

**CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES
February 8, 2022**

Commissioners:

<input type="checkbox"/> Barre City	Janet Shatney, Sec/Treas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moretown	Dara Torre
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joyce Manchester, Alt
<input type="checkbox"/> Barre Town	Byron Atwood	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Northfield	Laura Hill-Eubanks
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	George Clain, Alt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orange	Lee Cattaneo
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Berlin	Robert Wernecke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plainfield	Paula Emery
<input type="checkbox"/>	Karla Nuissl, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Atchinson, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/> Cabot	Amy Hornblas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roxbury	Gerry D'Amico, Vice-Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Calais	John Brabant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waitsfield	Don La Haye
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jan Ohlsson, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harrison Snapp, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duxbury	Alan Quackenbush	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren	Vacant
<input type="checkbox"/> E. Montpelier	Clarice Cutler (Interim)	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Michael Bridgewater, Alt.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vacant, Alt.	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington	Peter Carbee
<input type="checkbox"/> Fayston	Vacant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waterbury	Steve Lotspeich, Chair
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marshfield	Robin Schunk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Williamstown	Richard Turner
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Middlesex	Ron Krauth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacqueline Higgins, Alt.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Montpelier	Marcella Dent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodbury	Michael Gray
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike Miller, Alt.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worcester	Bill Arrand

Staff: Bonnie Waninger, Nancy Chartrand, Grace Vinson, Clare Rock

Guests: Stephen Falbel, Steadman Hill Consulting, Inc.; Marshall Distel, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Call to Order

Chair Lotspeich called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. Quorum was present to conduct business.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Public Comments

None.

Transit Financing Study

Chair Lotspeich welcomed Stephen Falbel of Steadman Hill Consulting and Marshall Distel of Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC). Distel shared that CCRPC, in partnership with Green Mountain Transit (GMT) and VTrans, requested Falbel complete a study analyzing innovative approaches to financing public transit in Vermont. The current system for funding public transit is heavily reliant on local property taxes.

1 In Falbel's presentation, he provided an overview of the goal, scope and principles of the transit study:
2 statewide transit access; potential funding replacement alternatives; and an evaluation of the funding
3 alternatives that were identified.

4
5 Details on the above were provided and expanded upon (video of the presentation along with slides is
6 available on CVRPC website at [https://centralvtplanning.org/about/minutes-agendas-staff-](https://centralvtplanning.org/about/minutes-agendas-staff-reports/board-of-commissioners/)
7 [reports/board-of-commissioners/.](https://centralvtplanning.org/about/minutes-agendas-staff-reports/board-of-commissioners/))
8

9 Following Falbel's presentation, the floor was opened to discussion and questions. Distel of CCRPC
10 noted that it recently shared this presentation with its Transportation Advisory Committee and are
11 planning to share with the Board at its next meeting.

12
13 Discussion continued including concerns about inclusion of Medicaid statistics and not including fare
14 increase as an alternative. There was also comment regarding the type of funding the proposed. The
15 Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) was supposed to address this type of issue. TCI currently is not
16 moving forward. Discussion continued on how increased use of solar may affect utility, fees and the
17 inequities a utility fee may or may not impose. Concerns were raised about increased property taxes. It
18 was suggested that perhaps a mix of revenue sources would help to address income sensitivity.
19

20 B. Waninger provided an overview of how GMT is funded and the differences between urban and rural
21 area contributions. She commented that services currently provided cannot continue with the current
22 structure. Vermont eventually will face a question of whether to reduce service or change the funding
23 system. Waninger requested the Board's opinion on these choices (reduce services or change funding
24 system). Can the region support identifying alternative funding?
25

26 A. Quackenbush inquired if a motion was needed. The motion in the agenda packet was referenced –
27 "Urge the Vermont Legislature to replace the current, inequitable funding structure for public
28 transportation with a replacement revenue source so that transit services can effectively operate
29 statewide."
30

31 *A. Quackenbush moved the motion as outlined in the agenda; J. Brabant seconded.* Discussion ensued
32 regarding an energy fuel tax and a request for more discussion from the Board and providing comments
33 to Waninger before moving the motion. The motion was read again for clarification and the vote called.
34 *As the vote was not unanimous, a roll call vote was conducted as follows: (Barre City – Not present, Barre*
35 *Town – No, Berlin – No, Cabot – Not present, Calais – Yes, Duxbury – Yes, East Montpelier – Not present,*
36 *Fayston – Not present, Marshfield – Abstain, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – Yes, Moretown – Yes,*
37 *Northfield – Yes, Orange – Yes, Plainfield – Yes, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant,*
38 *Washington – Not present, Waterbury – Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes.*
39 *Motion carried with 14 in favor, 2 opposing, and 1 abstaining.*
40

