

MINUTES
STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

September 9, 2005
SRPC Office
2 Ridge Street, Suite 4
Dover, NH

Members Present: Tom Fargo, Chairman, Dover; Edmund Jansen, Jr., Vice Chairman, Rollinsford; Al Dixon, Secretary-Treasurer, Newmarket; Thomas Crosby, Madbury; Kenn Ortmann, Rochester; Rod Cools, Wakefield.

Members Absent: Heidi Seaverns, Nottingham; Bruce Woodruff, Alternate, Dover.

Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland, Linda Osburn.

Chairman Fargo called the meeting to order at 7:45 AM.

1. Minutes

Chairman Fargo entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2005 Executive Committee meeting. Dixon made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 19, 2005 minutes as written. Ortmann seconded the motion. The motion passed, and Cools abstained.

2. Financial Reports

Copeland reviewed the draft August financial reports. She stated that the Durham invoice would be removed from the FY 2005 accounts receivable, as the plan was not completed by the end of the fiscal year. She stated that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) spending was on target.

Copeland stated that she would begin the discussion of obtaining new office space in September. She noted that she would discuss with the current landlord the option of staying on the second floor temporarily if new office space is not found by June 2006. Copeland asked for assistance from Chairman Fargo and Crosby.

3. Executive Director Report

Copeland gave a status report of work on current contracts. She stated that was working on the Newmarket Hazard Mitigation Plan. Copeland stated that Gerry Mlyroie was completing the draft products for Madbury and Rollinsford and would begin the new projects. Copeland that the UPWP contract for FY 2004-2005 would be billed for un-recovered indirect expenses and the Memorandum of Understanding regarding billing for indirect expenses was being rescinded. She stated that the Regional Environmental Planning (REPP) and Targeted Block Grant (TBG) contracts were approved and work had commenced on those contracts. Copeland stated that a large mail out had been completed for the Conservation Plan funded through the New Hampshire Estuary Program. She stated that four community assisted visits had been completed under the National Flood Insurance Program contract and that work had not yet begun on the 604(b) contract for the Lamprey River Watershed mapping.

Copeland stated neither she nor staff had not yet completed their assessments. She stated that health benefit costs are lower and that a contract to update the SRPC website was signed. Copeland stated that she had hired a part time administrative assistant to prepare minutes, update the database and format documents. Copeland stated that one staff member resigned but might return to SRPC. She stated her concern that the staff member was the only one proficient in TRANSCAD, the program used by the model for the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Crosby asked if cross-training other staff was possible. Chairman Fargo stated that one staff person was needed to complete the bureaucratic tasks for the UPWP program and a second person was needed to complete the data collections and land use model update tasks for the UPWP program. He stated that Mylroie was working in land use/transportation integration. Cools asked if additional staff member was needed. Discussion ensued regarding the need for an additional planner with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) skills or for a GIS analyst. Chairman Fargo stated that SRPC should consider a planner with GIS skills. Copeland stated that SRPC had the funds for an additional staff member. Ortmann suggested conducting exit interviews to provide valuable information on why personnel leave SRPC and asked how to complete that process.

4. Approval of FY 2007 dues

Ortmann asked for the source of the listed 3% CPI increase. Copeland replied that SRPC used the consumer price index average increase for all items each year. Ortmann stated that it was never a good time to ask for additional funds but that SRPC should increase the dues and provide additional value to the member communities. Cools suggested a 5-6% value added increase and Ortmann agreed. Ortmann suggested a total 9% increase to be comprised of the actual CPI increase when published and a value added increase. Discussion followed regarding the timing of dues to allow the towns to set their budgets for next year.

Ortmann made a motion to approve the FY 2007 dues with a 9% total increase. Dixon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Rescission of Department of Transportation (DOT) and SRPC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Osburn explained that the DOT auditor had suggested the rescission of the MOU and allow each contract to specify the billing methodology.

Ortmann made the motion to rescind the Memorandum of Agreement with DOT. Cools seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. First Quarter Commission Meeting

Copeland stated that the annual commission meeting was scheduled for September 29, 2005 and passed out a possible survey for SRPC commissioners to share with their local boards. She stated that a survey was available on the SRPC website asking for the three most important planning issues to the local communities. Copeland stated that the NH Revised Statutes Annotated (RSA) Chapter 36 describe the duties of regional planning commissions regarding housing, traffic, environmental, water, facilities and schools and economic development. Chairman Fargo stated that there was a misconception regarding what regional planning commissions do. Ortmann suggested a cover letter to the staff and board members of each community be sent with the survey and asked about the possibility of placing the survey online. He stated that there could be a disconnection between the RSAs and what the member communities expect which could lead to lost revenue making

opportunities. Cools stated that his conception of the regional planning commissions was that regional planning commissions work for towns that paid dues with the UPWP funded work an added bonus. Dixon suggested that the dues should support the core staff and SRPC should emphasize the regional economic impact of the regional planning commission. Jansen stated that SRPC should consider the three major issues for the next 2-5 years and provide the reasons why communities should continue to support SRPC. Discussion ensued regarding regional impact and what information would be requested in the survey. Chairman Fargo stated that he annual meeting would be a listening forum and a continual basis for interactive communication on how the regional planning commission could deal with the issues that communities need assistance with. Ortmann suggested passing out the questions at the meeting and requesting the commissioners meet with their boards of selectmen and planning boards to obtain feedback. Dixon suggested that SRPC list its accomplishments including how much outside funding SRPC brought in to the region and the economic impact of those funds. Jansen suggested SRPC list what projects are currently being worked on as well as future plans. Chairman Fargo stated that a regional plan for the future was needed.

Ortmann reiterated his concern for the SRPC financial situation and requested a separate meeting in October as a financial planning workshop dedicated to financial issues and how to address the issues. Cools suggested that the regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting should be meetings regarding regional issues not financial planning issues. Copeland stated that she would meet with other regional planning commissions to get ideas on what worked or did not work for their regional planning commission. Crosby stated that SRPC needed additional funding. Cools stated that SRPC needed a financial plan. Cools left the meeting at 9:05 AM. Copeland asked the committee to set a date for the meeting, citing that the next Executive Committee meeting was scheduled Executive Committee for October 14, 2005.

7. Regional Summit Meeting

Copeland discussed the draft agenda for the one-day regional summit tentatively scheduled for October 28, 2005 to build a broad based public consensus on region-wide development and conservation policies. She described the regional focus and the various possible speakers including a representative from the governor's office and reactions from speakers focused on conservation, business, local government, legal, developer and quality of life perspectives. Ortmann suggested the keynote speakers provide various ideas followed by reactions from other speakers and attendees. Chairman Fargo stated he liked the ideas. Copeland stated that she would contact the suggested speakers.

8. Management Goals for FY 2006

Ortmann suggested that the financial planning workshop be held as soon as possible. Copeland listed the upcoming scheduled meetings: September 29, 2005 SRPC Commission meeting; October 14, 2005 Executive Committee meeting; October 28, 2005 Regional Summit meeting; and November 18, 2005 Executive Committee meeting. After several proposed dates, the financial workshop was scheduled for October 31, 2005 from 3:00 to 6:00 PM in the SRPC conference room. Osburn stated that she would send a reminder notice to the committee.

9. Other Business

Chairman Fargo noted that there was no additional business and entertained a motion to adjourn. Ortmann made the motion to adjourn and Jansen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Osburn

Linda Osburn
Bookkeeper

Minutes approved on October 14, 2005.

By: *Thomas Fargo*

Thomas Fargo, Chairman