

Southwest Region Planning Commission

37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431

603-357-0557 Voice

603-357-7440 Fax

SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

AGENDA

May 14, 2024

3:00 p.m.

37 Ashuelot Street

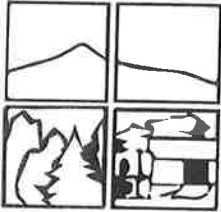
Keene, NH 03431

- I. Welcome
- II. Advisory Committee Reports
 - a) Transportation Advisory Committee
 - b) Energy & Natural Resources Advisory Committee
 - c) Economic Development Advisory Committee
 - d) Brownfields Advisory Committee
- III. Consent Agenda
 - a) Minutes of April 16, 2024 Meeting
 - b) Minutes of May 1, 2024 Meeting
 - c) Agreement with Keene - Grant Administration Services
 - d) Agreement with Antrim - Road Surface Management System & Pedestrian Infrastructure Inventory Technical Assistance
 - e) Amendment to Agreement with NH HSEM - Hazard Mitigation Planning
 - f) Highlights of Commission Activities - April 2024
 - g) Financial Report - April 2024
- IV. Director's Team Report
 - a) Draft Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 24-25
 - b) Featured Topic for SWRPC Annual Meeting
 - c) Comments to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission re: Great River Hydro Relicensing
 - d) Executive Director Six-Month Action Plan, Revisions
- V. Next Meeting
- VI. Other Matters
- VII. Public Comments
- VIII. Adjourn

A Non-Public Session may be needed.

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Southwest Region Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 Voice 603-357-7440 Fax

Agenda Item II (b)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Staff

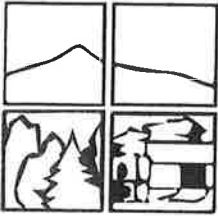
RE: Energy and Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Background

SWRPC's Energy and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) last met on April 24, 2024 and featured a presentation by Kate Buckman, New Hampshire River Steward at the Connecticut River Conservancy. Ms. Buckman described the Conservancy's programs and efforts to protect our region's watersheds. She explained the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing process for dams which is currently ongoing for three dams on the Connecticut River within the Monadnock Region. The public comment period for these dams, which will help guide development of the license that will be in effect for 30-50 years, is currently open.

Recommendation

For your information.



Southwest Region Planning Commission

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Agenda Item II (c)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Staff

RE: Economic Development Advisory Committee

Background

The Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) last met on May 1, 2024.

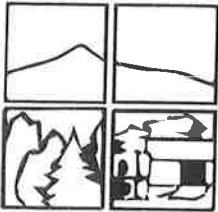
The meeting featured two presentations focused on building capacity for local economic and community development. The first presentation showcased the work of the Cheshire County Grants Department and their innovative approach to securing funds from a wide variety of grant programs to initiate and bolster development in Cheshire County. Cheshire County extends their grant-related expertise to any organizations or municipalities in need of funding for development in the County. The County will act as fiscal sponsor for grants awarded to local entities, providing fiscal and contractual management. The grants department is also hosting a free grant writing course designed to provide attendees with a basic understanding of what a grant is and what they require, how to identify funding opportunities, how funding organizations operate, and how to craft a competitive proposal.

The second presentation focused on the work of Arnette Development Group (ADG), a consulting firm contracted with the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (NH BEA) to provide applicants to the Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC) Catalyst grant program with technical assistance and coaching services. NH BEA's goal is to assist communities in developing competitive proposals and to better understand what barriers are holding certain communities back from accessing the program. ADG serves as a resource for information, reviews proposals for applicants, and works to link local needs to federal objectives. Organizations looking to engage ADG for their services will need to fill out their online application at nbro-nh.com to be assigned a coach.

The next EDAC meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2024.

Recommendation

For your information.



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Agenda Item II (d)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Staff

RE: Brownfields Advisory Committee

Background

The Brownfields Advisory Committee (BrAC) last met on February 12, 2024 and the results of that meeting were reported at the February 13th Winter Commission meeting.

The next BrAC meeting is yet to be scheduled.

Recommendation

For your information.

SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES

April 16, 2024

Present: Tom Mullins, Chairman, *Peterborough*; Gus Lerandean, Vice-Chair, *Swanzy*; Sara Carbonneau, Vice-Chair, *Winchester*; Cheryl Mayberry, Treasurer, *Walpole*; Brian Barden, *Dublin*; Leslie Casey, *Sullivan*; Terry Clark, *Cheshire County*; Jay Kahn, *Keene*; Joe Levesque, *Alstead*; Leandra MacDonald, *Peterborough*; Ed Merrell, *Jaffrey*; Larry Robinson, *Marlborough*.

Staff members present include Todd Horner, Executive Director; J. B. Mack, Assistant Director; Becky Baldwin, Office Manager.

Absent: Christine Robidoux, Secretary, *Temple*; Butch Morin, *Richmond*; John Snowdon, *Westmoreland*.

I. Welcome

Chairman Mullins called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m., welcomed those in attendance and acknowledged that a quorum was present.

II. Advisory Committee Reports

a. Transportation Advisory Committee

Staff member J. B. Mack reported that the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met on March 4, 2024. Representatives from the NHDOT provided a presentation on highway safety including information on the Road Safety Audit Program and overviews of the *State Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and Vulnerable Road User Assessment*. Director Casey asked if a copy of the presentation was available and J. B. Mack responded that there was and he'd forward it to Board members. The next meeting of TAC is scheduled for May 6, 2024.

b. Energy & Natural Resources Advisory Committee

Todd Horner reported that the Energy and Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) met on January 24, 2024. A summary description was provided at the February 13, 2024 SWRPC Winter Commission Meeting. The next meeting of ENRAC is scheduled for April 24, 2024 and will feature an overview of the relicensing process for three dams on the Connecticut River within the Monadnock Region.

c. Economic Development Advisory Committee

Todd Horner reported that the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) met on January 10, 2024. A summary description was provided at the February 13, 2024 SWRPC Winter Commission Meeting. The next meeting of EDAC is scheduled for May 1, 2024 and will feature presentations on capacity building and technical assistance workshops for grant writing.

d. Brownfields Advisory Committee

Staff member J. B. Mack reported that the Brownfields Advisory Committee (BrAC) met on February 12, 2024. A summary description was provided at the February 13, 2024 SWRPC Winter Commission Meeting. Since that meeting SWRPC staff has been working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, NH Department of Environmental Services and Ransom Consulting to complete Site Specific Quality Assurance Project Plans for work scheduled to take place in New Ipswich and Peterborough later this month. A meeting of the BrAC is anticipated in the coming weeks.

III. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of March 28, 2024, 2024 Meeting**
- b. Agreement with Cheshire Medical Center - Complete Streets 2024 Technical Assistance**
- c. Agreement with Westmoreland - Culvert Inventory and Assessment**
- d. Agreement with Greenfield - Grant Administration Services**
- e. Agreement with Gryczka and Associates for Accounting Consultant Services**
- f. Agreements for Phone and Internet Service**
- g. Highlights of Commission Activities - March 2024**
- h. Financial Report - March 2024**

Motion: To approve the consent agenda as presented.

Motion by Director Robinson, seconded by Director Lerandean. Approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Director's Team Report

a. Executive Director 6-Month Action Plan, Discussion of Draft

Todd Horner explained that as a part of the hiring process he was asked to develop a six-month action plan, to be shared with the Board, outlining his priorities as Executive Director. Copies of the draft plan were distributed to the Board (copy attached). Todd Horner reviewed each section of the Action Plan that was broken into the categories of Key Priorities, Outreach and Engagement, Programs and Projects, Operations, and Governance. Board members reviewed, discussed and made comments on each of the categories as follows:

Key Priorities:

Director Kahn asked what we are doing to backfill the vacant staff positions we currently have. Todd Horner replied that even though he has taken on the role of Executive Director he is still actively working on the projects he was involved in prior to the change. He added that we have brought on a couple of contract employees to assist us on specific portions of our work program such as Carol Ogilvie who is providing assistance with local planning and master plan activities.