41 **Municipal Plan Approval & Confirmation of Planning Process & Certificate of Energy**

42 B. Arrand advised the Municipal Plan Review Committee (MPRC) reviewed the 2016 Town of Calais
43 Town Plan as amended 2020. He noted two changes to the Town Plan: an update to make a new village
44 center designation for North Calais and an update to the Natural Resources section to address forest
45 integrity. Arrand noted the MPRC found the changes were consistent with state goals and the regional
46 plan and voted to recommend approval of the plan. The MPRC also recommends confirming the Town's
47 planning process. Rock clarified that there was not a request for a determination of energy compliance.

1
2 J. Brabant spoke about the current initiative to restore Memorial Hall in North Calais. Approval of the
3 amendment to the Town Plan will allow the building to leverage village center tax credits and continue
4 restoring this historic building.

5
6 *J. D'Amico moved to approve the 2016 Calais Town Plan as amended; A. Quackenbush seconded. It was*
7 *confirmed that the amendment went through the local public hearing process and was now coming for*
8 *regional approval. Vote called and motion carried.*
9

10 *L. Hill-Eubanks moved to confirm the planning process of the Town of Calais; R. Wernecke seconded.*
11 *Motion carried.*
12

13 *R. Wernecke moved to adopt the Resolution provided in the agenda packet; R. Turner seconded.*
14 Question raised by Clain as to where the last paragraph in resolution originated. Waninger advised it
15 was related to statute (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/24/117/04402>). Arrand
16 pointed out the date the plan expires is the same because it is an amendment. *Vote was called and*
17 *motion carried.*
18

19 **Winooski Basin Water Quality Council**

20 G. Vinson provided an outline regarding additional appointments to the Basin Water Quality Council
21 (BWQC). It was confirmed that three actions are requested.
22

23 Vinson advised the first action is to appoint one or two alternates for the municipal BWQC seats from
24 the pool of applications previously received: Clark Amadon, Alice Peal, and Darlene Palola. She provided
25 a brief overview of the candidate's experience. Vinson also reviewed the benefits of having two
26 alternates versus one alternate.
27

28 *G. Clain moved to appoint two alternates for the municipal Basin Water Quality Council seats; J. Brabant*
29 *seconded. It was recommended that with two alternates that they be elected as alternate for the*
30 *specific seats, i.e. Alternate A for Candidate A. Vote called and motion carried.*
31

32 *J. Brabant moved that CVRPC appoint Darlene Palola as alternate to Annie Costandi and Alice Peel as*
33 *alternate to Nigel Hicks-Tibbles; L. Hill-Eubanks seconded. As the vote was not unanimous, a roll call*
34 *vote was conducted as follows: Barre City – Not present, Barre Town – Yes, Berlin – Yes, Cabot – Not*
35 *present, Calais – Yes, Duxbury – No, East Montpelier – Not present, Fayston – Not present, Marshfield –*
36 *Yes, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – Yes, Moretown – Abstain, Northfield – Yes, Orange – Yes, Plainfield –*
37 *Abstain, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant, Washington – Not present, Waterbury –*
38 *Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes. Motion carried with 14 in favor, 1 opposing,*
39 *and 2 abstaining.*
40

41 Vinson advised the second action was to appoint an alternate for the CVRPC representative to the
42 BWQC. P. Emery advised she was happy to defer to R. Wernecke. Lotspeich inquired if Wernecke was
43 still interested, and Wernecke confirmed he was.
44

45 *B. Arrand moved to appoint Robert Wernecke as alternate for Alan Quackenbush; J. Brabant seconded.*

1 *Motion carried.*

2
3 Vinson advised the third action was to appoint two watershed protection organization seats. She noted
4 that interest had been expressed by Friends of the Mad River (FMR), Friends of the Winooski River
5 (FWR) and Lake Champlain International (LCI). Watershed United Vermont (WUV) advised they did not
6 believe LCI was qualified as a watershed protection organization. CVRPC contacted LCI noting it
7 concurred with WUV's opinion and requested LCI provide additional information to support its position.
8 LCI had not provided additional information as of the date of the Board meeting. It was confirmed that
9 FMR and FWR meet the definition of watershed organization and have been recommended by WUV.

