



Upper Valley Lake Sunapee
Regional Planning Commission

Commission Meeting
Wednesday, April 24, 2013
10 Water Street, Lebanon, NH 03766
Approved June 18, 2013

Members Present:

Dan Brand	Larry LeClair	Aaron Simpson
Kate Connolly	George McCusker	Bill Trought
Bob Crane	Joan Monroe	Josh Trow
Jonathan Edwards	Ken Morley	Christine Walker, Staff
Ann Green	Nancy Rollins	Patricia Crocker, Staff
Sam Greene	William Schroeter	
Peter Guillette	Linda Scofield	

1. Call to Order

Chair Larry LeClair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes: *Aaron Simpson moved to approve the Minutes of March 6, 2013 as presented; Peter Guillete provided a second. Motion carried.*

3. Overview of the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget and Work Plan

Christine Walker presented a preliminary budget for 2014 to help the Commissioners prepare for the Annual Meeting in June when the final budget will have to be adopted a budget.

The PowerPoint slides outlined changes from previous years in comparison with the proposed budget. She noted that some of the numbers may change before June because of grants that are pending and future contracts with communities that may request RPC assistance before the final budget and later in the fiscal year. The presentation is attached.

One of the notable increases was for the Workers Compensation insurance. The insurance carrier has reclassified the planning staff as engineers which has a different rating than clerical office staff.

One of the notable savings this year comes with a move to cloud computing and remote IT support. Since there will no longer be a need to purchase software, which now is part of the cloud package, this will reduced software costs by \$4,000. Another decrease for project related publications may be reviewed but has at this point been decreased.

The Commissioners will receive a Work Plan at the annual meeting that will provide a narrative for all the projects.

Staffing has been adjusted based on the variable workload. The Commission has hired two new full-time staff during the past two years and had 5 part-time staff during that time. The Commission uses the part-time staff to help balance staffing and contracts while retaining core staff.

One of the as yet unconfirmed contracts was for Brownfields Assessments. If the application is success

the contract may be received by the end of May or end of June. The Brownfields work calls for about 75% of the funds to be used for specialized consultants to complete Phase I and Phase II engineering assessments of sites within the region.

The revenue distribution is more evenly spread among sources. The Commission is not as dependent on federal dollars as in previous years. The Member dues remain the same but appear as a larger percentage of the 2014 budget, because the budget is slightly less than last year. State Funds represent just 1% of the total budget. Final budget and work plan information for the Annual Meeting will be sent out in early June and may contain some adjustments.

4. Update on the Regional Plan was presented by the Regional Plan Subcommittee as noted under Committee Reports

5. Committee Reports

Finance – Kate Connolly reported for the Committee on the Monthly Financials - March 2013.

Net income is slightly negative but that looks the same as previous months and years in past. This helps to cover indirect cost rate adjustments that are expected annually following the DOT audit review. Christine Walker reported that this may not be necessary in future. Beginning in FY 2014 the DOT may agree to a negotiated indirect rate that is based on previous audited rates. Overhead cost rates have declined as the organization has grown and become more efficient.

Executive Committee - Reserve Fund Policy

Chair LeClair explained the proposed reserve fund language. A 15% reserve of the operating budget will cover operational expenses in the event of an emergency or be available for building future capacity of the organization. A question about whether there would be a cap on the amount of the funds as they may accrue overtime. LeClair stated yes, at 15% and further explained that the only time the reserves can be used is when the Executive Committee provides a proposal to the Commission and explains the need. The policy would allow for a monthly operating reserve of 7% or \$75,000 whichever is greater. The auditors reviewed the wording that is presented. When asked what other RPC policies look like, Walker noted that to her knowledge there were not as others are not in as good a position as UVLSRPC and are therefore not considering establishing a reserve policy. The policy calls for an annual cap to be set at 15% of the approved yearly budget. Aaron Simpson proposed that the wording be clarified to note that the 15% was the cap and with minor grammatical changes he *then moved to adopt the new policy. The motion was seconded by Bill Trought. Motion Carried.*

Other Committees

Dan Brand spoke for the **Regional Planning Committee**. They have met and two good meetings the last month. The Committee has inventoried local plans currently in place and identified common elements. They are correlating goals and values identified. The Regional Planning Committee meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 4pm or before full commission meetings at 4 pm.

Christine reported on the **TAC** meetings and their work on setting the priorities for projects in the region to clarify priorities for DOT. The region has been allotted approximately \$82MM for planning purposes for transportation projects. The TAC went through a methodical process led by Nate Miller to set priorities. This year it is much larger list and includes significant bridges in our region. She recommended that the Selectboards appoint representatives to the TAC if they do not currently have one.

The next step will be the biennial Govern & Executive Council regional meetings on the 10 year plan. The local TAC priorities become part of the Regional and State plans. One-third to one-half of projects for this region fell off the 10 year plan about 3 years ago. The objective now is to have a more realistic understanding of available funding and what can be accomplished to improve prioritization. Dan Brand noted that the repaving funds were cut when the registration fees were cut. If Commissioners want specific information about projects they may call Nate Miller or contact Chris Courtemanche to be added to the mailing lists for any of the Committees that may be of interest to them.

6. New Business:

Sole Source Approval for Fiscal Year 2014: JAMAR (traffic counting)

Chair LeClair asked for a motion to approve the approximately \$3,500 expense; Kate Connolly moved and Peter Guillette seconded the motion. Christine explained that this is used to purchase traffic counting boxes that need to be replaced after the previous season. The units are purchased by the manufacturer. Alternatives are not recommended because a change in vendor would require the purchase of new software making the costs that much higher. ***Motion carried.***

7. Announcements

Annual Meeting: The Commission is going to be 50 years old this year. There will be a panel of past Executive Directors. The Annual Meeting will be held Tuesday, June 18 at the newly renovated Hanover Inn, Hanover, New Hampshire. The business meeting at 5:45 will be followed by dinner and the panel presentation.