Outreach and Engagement:

Director Carbonneau asked if all towns in our region are members and Todd Horner responded that all are with the exception of Rindge. He added that not all of our communities have identified Commissioners to represent them. Chairman Mullins asked how the order for town visits was established and Todd Horner noted that those who have made inquiries for our services will be visited first and he already has visits scheduled with seven towns. With regards to marketing our services Director Casey asked what methods we currently employ and was told we have a bi-weekly electronic newsletter (Happenings), a monthly printed newsletter (Highlights) and in the future we may consider combining them and focusing more on the services we provide such as culvert assessments. Director Clark noted that it is important to not only showcase our services but provide information on how communities can utilize them. Todd Horner noted that we also have a presence on Facebook but it is unclear how much that is utilized. Director MacDonald noted it would be a valuable service to be able to assist our towns in communicating with each other. Director Robinson noted that there used to be quarterly meetings involving various Boards of Selectmen that discussed issues of interest and Director Levesque shared that Alstead still meets with neighboring towns regarding similar areas of interest such as joint purchasing of oil. Director Carbonneau noted the SWRPC used to host Town Planner meetings on a regular basis to discuss issues of importance. Todd Horner noted that there may be a role for SWRPC in providing a venue and opportunity for peer to peer networking regarding issues and concerns shared by various municipalities. Director Kahn suggested finding a way to discuss issues with politicians, State and Federal agencies. Chairman Mullins cautioned that we need to be careful how we approach this and Director Kahn noted he was not suggesting we consider lobbying. Chairman Mullins noted that open invitations to attend events such as our Commission Meetings would be fine. Director Robinson agreed noting that we can not be perceived as providing a forum for campaigning. Chairman Mullins added that in a public meeting forum we cannot monitor what participants choose to say. Director Levesque noted that he enjoys having the opportunity to speak with legislative staff that frequently attend our events during the social hour. Chairman Mullins noted that this is a discussion that should be explored to a greater extent at a future date.

Program and Projects:

Chairman Mullins asked if part of our recruitment process is looking at filling the gaps we currently are experiencing such as in the area of land use planning. Todd Horner noted this is presenting a challenge since most applicants do not have that capacity. Alternately, current staff or a new hire could be trained to fulfill this need. Chairman Mullins asked if our current contract with Carol Ogilvie covers any of this and Todd Horner responded that as requests come in they are shared with Carol to develop proposals for our consideration. Director MacDonald suggested that we might want to contract with her to provide training to new or current staff. Chairman Mullins noted that NHMA also provides training programs.

Director Kahn noted that our current Regional Plan is dated 2016. Todd Horner explained that although the State asks RPC's to continually update their Regional Plan funding for this effort has not been provided. The funding that is being secured from HUD will allow all of the RPC's to update their individual plans.

Operations:

Chairman Mullins asked if changing from Quickbooks Desktop to Quickbooks OnLine will move our accounting system to the cloud. Todd Horner responded that it will and we have reason to believe that Quickbooks Desktop is being sunsetted in the foreseeable future and we want to remain ahead of the curve.

Governance:

Chairman Mullins stated that the current SWRPC By-Laws are in need of up-dating and he is willing to assist with this process. He requested that a copy of the current by-laws be distributed to Board members for their review pending further discussion.

Director Merrell questioned how many of our municipalities do not have Commissioners to represent them. Todd Horner noted that at least a dozen of them have one or more vacancies.

General Observations:

Director Casey observed that the items on the Action Plan represent a lot to be accomplished in a six-month period especially while we are short staffed. She suggested narrowing the priorities so it is possible to report on several successes that are accomplished in the six-month period. Chairman Mullins agreed that the Plan provides good information and goals but there is a lot on it. Director Levesque suggested that Todd Horner focus first on what he doesn't already know and before long he will be able to handle everything.

Chairman Mullins noted that this item was informational only and does not need Board approval. He suggested that the Action Plan be revised based on Board input. Todd Horner asked Board members to contact him if they have any further comments for consideration. Chairman Mullins noted that any communication should be shared directly with Todd Horner and not distributed to all members.

V. Next Meeting

Chairman Mullins announced that the next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on May 14, 2024.

VI. Other Matters

Formalize Agreement with Tim Murphy for Continued Assistance

Chairman Mullins suggested that it might be a good idea for the Executive Committee to have a discussion with both Todd Horner and Tim Murphy about a potential role for Mr. Murphy and his willingness to provide assistance to SWRPC as we go through the Executive Director transition process. Both Todd Horner and Board members in attendance agreed with the suggestion.

