

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Executive Committee**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**July 6, 2020 Meeting**

Present:

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Julie Potter  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laura Hill-Eubanks | <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Gray             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dara Torre    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Lotspeich    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janet Shatney |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gerry D'Amico |  |   |

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand

Guests: George Clain, Barre Town CVRPC Alternate

**Call to Order**

Chair Hill-Eubanks called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

None

**Public Comment**

None

**Contract/Agreement Authorization**

Hill-Eubanks directed the Committee to the information in the packet.

Department of Public Safety – EMPG 2019 Amendment 2 - B. Waninger provided additional information as to the need for the amendment. She noted it was a simple amendment adjusting in kind match to be properly allocated in the salary and benefits line item and the indirect costs line item; which is how it was intended initially.

*J. Shatney moved to approve having the Executive Director sign the grant agreement amendment; J. Potter seconded. Motion carried.*

Biggestone Investments – Office Lease Extension - Waninger advised the information in the packet included the proposed amendment as well as the original lease and subsequent extensions. The term for notification has been changed from one year to 90-days for this one-year extension as we requested. There was question regarding potential improvements to the building. It was noted this will be discussed further as we approach negotiation in the future.

*G. D'Amico moved to approve having the Executive Director sign the lease extension; J. Shatney seconded. Motion carried.*

1 Hill-Eubanks also directed the Committee to the informational only contract amendments in the packet.  
2 Included was an addition of \$5,000 for the Working Communities Grant for use to address COVID-19.  
3 Waninger also advised that the Milone and McBroom addendum outlines a site that is being added to  
4 their approved Master Agreement, for two stormwater designs in East Calais.  
5

### 6 **Regional Plan Amendment**

7 Hill-Eubanks directed the Committee to the information in the packet. Prior to COVID-19 the public  
8 hearing process was being initiated for an amendment to the current Regional Plan, pulling out the  
9 regional housing element due to numbers being based on the 2010 census; and to adjust the future land  
10 use map to better correspond with the regional land use planning designation. There was question as to  
11 whether this information has been presented to the entire Board. D. Torre confirmed it was presented  
12 to the entire Board; which was concurred by Hill-Eubanks. There had been discussion to have Mike  
13 Miller of the City of Montpelier participate in the public hearing to answer any questions raised  
14 regarding Montpelier's designation. S. Lotspeich advised he believed having Miller participate was a  
15 good idea. It was confirmed staff would try to have Miller present at the hearing. Waninger  
16 recommended the Commission initiate the hearing process and confirmed there are two hearings held  
17 as part of the process. It was requested that as part of the first hearing there be a short recap  
18 presentation similar to what was presented previously to the Board. It was confirmed that C. Rock  
19 would give the general presentation at the hearing. It was also confirmed that in February the  
20 Commission voted to move to the public hearing process, and hearings were scheduled, however,  
21 COVID-19 interrupted that process.  
22

23 *J. Potter moved to approve proceeding with the hearings to amend the Regional Plan. D. Torre*  
24 *seconded. Motion carried.*  
25

### 26 **Retirement Benefit**

27 Waninger updated the Committee of a retirement error that was alerted at the last meeting. The  
28 current Personnel Policy outlines that the retirement benefit is only for full-time employees. Waninger  
29 advised that three part-time employees are currently being paid this benefit outside of the Personnel  
30 Policy, as it was included in their employment offers in error. Waninger advised she would like a  
31 discussion as to how to address the benefits currently offered to existing staff. There was confirmation  
32 that these benefits start after 12 months of service. It was questioned that if this benefit was  
33 terminated for part-time staff, what would happen to the funds that had accrued. It was confirmed the  
34 employees would keep the funds. It was also confirmed the current employer contribution is 5% of  
35 employee's salary and that only the employer contributes to this type of plan, not the employee. It was  
36 further noted that the company now offers a 457B benefit that employees only contribute to; with no  
37 employer contribution.  
38

39 J. Potter suggested grandfathering in those part-time employees who are currently receiving the  
40 benefit; and further advised it is not standard to make retirement benefits solely tied to full-time (40)  
41 hours. Lotspeich agreed and asked if the Personnel Policy should be amended to do so. Waninger  
42 advised that ideally an amendment would be completed, however, a motion could be passed to address  
43 until the policy can be amended, which would be an exception to the personnel policy. It was noted  
44 that a Personnel Policy review had been initiated prior to COVID-19, however that process is currently  
45 on hold. Discussion ensued as to how best to move forward with addressing the situation and if the

1 Personnel Policy Review Committee should restart. It was agreed to move forward with a resolution  
2 and then have the Personnel Policy Review Committee further discuss the issue when they resume  
3 meeting.

4  
5 *J. Potter made a motion to resolve to make an exception based on offers made to current part-time*  
6 *employees, which would allow part-time employees (24 hours/week minimum) to continue the benefit*  
7 *until the policy can be finalized to address the full-time status. G. D'Amico seconded. Motion carried.*  
8

## 9 **FY21 Budget**

10 Hill-Eubanks directed the Committee to the information in the packet. Waninger advised the proposed  
11 FY21 budget is based on ACCD input, current contracts, and expected State contract allocations. She  
12 advised she expects an adjustment will be needed when the State updates their budget in September,  
13 as currently the Legislature has only approved a 3-month budget for the State.

