

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Minutes

April 30, 2018

Present:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Julie Potter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laura Hill-Eubanks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Gray
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dara Torre	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Lotspeich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don La Haye
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Byron Atwood		

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand

Guests: None

Chair J. Potter called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Public Comment

None.

Financial Report

B. Waninger advised CVRPC remains on track to achieve its FY18 goals. The Committee discussed the potential net income, possible reserve contributions, how reserve contributions are reflected in the budget, and the effects of accrual versus cash budgeting. Waninger described how future budgets would reflect reserve contributions. Budget adoption includes adopting reserve fund goals.

B. Atwood and L. Hill-Eubanks entered at 4:05 pm.

S. Lotspeich moved to accept the financial report with change to net income at the end of Revenue / Expenses to reflect the reserve contribution; M. Gray seconded. Motion carried.

Contract/Agreement Authorization

Potter noted no contracts/agreements needed authorized. B. Waninger advised CVRPC was not awarded a Brownfield grant. The Committee discussed the brownfields grant process.

2016 Regional Plan Update

Waninger summarized subsequent events to the Board's decision to prohibit wind above 2500 feet. The implication would be a similar prohibition of development above 2500 feet for all development. The Regional Plan Committee recommends the Board modify Regional Energy Plan language to match Regional Plan language, which "discourages" rather than "prohibits" development above 2500 feet.

L. Hill-Eubanks asserted some types of development could be prohibited and others not. B. Waninger noted that if wind is prohibited such a prohibition would apply to cell towers and other development above 2500 feet. As part of Act 174, the Public Service Department (PSD) developed guidelines to be certified. Energy cannot be treated differently than other types of development.

A public hearing is not required to change the Regional Energy Plan. Two hearings are required for Regional Plan; one was held in April.

The PSD also commented on CVRPC's wind tower hub height limit. State energy guidelines define three wind hub heights – 30 m residential, 50 m commercial, 70 m utility scale. 116 feet is in the middle of residential and commercial heights. The PSD suggested CVRPC either choose a predefined height or clarify its language. Staff will have more visuals and details for presentation to Board at the upcoming Board meeting to help understand and address the height issue as it pertains to the Regional Plan.

The Committee requested information about the implementation if Commissioners need additional time to discuss these issues. Waninger said municipal energy plans cannot be certified after 7/1/18 unless CVRPC has a certified Regional Plan. It does not appear that any municipalities are ready for certification. Calais is the closest to energy plan completion.

Waninger noted that the year 1 municipalities (Waterbury, East Montpelier, and Barre Town) are not ready to send plans to the Selectboard for adoption consideration. If this does not occur by August 31, CVRPC will not earn the product-based payment related to work with these three towns (\$2,040 total).

Strategic Plan FY19 Actions

Waninger reviewed changes from the last draft and discussed staff input. M. Gray requested towns be incorporated into the project management training. B. Waninger indicated the initial training will be internal at a staff meeting. CVRPC could make it available to towns once the "dry run" is complete. L. Hills-Eubank requested Friends of the Winooski River be added to regional partners on page 20, line 8.

Discussion ensued as to whether the document is an internal document or not. Previously it has not been published on the website. It will, however, be incorporated into the Performance Review process for 2019. B. Waninger will finalize the document for review and adoption next month.

FY19 Work Plan & Budget

This is the Committee's first review of the Work Plan and second review of the Budget. The Work Plan format was adjusted this year to increase understanding of what CVRPC does and how it is funded. Waninger provided an overview of the document.

D. Torre requested an addition for Moretown as outlined on page 26 to add Phase II River Corridor. She has discussed the need with E. Vorwald.

S. Lotspeich had a question on page 32 regarding staffing. This is to be addressed.

J. Potter requested an amendment on page 31 – last paragraph. Amend to “. . . with several large contracts ending, natural resource funds are decreasing. They continue to be a strong part of the Commission’s work program.”

B. Waninger also provided an overview of the Draft Budget, indicating shaded items are risk areas (page 36, lines 3, 24, 36, 39 & 52) and why. From an expense perspective, it is a very tight budget. No professional development will be undertaken unless required by a contract. Some dues were also removed. It is still a deficit budget.