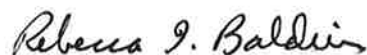
VII. Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

VIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rebecca I. Baldwin
Office Manager

SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES

May 1, 2024

Present: Tom Mullins, Chairman, *Peterborough*; Gus Lerandean, Vice-Chair, *Swanzy*; Sara Carbonneau, Vice-Chair, *Winchester*; Christine Robidoux, Secretary, *Temple*; Cheryl Mayberry, Treasurer, *Walpole*; Brian Barden, *Dublin*; Leslie Casey, *Sullivan*; Terry Clark, *Cheshire County*; Leandra MacDonald, *Peterborough*.

Staff members present include Todd Horner, Executive Director; Becky Baldwin, Office Manager.

Guest: Tim Murphy, Former Executive Director.

Absent: Jay Kahn, *Keene*; Joe Levesque, *Alstead*; Ed Merrell, *Jaffrey*; Butch Morin, *Richmond*; Larry Robinson, *Marlborough*; John Snowdon, *Westmoreland*.

I. Welcome

Chairman Mullins called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m., welcomed those in attendance and acknowledged that a quorum was present. He thanked those in attendance noting that today's meeting was called due to a time sensitive item on the agenda.

II. Northern Border Regional Commission, Timber for Transit Program Grant Application

Todd Horner explained that staff is in the process of completing an application to Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) for their Timber for Transit Program which is new this year. Applications must be submitted by May 3, 2024 and require a resolution authorizing submittal of the application by the Board, therefore, the reason for today's meeting.

NBRC supports community and economic development in northern New England and upstate New York. The Timber for Transit Program goal is to build markets for local innovative timber products in response to transportation infrastructure needs in rural communities. Funding allocated through the program will be used to support engineering and predevelopment services for communities in Cheshire County interested in building, repairing or replacing transportation infrastructure with timber-based products. Projects that would benefit from the funding include bridges used for motorized traffic, walking, bicycling, snowmobiling as well as projects for transit facilities, parking structures, wayfinding kiosks, and trailside amenities.

Director Lerandean asked what SWRPC would receive for compensation and Todd Horner responded that of the \$900,000 being applied for, SWRPC would retain \$100,000 for administration purposes over the three-year timeframe of the grant. He added that although we are competing with other states for the

funding we are the only organization applying from New Hampshire. Chairman Mullins asked if there is a specific funding pool for each state and Todd Horner noted it is one pool for everyone. Director Carbonneau asked what states are involved and was told in addition to NH, Maine, VT, and up-state NY are eligible. Director Clark added that the areas need to be under economic distress to qualify. Tim Murphy pointed out that the application is the result of a previous letter of intent that resulted in NBRC inviting us to submit an application. Todd Horner added that UNH Extension will partner with us as it relates to timber acquisition for projects. It was further noted that NHDOT is providing a letter of support for the application and anticipates leveraging Bridge Aid funding as part of a required match to lessen the burden on our communities.

Motion: To adopt the following resolution, which empowers the Executive Director to act on behalf of SWRPC as the Authorized Official with respect to an application to the NBRC Timber for Transit Program:

RESOLVED, that Todd Horner, who is the Executive Director, is empowered to act on behalf of SWRPC as an Authorized Official in relation to an application to the Northern Border Regional Commission Timber for Transit Program.

Motion by Director Lerandeanu, seconded by Director Carbonneau. Approved by unanimous vote.

VI. Other Matters

No other matters were brought before the Board at this time.

VII. Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

VIII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rebecca I. Baldwin
Office Manager



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37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 Voice 603-357-7440 Fax

Agenda Item III (c)

Date: May 7, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Executive Director

RE: Agreement with Keene - Grant Administration Services

Background

The City of Keene is requesting assistance from SWRPC in administering a grant under the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The City has been selected for an award of \$500,000 in CDBG Housing and Public Facilities funds to support the Base Hill Cooperative (BHC), a non-profit resident-owned community, to support the replacement of their failing water distribution system at Hillside Acres Mobile Home Park located at 180 Base Hill Road, Keene NH. The project will provide BHC with appropriate and sufficient water distribution facilities for continued operation that will maintain affordable housing for its 53 households, 35 of which are low- and moderate-income.