14  
15 Waninger explained in more detail the alternate budget scenarios outlined in the packet and the  
16 potential implications of anticipated shortfalls that may arise out of expected budget adjustments at the  
17 State level. The four main areas that Regional Planning Commission directors anticipate adjustments  
18 are: a reduction in the state allocation of 20-25%; TPI in-kind match amended from 10% to 20%; Agency  
19 of Natural Resources could pause clean water efforts, which would reduce or eliminate multiple  
20 contracts; and agencies are signaling they would like RPC's to be involved in COVID-19 recovery and  
21 response activities, however, it is unknown where these funds would be underwritten, so there is  
22 potential the costs of providing these services may need to be partially funded by the RPCs.

23  
24 She also reviewed grants and contracts that may serve to augment current revenues:

- 25 • VT DEC Clean Water Service Provider
- 26 • US EDA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- 27 • Town of Middlesex Zoning Update
- 28 • VT Agency of Administration Coronavirus Relief Fund RPC Municipal Assistance

29  
30 Discussion ensued about potential program and staffing changes that may need to occur as related to  
31 each budget scenario presented in the packet. It was noted that with regard to our Land Use Program  
32 and town assistance, we would honor current commitments, but may have to limit or delay future  
33 commitments. It was confirmed that ACCD is awaiting our organizational budget in order to issue our  
34 FY21 contract, and it is expected that they will include a caveat that based on State budgeting they  
35 reserve the right to reduce the award.

36  
37 Waninger advised this scenario planning is done so we can start thinking about the "what ifs" before  
38 they need to be instituted in order to consider how to approach any necessary changes.

39  
40 Lotspeich noted that many municipalities have used furloughs to address budgeting issues to date; and  
41 inquired if Waninger has looked at any furlough scenarios. She advised that we have currently done this  
42 with two staff who each chose to cut their hours by 8 hours/week.

1 It was confirmed the budget presented for approval assumes normal flow of funds from ACCD and does  
2 not address any of the four scenarios outlined above. Waninger advised that page 25 in packet  
3 highlights contracts considered 'at risk' due to concern that the State may ultimately adjust their funding  
4 of those contracts. She noted the proposed budget is conservative (light on revenues, heavy on  
5 expenses) to allow for more flexibility in any necessary adjustments and reiterated that she expects a  
6 budget adjustment will be necessary based on State budgeting.

7  
8 G. Clain inquired if the word "not" was missing on page 20, and Waninger confirmed it was and should  
9 read "Vtrans has not offered. . . ." Clain also inquired if she has heard anything about consolidating  
10 RPCs. Waninger advised this does not appear to be part of current conversation due to the assistance  
11 RPCs provide to both municipalities and state agencies.

12  
13 D. Torre noted if State agencies cut their own staff that they may need to rely on RPCs more to assist  
14 with their work. Waninger confirmed that traditionally when state funding is cut, they outsource to  
15 contractors and RPCs so this could be a potential scenario.

16  
17 With regard to a question raised about timeframe, Waninger advised she anticipates that 4-6 weeks  
18 after Legislature passes a 9-month budget, we will know from State agencies what their plans are.  
19 Therefore, it is likely we will need to adjust our budget by early November.

20  
21 There was question as to how much control ACCD has over how we use our funds. Waninger advised  
22 that for the most part, it is up to the Commission, however, there are specific tasks that must be  
23 completed as part of the contract, and some of these items may need to be renegotiated with any  
24 funding change.

25  
26 *G. D'Amico moved to adopt the CVRPC FY21 budget; J. Potter seconded.* D'Amico questioned why it was  
27 being approved now when we are already in FY21; Waninger advised it was delayed pending more  
28 certain information. He also inquired if the Board needed to adopt or just Executive Committee. It was  
29 confirmed just the Committee and a presentation would be made to the Board on the approved budget.  
30 Torre asked when we would see FY20 financials and if they have bearing on the budget. Waninger  
31 advised they do have bearing on the budget, and that she anticipates seeing 6/30/20 financials right  
32 before audit due to continuing to catch up on invoices. Based on what is anticipated for invoicing, she is  
33 comfortable with the budget presented. A vote was called. *Motion carried.*

34  
35 Waninger advised the work program is to focus on what we have committed to until we know what  
36 funding cuts may end up being with the State's 9-month budget. She advised that strategic goals  
37 revolve around financial stability and keeping staff morale intact while addressing potential shortfalls  
38 and providing as much service as possible.

39  
40 Lotspeich left the meeting at 5:35 pm. Quorum was still present.

#### 41 42 **Consent Items**

43 Hill-Eubanks directed the Committee to the information in the packet. No comments provided.  
44

1 *J. Shatney moved to approve the consent items including the minutes; D. Torre seconded. Motion*  
2 *carried.*

3  
4 **Commission Meeting Agenda**

5 Hill-Eubanks directed the Committee to the information in the packet. No questions from Committee on  
6 the agenda as presented. Waninger inquired as to how much budget scenario information should be  
7 presented at the Board meeting. There was consensus she advise she has several scenarios that have  
8 been thought through and shared with the Executive Committee, however, there is too much unknown  
9 information at this time to go into it further with the Board until more is known on the upcoming State  
10 budget.

11  
12 Hill-Eubanks raised question as to whether we would continue to hold remote meetings for the Board as  
13 she still is not comfortable trying to meet in person. Waninger advised she could include information  
14 about this in her Staff Report.

15  
16 *J. Shatney moved to approve the Board Meeting agenda as presented; J. Potter seconded. Motion*  
17 *carried.*

18  
19 **Adjourn**

20 *G. D'Amico moved to adjourn at 5:46 pm; J. Shatney seconded. Motion carried.*

21  
22 Respectfully submitted,

23  
24 Nancy Chartrand  
25 Office Manager