10
11 *L. Hill-Eubanks moved to appoint the Friends of the Winooski and the Friends of the Mad River to the*
12 *BWQC watershed organization seats; D. La Haye seconded.* There was discussion on an appearance of a
13 conflict of interest with these organizations voting on prioritizing projects they may be working on.
14 Vinson advised that the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) currently is creating guidance
15 to address the inherent conflict of interest. Draft guidance noted that organizations proposing projects
16 would recuse themselves from any vote regarding a project they are working on. Vinson said she
17 anticipates more guidance will be forthcoming from DEC. *Vote called and motion carried.*

18 19 **USDA Grant Application**

20 Waninger provide an overview of the grant and assistance. She noted CVRPC is the applicant because
21 the entity benefiting from the study is not allowed to apply for the grant. The Plainfield Co-operative
22 needs someone to apply for and manage the grant. Waninger described the USDA grant application
23 process and roles of the Plainfield Co-operative and CVRPC. USDA requires the Board's authorization to
24 apply and administer the grant, and to authorize a signer for the grant documents.

25
26 *G. Clain moved to authorize the Chair to sign the resolution for the USDA Rural Business Development*
27 *Grant for the Plainfield Co-operative; P. Emery seconded.* Emery noted she is a member of the Plainfield
28 Co-op and asked whether she should abstain or recuse herself from the vote. As a result of discussion,
29 Emery withdrew her second and Emery, L. Cattaneo, and R. Schunk advised they would recuse
30 themselves. *B. Arrand subsequently seconded the motion.* Waninger advised the motion must be to
31 adopt the resolution or to authorize CVRPC to apply for and administer the grant and authorize to sign
32 the grant documents to meet USDA's requirements. Clain confirmed his motion was for the Chair to
33 sign the resolution. *Vote called and motion carried.*

34 35 **Resolution on Complying the Vermont Open Meeting Law**

36 Waninger advised the resolution needed to be updated again to comply with the recent change in Open
37 Meeting Law, which allow public bodies to meet remotely with electronic meeting technology through
38 January 15, 2023. She provided an overview of resolution details.

39
40 *B. Wernecke moved to adopt the resolution; J. Brabant seconded.* P. Emery inquired as to whether the
41 word "will" was necessary in paragraph 2 of item 2 as it sounded like a mandate. She requested that it
42 be changed to "may". Waninger advised if we change "will" to "may", then staff will be required to host
43 a physical location. If Board decides to start meeting with a physical location before January 15, 2023, it
44 can update the resolution. Clain stated he would vote against the resolution as it was worded currently

1 with the January 15, 2023 date and suggested the resolution states “until further notice”. It was
2 clarified that the date corresponds to the legislation and that another resolution could be approved if
3 CVRPC returns to meeting at a physical location. It was also noted that wording in the resolution allows
4 hosting with a physical location if the agenda lists a location. L. Hill-Eubanks advised she would like to
5 support the resolution to keep staff safe and return to in-person meetings when the Board feels it
6 should do so. A roll call was conducted as follows: *Barre City – Not present, Barre Town – No, Berlin –*
7 *Yes, Cabot – Not present, Calais – Yes, Duxbury – Yes, East Montpelier – Not present, Fayston – Not*
8 *present, Marshfield – Yes, Middlesex – Yes, Montpelier – No longer present, Moretown – Yes, Northfield*
9 *– Yes, Orange – Yes, Plainfield – Yes, Roxbury – Yes, Waitsfield – Yes, Warren – seat vacant, Washington –*
10 *Not present, Waterbury – Yes, Williamstown – Yes, Woodbury – Yes, Worcester – Yes. Motion carried*
11 *with 15 in favor and 1 opposing.*
12

13 **Minutes (December 14, 2021 & January 11, 2022)**

14 *G. Clain moved to accept the December 14, 2021 minutes; L. Cattaneo seconded. Motion carried.*
15

16 *D. La Haye moved to accept the January 11, 2022 minutes; B. Arrand seconded. Motion carried.*
17

18 **Reports**

19 Waninger provided an update on GMT labor negotiations. Lotspeich noted the Executive Committee is
20 using special meetings and making good progress reviewing the draft bylaws. It is trying to get
21 clarification regarding elections, whistleblower protections, and bonding before bringing the update to
22 the Board.
23

24 **Adjournment**

25 *D. La Haye moved to adjourn at 8:44 pm; R. Krauth seconded. Motion carried.*
26

27 Respectfully submitted,
28 Nancy Chartrand, Office Manager