A portion of the CDBG award will be used to offset SWRPC's costs in preparing the application, to administer the grant, and for assisting with matters related to compliance with federal labor standards. Compensation to SWRPC for these activities is anticipated in the amount of \$44,000. Services are scheduled to extend through grant closeout in December 2026.

Recommendation

Approval of the activity by authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the City of Keene to provide CDBG administration assistance services as generally described above.



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Agenda Item III (d)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Executive Director

RE: Agreement with Antrim - Road Surface Management System & Pedestrian Infrastructure Inventory Technical Assistance

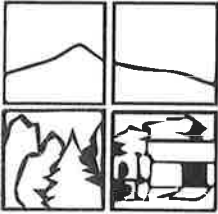
Background

SWRPC provides technical assistance and transportation planning services to communities to assist with capital planning and maintenance of Town-owned transportation. Through this assistance program, SWRPC utilizes technology applications and data collection methodologies provided by the University of New Hampshire Technology Transfer Center to complete inventory and analysis projects. Under this program, SWRPC will complete a project titled "Road Surface Management System & Pedestrian Infrastructure Inventory Technical Assistance" for the Town of Antrim. This project will include two components: an inventory of pedestrian infrastructure and a Road Surface Management System (RSMS) assessment. For the pedestrian infrastructure inventory, SWRPC will collect GPS field data and other attribute information for all crosswalks, sidewalks, curb ramps. For the RSMS assessment, SWRPC will assess pavement condition on all Town-maintained, paved roads. We will use pavement condition field data to forecast the future condition of pavement and the cost of future pavement repairs for 10 years and to generate a paving plan that best addresses the Town's needs.

The scope is in the process of being finalized with Town staff and is currently estimated at approximately \$19,500. SWRPC's contract with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation will cover \$14,600 (75% of project costs). Antrim will pay \$4,900 (25% of project costs). The nine-month project would commence late this spring or early summer.

Recommendation

Approval the activity by authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with the Town of Antrim to provide assistance as generally described above.



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Agenda Item III (e)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Executive Director

RE: Amendment to Agreement with NH HSEM - Hazard Mitigation Planning

Background

In April, SWRPC staff were informed by NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) about an extension of its agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with respect to FFY 2019 Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant funds from May 29, 2024 to May 29, 2025. The grant supports hazard mitigation planning activities in nine communities. There are three plans that require additional revisions and edits to comply with federal requirements before they can be adopted. Due to the period of performance extension, it will be necessary to amend the original grant agreement with HSEM. SWRPC expects the grant agreement amendment documentation in the coming weeks which requires approval from SWRPC's Board of Directors. An extension would not entail additional funding.

Recommendation

Authorize the Executive Director to extend its current agreement with HSEM and a SWRPC Officer to sign the Certificate of Vote.



SWRPC

Commission Highlights

April 2024

Vol. 30 - No. 4

Save the Date – SWRPC Annual Meeting is June 11, 2024

The shape our communities take depends significantly on the vision and decisions of local volunteers. Those that serve on planning boards donate their time, energy, and talents to craft a comprehensive plan, develop local land use policy, and review development proposals. Volunteers serving on other municipal committees also affect the character and pattern of our communities, whether through the preservation of historic neighborhoods, the protection of natural resources, budgeting for capital improvements, or fostering economic development. Beyond sitting on a municipal board, residents volunteer in other important ways that impact their communities' physical form. Participation in town meeting is a prime example. Taken together, these volunteers could all be considered citizen planners, each with different responsibilities for steering their communities into the future.

Join us on June 11, 2024 at SWRPC's Annual Meeting to explore the important role of citizen planners in the Monadnock Region today, the challenges they confront, the accomplishments they've achieved, and resources available to support them. The meeting will be held at Heberton Hall in the Keene Public Library Annex, 60 Winter Street, Keene, NH. The meeting starts at 5:00 p.m. with a social gathering. Light refreshments will be served. To register, please go to <https://forms.office.com/r/rMWwpW61sR>.