8. Commissioner Town Announcements

Peter Guillette reported that the bond issue for improvements to Stevens High School in Claremont was recently approved and this is great news for citizens and students of Claremont. The new recreation center is open and membership is more than twice what was expected. The building, pool and gymnasium are fantastic. It is located on South Street across from Arrow Head Ski Area.

Kate Connolly reported that **Hanover** is expected to receive a donation that will help the Town purchase a piece of land adjacent to their recreation fields.

Sam Greene reported that **Lyme** had a successful visioning process with about 100 people involved in the activity. Each of 8 groups had a facilitator and they rated importance against feasibility of activities that they saw as benefitting the Town. Among the common needs identified were aging in place and affordable housing. He noted that the Upper Valley Housing Coalition's director Anne Duncan Cooley has been working on project for "Irene Cottages." These are designed to replace mobile homes as affordable housing. Much design and marketing efforts have been on going, but one has not be implemented yet.

Josh Trow report that **Sunapee** has a 140 acre conservation project under consideration of land foreclosed upon after a private operation for water extraction went bankrupt. Sunapee has also approved a bond of up to \$900,000 to construct a new library.

Joan Monroe reported that **Lebanon's** two biggest items were discussions about the airport - a complicated and complex issue. The airport master plan needs to be updated. The planning office has found funding to do a city-wide, all-mode transportation plan and the airport will be part of looking at the aviation side. The second project, the Twin State Gravel and Sand site, has been cleared for redevelopment as of this week. The Iron Horse Park will cover over 92 acres for redevelopment. Joan was asked whether she thought there was any interest in setting up a regional airport authority as a way to fund the projects. She said that had been considered in the past and might be again. There was much speculation about which large retailer might fill a major site on the location.

The road that currently goes into the gravel pit will no longer be used. Entrances will be on Route 12 A and after the underpass on Glenn Road. The City voted to continue rail access and several lots would back up on to the current rail spur. Four companies could move in and use the rail. The rail trail will run through the property and will also remain open. The rails have been picked up as far as APD and the rail trail people are standing by awaiting approval for couple of landowners to allow the rail and tie removals. She note the rail trail as very well used and very well liked by residents and visitors.

Bob Crane reported that the **New London** town meeting was set for May 15 and there had been some talk of revising some of zoning bylaws but that this has been put off for another year because the planning board has been so busy. The Town is meeting with Colby Sawyer that wants to upgrade some of its athletic fields. Concern remains about lights on the fields and potential that one of the fields would have synthetic surfacing.

In proportion to town of New London, Colby Sawyer has had a significant impact on the town with now

1,500 in the student body. Aaron Simpson noted that there is collateral impact on Sunapee because their waste water treatment plant serves the college. Town has a municipal system in the village that also serves the college. The zoning side is considering regulations for shoreland protection to be consistent with state changes to the laws.

Bill Schroeter reported that **Unity** will finally have a store in town. A general store will reopen and will still be called Will's Place. The school is still under construction and will be finished by late July and be ready for students in August. The old school has to be demolished before they can obtain the state share and that will take place in July.

Linda Scofield reported that **Wilmot** has camps on Eagle Pond and they are reclaiming a sand and gravel pit and putting in some new turf playing fields which will be an improvement to the shoreland.

Ann Green reported that **Orford** is status quo, but there is a task force working on repurposing the old school. The likelihood is that it could become "affordable" housing. It is located behind the dilapidated Orford Inn.

Springfield has received a planning grant to conduct a wetlands mapping project. Kevin Lee reported they are being assisted by UVLSRPC Planner Mike McCrory. A process that went almost no where during the previous year is moving forward with the help of a New Hampshire Housing Community Planning Grant. At the end of the project Springfield will have accurate maps and will also simplify the regulatory scheme and draft fairer ordinances. The Town understands the obstacles to the process because some land owners may not want to cooperate. The review will take place both on the ground and aerially.

Joan Monroe offered they look at the Lebanon regulations which call for wetlands evaluation when changes occur. If it is land not previously mapped, as each parcel comes before the planning board for a change there has to be access permitted. At that time, the land owner could be asked to do the wetland mapping and evaluation if they had failed to cooperate in an earlier mapping effort.

Jonathan Edwards congratulated Christine, Nate, and staff for their work in Enfield which has enacted new zoning ordinances. Similarly there is a complete new set of zoning regulations in place in Claremont which they hope will be more amenable to business development and applications more simple. Both were form based codes that will be able to manage growth while protecting the communities from unattractive development. For example, the new rules required that rather than the standard cement block building that Dollar General will have to have pitched roofs and attractive store fronts. The regulations are designed to reduce barriers for development but ask that the development comply with specific guidance on how they should look.

Christine noted that UVLSRPC was partnering with the League of Women Voters of the Upper Valley on a discussion entitled "Taking our Water for Granted."

Christine reported that UVLSRPC had mapped the entire region using a food survey with NEMS that includes availability of healthy food choices. Now the region can be compared to others in the nation. Dr. Karen Glans who is a national expert on food nutrition surveying will present at Colby-Sawyer. Planning for the event is underway.

Jonathan Edwards moved to Adjourn seconded by Ken Morley at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Patricia Crocker, UVLSRPC Staff