

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
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

Department of Public Safety – EMPG 2019 Amendment 2 - B. Waninger noted it was a simple amendment adjusting in-kind match to be properly allocated between the salary and benefits and the indirect cost line items.

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

Bigglestone Investments – Office Lease Extension - Waninger advised the term for notification has been changed from one year to 90-days for this one-year extension as requested by CVRPC. 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.

Grants and contract in the informational only section of the contracts memo were highlighted.

Regional Plan Amendment

Waninger explained that prior to COVID-19, the public hearing process was initiated for an amendment to the current Regional Plan. The amendment removes the Regional Housing Distribution Plan and its

1 requirements due to numbers being based on the 2010 census and adjusts the future land use map to
2 better correspond with the regional land use planning designation.

3
4 There was question as to whether this information has been presented to the entire Board. D. Torre
5 and L. Hill-Eubanks confirmed it was presented to the entire Board. There had been discussion to have
6 Mike Miller of the City of Montpelier participate in the public hearing to answer any questions raised
7 regarding Montpelier's designation. S. Lotspeich advised he believed having Miller participate was a
8 good idea. It was confirmed staff would try to have Miller present at the hearing. Waninger
9 recommended the Commission initiate the hearing process and confirmed there are two hearings held
10 as part of the process. It was requested that as part of the first hearing there be a short recap
11 presentation similar to what was presented previously to the Board. Clare Rock will present at the
12 hearing. In February, the Commission voted to move to the public hearing process. Hearings were
13 scheduled, however, COVID-19 interrupted that process.

14
15 *J. Potter moved to approve proceeding with the hearings to amend the Regional Plan; D. Torre seconded.*
16 *Motion carried.*

17 18 **Retirement Benefit**

19 Waninger provided details for a retirement error discussed briefly at the in June meeting. The current
20 Personnel Policy outlines that part-time employees are eligible for benefits and later that the retirement
21 benefit is only for full-time employees. Waninger advised that three part-time employees are currently
22 being provided a retirement benefit outside of the Personnel Policy, as it was included in employment
23 offers in error. Waninger requested guidance from the Committee regarding how to address this for
24 existing staff; new part-time staff would not be offered the benefit. There was confirmation that the
25 retirement benefit started after 12 months of service. In regards to questions asked by the Committee,
26 Waninger confirmed that if the benefit was terminated for current part-time staff, those employees
27 would keep accrued funds. She also confirmed the current employer contribution is 5% of an
28 employee's gross salary and that only the employer contributes to this type of plan, not the employee.
29 CVRPC offers a 457B retirement benefit as of December 2019 that allows employees to contribute as
30 pre-tax payroll deductions. The 457B plan does not have an employer contribution.

31
32 J. Potter suggested grandfathering in those part-time employees who are currently receiving the
33 benefit. She noted that retirement benefits don't have to be tied to full-time employment. Lotspeich
34 agreed and asked if the Personnel Policy should be amended to do so. Waninger advised that ideally an
35 amendment would be completed. However, a motion could be passed to address the immediate
36 situation until the policy can be amended. It was noted that a Personnel Policy review had been
37 initiated prior to COVID-19; that process was put on hold temporarily. Discussion ensued as to how best
38 to move forward with addressing the situation and if the Personnel Policy Review Committee should
39 restart. It was agreed to move forward with a resolution and then have the Personnel Policy Review
40 Committee further discuss the issue when they resume meeting.

41
42 *J. Potter moved to make an exception to CVRPC's retirement benefit based on offers made to current*
43 *part-time employees; the exception would allow part-time employees (24 hours/week minimum) to*
44 *continue receiving the retirement benefit until the Personnel Policy can be adjusted to address the full-*
45 *time status; G. D'Amico seconded. Motion carried.*

FY21 Budget

Waninger advised the proposed FY21 budget is based on ACCD input, current contracts, and expected State contract allocations. She expects an adjustment will be needed when the remainder of the State budget is passed in ~September; the Legislature approved a 3-month budget for the State pending its having a more complete understanding of tax revenues received.