Last Call for Ten Year Plan Transportation Project Nominations

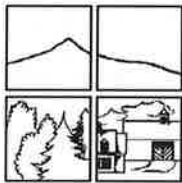
SWRPC's deadline for municipalities to submit transportation project nominations for the 2027-2036 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan is May 17, 2024. By committing a small local match, municipalities seeking assistance in developing conceptual designs and cost estimates for project ideas may be eligible for engineering services. The project nomination form can be found at www.swrpc.org/typ_nomination. For more information or to submit the pdf form, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org

Complete Streets Policy Development

In April, SWRPC staff convened meetings of local task forces in Alstead, Antrim and Temple to begin the development of municipal Complete Streets policies in each community. The three projects will be completed this summer and include public outreach, policy development technical assistance, data collection, and development of a list of potential implementation projects. Complete Streets refers to roadways which safely accommodate all users of a given street. For example, a Complete Street which passes through a village center where more pedestrian and bicycle traffic is expected might have sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes, while a Complete Street in a rural setting where there are occasional pedestrians and recreational bicyclists might call for wider shoulders and traffic calming. Complete Streets policies are an official commitment of the Town to ensure that the needs of all users of the transportation system are considered, and to the extent feasible, incorporated in all municipally managed transportation projects and project phases. They act as guiding documents for towns to reference when considering projects for their transportation infrastructure or for providing feedback to New Hampshire Department of Transportation on improvements to state highways. Additionally, the policies allow towns to apply for implementation funding from the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation. For more information about the projects, please contact Jason Cooper of SWRPC staff at jcooper@swrpc.org.

Food Systems Work Group Meets at The Community Kitchen

The Food Systems Work Group of the Monadnock Farm and Community Coalition (MFCC) met on April 22nd at The Community Kitchen in Keene. Staff at The Community Kitchen provided the Work Group with a tour of the facility including the dry and cold storage, offices, kitchen, and hot meals space. The Community Kitchen provides crucial services for the Monadnock Region and served hot meals to nearly 2,000 individuals in 2023. In 2022, The Community Kitchen distributed nearly 250,000 meals through their pantry program. Additionally, their mobile food pantry program will be returning in 2024 to help distribute food to those in need throughout the region. The Food Systems Work Group is committed to collaborating to reduce food insecurity in the Monadnock Region. To learn more about The Community Kitchen, please visit <https://thecommunitykitchen.org/>. To learn more about MFCC's Food Systems Work Group, please contact Jason Cooper of SWRPC staff at jcooper@swrpc.org.

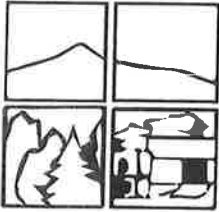


2024 Traffic Research Season Kicks-Off

On April 15th, SWRPC staff attended the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Bureau of Traffic's annual kick-off meeting on traffic data collection. Attendees included NHDOT staff and representatives from the State's nine regional planning agencies. The meeting agenda featured equipment demonstrations, discussions about 2023 performance, bicycle and pedestrian data, and collection of freight and vehicle speed information. In addition to well over 100 studies requested by NHDOT in our region this year, SWRPC has some capacity to conduct traffic counts or other studies requested by its municipal members. To initiate a request, please complete the request form at arcg.is/11GnLe0. For more information, please visit www.swrpc.org/traffic or contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff at hunderwood@swrpc.org.



