Humanity) and running up against opposition from adjacent neighborhoods to the development. There is a need to create and deliver upfront messaging regarding workforce housing. Had the developer known or anticipated this, opposition messaging may have assisted. A comment was made that as the RHNA is being finished, messaging to planning boards and communities could assist in this upfront understanding of housing terms and needs. Discussion regarding housing terminology and misunderstanding of types of housing development. Often the foundation at the onset of housing discussions is not laid with a shared understanding of terminology. The Council recently supported one community's conversation with a housing data snapshot – this can be developed for others.

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (if needed)

None was needed

Public Comment

Vice Chair Gaetjens-Oleson asked for public comment – there was none.

Adjournment

MOTION: Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Treasurer Fish

The meeting adjourned at 2:53

Respectfully Submitted,
Michelle Moren-Grey, Executive Director