Waninger described the alternate budget scenarios outlined in the packet and the potential implications of anticipated shortfalls that may arise out of expected budget adjustments at the State level. She also reviewed grants and contracts that may serve to augment current revenues.

Discussion ensued about potential program and staffing changes that may need to occur as related to each budget scenario presented in the packet. It was noted that with regard to our Land Use Program and town assistance, we would honor current commitments, but may have to limit or delay future commitments. It was confirmed that ACCD is awaiting CVRPC's organizational budget to issue the FY21 grant agreement. The agreement will include a caveat reserving the right to reduce the award.

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

Lotspeich noted that many municipalities have used furloughs to address budgeting issues to date; and inquired if Waninger has looked at any furlough scenarios. She advised that two staff have been furloughed for 8 hours/week.

The budget presented for approval assumes normal flow of funds from ACCD and does not address any of the four scenarios outlined above. Page 25 in the packet highlights contracts considered 'at risk' due to potential State adjustments or non-funding. She noted the proposed budget is conservative (light on revenues, heavy on expenses) to allow for more flexibility in any necessary adjustments and reiterated that she expects a budget adjustment will be necessary based on State budgeting.

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

D. Torre noted if State agencies cut their own staff that they may need to rely on RPCs more to assist with their work. Waninger confirmed that traditionally when State funding is cut, the State outsources to contractors and RPCs. COVID may be different.

With regard to a question raised about timeframe, Waninger advised she anticipates that 4-6 weeks after Legislature passes a 9-month budget, State agencies will share their plans. Therefore, a budget adjustment is likely for early November.

1 There was question as to how much control ACCD has over how we use our funds. Waninger advised
2 that for the most part, it is up to the Commission; however, there are specific tasks that must be
3 completed contract, and some of these items may need to be renegotiated with any funding change.
4

5 *G. D'Amico moved to adopt the CVRPC FY21 budget; J. Potter seconded.* D'Amico questioned why it was
6 being approved now when we are already in FY21; Waninger advised it was delayed pending more
7 certain information. He also inquired if the Board needed to adopt or just Executive Committee. It was
8 confirmed just the Committee. A budget presentation will be made to the Board. Torre asked when we
9 would see FY20 financials and if they have bearing on the budget. Waninger advised they do have
10 bearing on the budget. She anticipates seeing 6/30/20 financials right before audit due to continuing to
11 catch up on invoices. Based on what is anticipated for invoicing, she is comfortable with the budget
12 presented. A vote was called. *Motion carried.*
13

14 Waninger advised the work program is to focus on what we have committed to until we know what
15 funding cuts may end up being with the State's 9-month budget. She advised that strategic goals
16 revolve around financial stability and keeping staff morale intact while addressing potential shortfalls
17 and providing as much service as possible.
18

19 Lotspeich left the meeting at 5:35 pm. Quorum was still present.
20

21 **Consent Items**

22 *J. Shatney moved to approve the consent items including the minutes; D. Torre seconded. Motion*
23 *carried.*
24

25 **Commission Meeting Agenda**

26 Waninger inquired as to how much budget scenario information should be presented at the Board
27 meeting. There was consensus to share that there were several scenarios discussed with the Executive
28 Committee without providing detail. There is too much unknown information.
29

30 Hill-Eubanks raised question as to whether we would continue to hold remote meetings for the Board as
31 she still is not comfortable trying to meet in person. Waninger advised she could include information
32 about this in her Staff Report.
33

34 *J. Shatney moved to approve the Board Meeting agenda as presented; J. Potter seconded. Motion*
35 *carried.*
36

37 **Adjourn**

38 *G. D'Amico moved to adjourn at 5:46 pm; J. Shatney seconded. Motion carried.*
39

40 Respectfully submitted,
41

42 Nancy Chartrand
43 Office Manager