INCOME	2023/24 Budget	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	April 2024	YTD Total	Budget to Actual
Local Planning							
OPD TBG	11,111	3,913	5,319	1,878	0	11,110	100%
Planning Assistance Projects	14,193	2,333	5,096	0	0	7,429	52%
Natural Resource Planning							
DES Watershed Management	65,000	6,952	19,646	13,732	4,045	44,375	68%
Transportation Planning							
DOT UPWP	241,000	65,939	67,450	60,045	20,313	213,747	89%
Complete Streets Implementation	40,000	11,534	8,892	10,000	2,500	32,926	82%
Mobility Manager	129,000	26,872	40,198	27,082	9,338	103,490	80%
Community & Economic Development							
CDBG Administration	128,000	31,498	28,665	26,297	7,074	93,534	73%
Regional Economic Development	128,000	27,217	24,384	35,484	13,797	100,882	79%
Information Management							
GIS Assistance	5,000	1,125	3,600	0	0	4,725	95%
Emergency Management Planning							
Hazard Mitigation Planning	24,000	3,488	9,810	10,763	0	24,061	100%
Emergency Operations Planning	8,000	0	530	2,812	1,037	4,379	55%
Other Projects							
EPA Brownfields	142,000	26,836	20,681	21,425	5,211	74,153	52%
Public Health Planning	9,000	2,792	3,795	2,519	897	10,003	111%
Regional Plan Update	5,000	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Broadband Technical Assistance	25,000	5,239	5,900	9,000	2,090	22,229	89%
NH Housing Navigator	163,000	29,649	34,876	39,872	16,091	120,488	74%
Administrative							
Municipal Dues	93,497	23,373	23,373	23,373	7,791	77,910	83%
Publications	3,500	40	40	3,438	0	3,518	101%
Copy/Reproduction	500	114	134	258	108	614	123%
Interest Earned	1,600	383	254	548	166	1,351	84%
TOTAL	\$1,236,401	\$269,297	\$302,643	\$288,526	\$90,458	\$950,924	77%
EXPENSE							
Salaries	649,000	143,967	173,259	143,218	48,176	508,620	78%
Benefits	161,000	36,194	39,205	36,409	11,562	123,370	77%
Contract Services	279,000	45,679	53,828	60,895	14,340	174,742	63%
Postage	3,000	699	597	859	448	2,603	87%
Telephone	7,000	1,808	1,873	1,859	628	6,168	88%
Office Supplies	10,000	1,787	1,903	1,405	2,628	7,723	77%
Legal/Accounting/Insurance	18,295	3,271	4,209	5,468	2,209	15,157	83%
Dues/Subscriptions/Publications/Advertising	19,789	4,506	4,021	7,750	2,715	18,992	96%
Travel/Training	4,900	2,307	954	420	66	3,747	76%
Rent	53,333	12,999	13,333	13,500	4,500	44,332	83%
Utilities	5,800	1,204	1,153	2,453	0	4,810	83%
Traffic Research Vehicle	5,500	2,166	296	2,757	0	5,219	95%
Equipment Maintenance/Leases	3,200	714	561	533	35	1,843	58%
Equipment Purchases	600	0	0	0	549	549	92%
Equipment Depreciation	9,924	3,696	2,076	2,076	692	8,540	86%
Commission Meetings	2,500	0	0	0	963	963	39%
Land Use Manuals	3,029	0	0	3,028	0	3,028	100%
Copy/Reproduction	531	114	134	258	108	614	116%
TOTAL	\$1,236,401	\$261,111	\$297,402	\$282,888	\$89,619	\$931,020	75%
Surplus / (Deficit)	\$0	\$8,186	\$5,241	\$5,638	\$839	\$19,904	



Southwest Region Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 Voice 603-357-7440 Fax

Agenda Item IV (a)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Executive Director

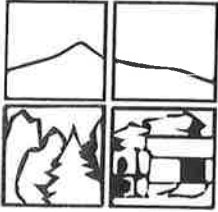
RE: Draft Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 24-25

Background

At the time of this writing, a proposed FY 24/25 work program budget for the year beginning July 1, 2024 is being prepared. The intent is to make this available at the May 14th meeting.

Recommendation

Review and consider acting on the proposed FY 24/25 work program budget.



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Agenda Item IV (b)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Executive Director

RE: Featured Topic of SWRPC Annual Meeting

Background

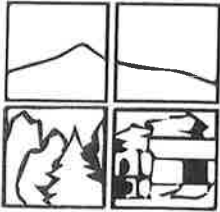
The shape our communities take depends significantly on the vision and decisions of local volunteers. Those that serve on planning boards donate their time, energy and talents to craft a comprehensive plan, develop local land use policy and review development proposals. Volunteers serving on other municipal committees also affect the character and pattern of our communities, whether through the preservation of historic neighborhoods, the protection of natural resources, budgeting for capital improvements, or fostering economic development. Beyond sitting on a municipal board, residents volunteer in other important ways that impact their communities' physical form. Participation in town meeting is a prime example. Taken together, these volunteers could all be considered citizen planners, each with different responsibilities for steering their communities into the future.