J. Potter noted that since it is expected CVRPC is to have sizable net income at end of FY18, could reserves be prepaid to cover anticipated FY19 deficit? B. Waninger said it could be. She noted the reserve fund amount is only one month’s worth of payroll versus the recommended six months of operating costs. She recommended not using reserves to fund the gap if possible. She noted the Committee could adopt a deficit budget at the fiscal year start and adjust for a different decision at the mid-year budget adjustment. She is looking for guidance at this time. The Committee supported adopting a deficit budget, which allowed at least six months for the Commission to close the budget gap.

B. Atwood questioned the reduction in ACCD funds from FY18 to FY19. Waninger explained that FY18 was inflated artificially by a FY17 carryover. Carryover is not anticipated for FY19. Also, CVRPC’s ACCD funds decrease by 3-5% annually due to lack of growth regionally compared to other areas of the state. Atwood also questioned Community Development. Waninger said the brownfields consultant budget was ~\$229,000 in FY18 versus \$78,000 for FY19. Swings are also due to energy projects ending.

There was limited grant writing in FY17 which results in a dip in revenue for FY19. More grants will be written in FY19 which will help in the future, but not so much for FY19 revenue.

Committees

Personnel Policy Review: The FY18 budget included attorney review of the Personnel Policy Manual after CVRPC’s attorney provided a cursory review with recommendations. Waninger noted the review should begin shortly. Reaffirming the Personnel Policy Review Committee membership would assist with reviewing any recommended changes to the Policy. The first Committee meeting would be after 7/1/18. J. Potter, S. Lotspeich, and L. Hill-Eubanks all agreed to serve again.

B. Atwood moved to reappoint J. Potter, S. Lotspeich, and L. Hill-Eubanks to the Personnel Policy Review Committee; D. La Haye seconded. Motion carried.

Regional Plan: The Committee has difficulty achieving quorum and was uncertain of its membership. Staff research regarding membership was outlined in the meeting memo. Currently, there is one vacant Commissioner seat and of the five appointed organizations only one seat is filled.

L. Hill-Eubanks indicated it is difficult to get organizations to show up regularly and achieve quorum. She suggested membership be five Commissioners. Outside groups could be invited to offer input and advice as needed, similar to the initial Regional Plan element workgroups. It was noted that non-voting members still impact quorum. Upon inquiry, B. Waninger advised that Scott Bascom

(VTrans) would be fine with dropping off the Committee. With regard to the Plan, Land Use, Implementation, Compatibility Statement, and Natural Resource components still need to be addressed. Overall consistency and conciseness of language needs to be addressed in the 300-page plan. The goals need to be reviewed, consolidated, and strengthened for consistency.

Clare Rock will staff Plan Central Vermont and the Regional Plan Committee in FY19.

S. Lotspeich supported the change in membership to five Commissioners with interest organizations in an advisory role. He recommended addressing appointments length. Waninger said the goal is to provide the Commission with a draft by 06/30/19. Lotspeich recommended a two-year commitment.

S. Lotspeich moved to recommend to the Board that the Regional Plan Committee member consist of five Commissioners with a term length of two years; M Gray seconded. Motion carried.

The Committee requested an opportunity to discuss recommendations prior to Board appointments.

Consent Items

B. Atwood moved to approve the consent agenda as presented; L. Hill-Eubanks seconded. Motion carried.

Commission Meeting Agenda

D. Torre will not be at the Commission meeting due to a work commitment. M. Gray volunteered to address Elections. L. Hill-Eubanks requested staff include the Committee appointment table in the Commission packet. The Committee requested CVRPC Committees be moved up on the agenda and the time be adjusted to allow more time for the Regional Energy Plan discussion.

L. Hill-Eubanks moved to approve the Commission meeting agenda with changes; S. Lotspeich seconded. Motion carried.

Executive Session – Personnel

J. Potter requested a short update from staff in executive session.

B. Atwood moved to find that premature general public knowledge of the personnel discussion would place CVRPC at a disadvantage; D. Torre seconded. Motion carried.

B. Atwood moved to enter executive session at 6:00 pm; seconded by M Gray. Motion carried.

D. Torre moved to exit executive session at 6:28 pm; B. Atwood seconded. Motion carried.

No action was taken.

Adjourn

D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 6:28 pm; B. Atwood seconded. Motion carried.