



MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
August 16, 2006

Present: Kathy Hersh, Chair
Nelson Disco, Treasurer
Howard Dilworth
John Eresian
Mike Fimbel
Ray Peeples

Staff: Stephen Williams, Executive Director
Kerrie Diers, Assistant Director

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hersh at 6:00 pm.

II. Approval of the Minutes of June 21, 2006:

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Disco, and seconded by Eresian.
Motion passed unanimously.

III. Finance Report and Balance Sheet for June 2006:

Williams discussed the June reports. This represents the end of year figures, however they are unaudited, so may change somewhat after the audit is complete. The auditor is scheduled for the end of August. Williams distributed an overview of income and expenses for the FY 2006. One item of note is that NRPC loses money on local contracts. This has been a policy that has been in place at NRPC for quite some time, and may need to be reexamined in light of the losses that are being incurred. The hourly rate no longer covers the overhead costs. Discussion ensued regarding better communication about what dues cover, and the need to publicize all of the great things that NRPC does for the communities.

Discussion also ensued regarding the Hollis Circuit Rider contract. The Executive Committee directed the Executive Director to draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen indicating that NRPC would not renew the contract at the end of the calendar year.

Dilworth made a motion to increase the hourly rates for services to \$55.00 per hour effective September 1, 2006. Peeples seconded the motion. Discussion on the motion centered on the idea that this is a temporary measure until the Executive Director can develop a rate system. The motion passed with one vote in opposition.

IV. Personnel Report:

NRPC has hired Jill Simonetti as our Public Outreach Coordinator. She is originally from New England, comes to us most recently from North Carolina, where she has been the public outreach coordinator for the Conservation Fund and Peachtree-Pear Preserve.

Interviews for the Principal Planner position will be held in September.

V. Integrating Land Use and Transportation (iTRaC):

Diers provided an overview of the new program that will be rolled out at the September Full Commission Meeting. This program strives to implement the NH Smart Growth Principles and ensure better coordination of transportation and land use practices. The end result is a different way of planning that aims at better communities. More information will be distributed at the September meeting.

**VI. Regional Water Supply Study:**

There are two studies that NRPC is exploring in collaboration with Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission. The first is a study of the Merrimack River from the Lakes Region to the MA border. This would be a model that shows the flows in and out of the River and focuses on quality and quantity. This deals mainly with surface water supply issues.

The second study is a groundwater/aquifer study that would investigate the amount that could be withdrawn from aquifers and seeks to answer the question: How much growth can the region support before there is a problem? There is funding for the first year of study but more work is needed to solicit funding for the rest of the project.

VII. Legislative Committee on the 10 Year Transportation Plan:

Williams updated the Committee on the work of the Legislative Committee on the 10 Year Transportation Plan. This is the committee that was created by the last 10 Year Plan bill approved by the NH Legislature. It is looking into ways to improve the 10 Year Plan process. One thing that they have been investigating is an increase in the state gas tax of up to 10 cents per gallon. The legislative committee has discussed the idea of allocate the funding to be programmed by the RPCs. This could benefit the regions and provide a more equitable distribution of funding statewide. The MPOs are in favor of an allocation, but the rural planning commissions are undecided about the benefits of an allocation system. The allocation would split the funding to the 9 RPCs in the state on a formula based on population and eligible road miles. This would provide a local input on improvements and the distribution of projects within a region. This could also result in better working relationships and status for RPCs in the state. Williams is looking for direction from the Executive Committee on this.

The discussion had several points:

- There should be a cohesive position from the 9 RPCs in the state. Is there a middle ground where all 9 would agree?
- We should take the opportunity to make an allocation for public transportation / transit in the allocation process for alternative transportation modes.
- The Executive Committee needs to understand the process better before they can take a position.

VIII. Consideration of Future Facilities Alternatives:

A subcommittee of Hersh, Peebles and Fimbel was formed in May, and will convene to review any proposals, conduct interviews and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee.

IX. Possible request from the Town of Mason:

There has been no action on this item.

X. Other Business:

Chair Hersh initiated a conversation regarding the expectations of Executive and Full Commission meetings, length of meeting and the topics on the agendas. The discussion points that were made include:

- All Executive Committee meetings and topics are worthwhile. There are good policy discussions about the issues.
- Staff presentations at Full Commission meetings are somewhat lengthy and need to be shorter. The Round Table should be expanded but in a directed way, not open for every thing going on in the community, but more specifically planning related or even "What do you think about XXX?" or "How does X affect my community?" Communities could be guest speakers to present interesting/innovative projects or approaches to issues in their communities.



- There should be an old business section on the Executive Committee Agendas to be able to track unresolved issues.
- The Executive Committee would like to see a calendar of annual action items that the Full Commission needs to vote on in a two year cycle to understand what business items need to be taken care of at each Commission Meeting.

XI. Adjourn:

Disco made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Peeples. The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm

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