



MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
August 18, 2004
(Revised)

Present: John Eresian, Chair
Kathy Hersh, Vice Chair
Howard Dilworth, Jr.
Nelson Disco
Marilyn Peterman
Mike Fimbel
Frank Bolmarcich
Andy Prolman

Members Absent: Bill Parker

Others Present: Stephen Williams, Executive Director

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Williams handed out a revised agenda including a new policy item. The Chair asked if committee would agree to take the administrative items first and handle the policy items afterward. Members of the committee indicated their assent.

Minutes of the June 16, 2004 Executive Committee Meeting

The minutes of the June 16, 2004 meeting were reviewed by the members of the Executive Committee. No additions or changes were requested. Motion by Peterman, second by Disco to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Minutes of the July 5, 2004 Special Executive Committee Meeting

The minutes of the July 5, 2004 meeting were reviewed by the members of the Executive Committee. Members made the comment that the discussion as reflected in the minutes dealt with personnel issues that should have resulted in the Executive Committee moving into closed session. Motion by Hersh, second by Prolman to approve the minutes.

The suggestion was made that most of the detailed personnel information could be deleted without reducing the usefulness of the minutes as a record of the meeting. Motion to amend the motion to remove the appropriate section was made by Disco, seconded by Fimbel. Motion to amend passed. With no further discussion the main motion to approve the minutes passed.

FY04 Year End Fiscal Report

Williams called the attention of the committee to the FY04 Year-End Fiscal Report. He noted that for the year, NRPC showed a profit of \$81,964.90. Williams directed the attention of the committee to the Local Dues column and noted that most of the increase was due to the fact that the agency did not spend \$39,160.48 in Local Dues. He also pointed out that the agency had a deficit of \$29,283.30 on Local Planning Contracts. Williams stated that this was a yearly occurrence and reflected the agency's use of local funds to subsidize local planning work. Although this happens on most of the local planning contracts he said that the circuit rider contracts were the ones that received the biggest subsidy. After discussion the members of the committee directed Williams to work with the communities on increasing the circuit rider contracts.

FY05 Revenue Analysis

Williams called the attention of the committee to the table provided. He explained that the table represented all the contracts NRPC currently had or contracts for which there were commitments but not



actually signed contracts yet. Williams explained the meaning of each column and pointed out that the last column, headed "Balance Remaining" represented the total funds available to actually keep the agency functioning by paying staff and covering agency overhead costs. He also pointed out the fact that nearly all the contracts would expire in the course of the year. He stated that some would be carried over, but that most would need to be replaced. Williams assured the committee that this was the normal situation at the agency and in fact was normal at all agencies of this type. Members of the committee asked a number of questions regarding the information and what it showed regarding the financial condition of the agency. The Executive Committee agreed that it was good information and thanked Williams for providing it.

Report on Hiring Status

Williams reported that he felt things were going well for filling vacant positions. He stated that the GIS Planner had been hired and started work on August 16. He also was in the reference checking and negotiation stage with a GIS Manager candidate. And he, Eresian and Hersh would interview an Assistant Director candidate on Friday afternoon.

Administrative Policy Setting Process

Williams called the attention of the members of the committee to the memorandum submitted to them by Martin Michaelis, Commissioner from Amherst. He stated that he agreed the June meeting had become excessively focused on a minute examination of the details of proposed administrative items. Williams handed out copies of the agendas from Commission meetings in the last two years. He stated that he felt that those agendas showed that the agency had one meeting each year that was very administrative in nature - the June meeting.

Dilworth stated that he felt that if the Executive Committee had had the opportunity to review the administrative items over the course of several months prior to the June meeting that there might have been less of an issue at that meeting. Other members of the committee stated that they believed that they were concerned about some of the attitudes in evidence at the meeting and the fact that those attitudes were inconsistent with the attitudes of cooperation and mutual concern that typified NRPC meetings.

Communication from Selectman Cynthia Herman of Milford regarding NRPC Position on Formation of Merrimack Valley Regional Water District

Williams handed out letters that arrived that day from Selectman Cynthia Herman, chair of the Milford Board of Selectmen to each of the members of the Executive Committee. Williams explained the background. He stated that at the PUC preconference hearing on the Nashua valuation request for the Pennichuck water utilities he was called upon as an intervenor to state the agencies position on whether the Merrimack Regional Water District should receive full intervenor status. He stated that he understood the agency's policy to be support for the regional water district, and so he had stated that to the PUC. Immediately after he said that Selectman Herman had asked him why he took a position, stating that he had been directed to only participate as an intervenor to collect information. Williams replied that he had been directed to participate in the process as an intervenor to collect information but not forbidden from taking positions that were consistent with NRPC policy. Williams then stated that Selectman Herman had brought up this issue with the Milford Board of Selectmen at their meeting on August 16 and that was the reason for the letter.

Williams asked the Executive Committee if he correctly understood that it was the agency policy to support the formation of the regional water district. The Executive Committee agreed that was correct. Williams also asked if he had acted correctly in stating that position before the PUC, or if the Executive Committee would prefer that he remain silent. The members of the Executive Committee agreed that was appropriate and that they would have done the same thing.



Williams asked the Executive Committee what they wanted him to do. A motion was made by Peterman and seconded by Disco directing that Williams and Eresian send a letter with minutes of appropriate meetings responding to Milford's concerns. Motion passed.

Economic Development Initiative

Williams reviewed the memorandum on the Economic Development Initiative. He stated that this was something that Singelakis had started in the last two years prior to his departure and that Williams picked it up when he became Executive Director. Williams described the strategy that he, Doug Brown of GIDC and Ricia Velasco of DRED had developed for increasing awareness of economic development on the regional level.

Members of the Executive Committee questioned the need for a focus on Economic Development. Other members expressed concern regarding the involvement of NRPC with GIDC. Williams stated that he felt there was a regional role in Economic Development and that the strategy he had outlined was fairly consistent with the manner in which it was practiced in other areas of the country. Members of the committee suggested that it was not appropriate to do an economic development presentation at the September 1 meeting without further information for the Executive Committee and further discussion. Williams suggested that he invite Brown and Velasco to attend the October 20 Executive Committee meeting to discuss the issues with the Executive Committee. The members of the Executive Committee agreed to the suggestion.

Adjourn

Williams reminded the committee that the next meeting would be on September 1 and that the main item would be a review of the draft NRPC audit with the auditor. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.