It's been some time since the Commission featured the work of planning boards and other citizen planners at its Annual Meeting. Given the importance of the topic to the work of SWRPC and its significance to the wellbeing of Monadnock Region communities, staff consider it appropriate to explore the subject in some detail at the Annual Meeting scheduled for June 11th. The agenda and format of the meeting is still under development, but could include any of the following components:

1. An overview by the NH Office of Planning and Development (NH OPD) about the resources made available through their staff to local land use boards. NH OPD staff will be in attendance at the meeting and have offered to present on the topic.
2. A presentation on planning resources made available through other organizations and initiatives. Examples include [Now What NH](#), the [NH Zoning Atlas](#), [New Hampshire Listens](#), [Plan NH](#), the [New Hampshire Municipal Association](#) and others. SWRPC staff could also provide an overview of the services and technical assistance that it provides to citizen planners.
3. Small group discussion around a variety of planning topics, to be identified through a short survey distributed in advance of the meeting. The purpose of such small group discussion would be to collect information regarding services and resources that would be helpful to citizen planners in SWRPC member municipalities. It could also set the stage for future roundtable discussions with planning boards and other citizen planners.

Recommendation

No official action is needed, but input and feedback from the board regarding the topic and potential agenda items would be welcome.



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Agenda Item IV (c)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Assistant Director

RE: Comments to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission re: Great River Hydro Relicensing

Background

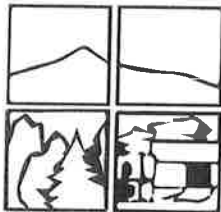
In June 2023, Great River Hydro, LLC filed a final application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to relicense three dams on the Connecticut River, two of which are in the Southwest Region Planning Commission service area: the Bellows Falls Dam located partially in Walpole and the Vernon Dam located partially in Hinsdale. These licenses would permit Great River Hydro, LLC to continue to operate the hydroelectric facilities on the river according to conditions set by the licenses. Hydroelectric dam management practices can impact several planning-related themes that are typically within the domain of regional planning commission concerns including but not limited to wildlife habitat, water quality, energy policy, recreational access, and hazard mitigation. The last time licenses were granted for the dams was in 1979, and the current license is anticipated to be granted for another 30 to 50 years. Earlier this year, FERC opened up a Notice for Solicitation of Comments and Preliminary Conditions to the public. The deadline for submitting comments is May 22, 2024.

SWRPC staff have reached-out to the Towns of Hinsdale, Chesterfield, Westmoreland, and Walpole to notify them about the opportunity to submit comments and collect any feedback they have on the relicensing. In addition, staff have been coordinating with other New Hampshire and Vermont regional planning commissions impacted by relicensing, as well as the Connecticut Joint River Commissions and the Connecticut River Conservancy. Based on SWRPC's outreach, it appears that SWRPC local towns are unlikely to submit comments, but the larger regional organizations will be submitting comments on behalf of their constituencies. Given the huge impact that hydroelectric operations can have on this section of river, and the range of opportunities that communities could benefit from as conditions to the license, SWRPC is preparing a letter to submit to FERC.

Using *Monadnock Region Future* and other official planning documents created by SWRPC as a basis for the comments, SWRPC plans to join other area regional organizations to make a case for several license conditions including the development of a Riverbank Monitoring and Erosion Control Plan, a Recreational Management Plan, a Historic Properties Management Plan and a Mitigation and Enhancement Fund. SWRPC staff will be on hand to answer any questions the Board of Directors may have at the May 14th meeting.

Recommendation

For your information.



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37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 Voice 603-357-7440 Fax

Agenda Item IV (d)

Date: May 14, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: Executive Director

RE: Executive Director Six-Month Action Plan, Revisions

Background

At the April 16th SWRPC Board of Directors meeting, Executive Director Todd Horner presented a draft six-month action plan that would guide his activities and oversight of the agency. As documented in the minutes from the meeting, the Board provided comments and questions regarding the action plan. The action plan has been revised accordingly and is attached to this memo. Notable changes include:

1. Ordering action items in each category to reflect their rough level of priority. Several board members noted that it may be difficult to achieve all listed action items and that triaging may be necessary. It may be necessary to extend the period of time over which lower priority items are implemented.
2. Under outreach and engagement, addition of an action item targeting the facilitation of multi-town discussion on key planning-related topics.

The action plan is intended to serve as a living document, to be revisited at the six-month mark or earlier if necessary. The Executive Director is available to discuss the plan further at future board meetings or with individual board members.

Recommendation

For your information.

SWRPC Executive Director Six-Month Action Plan

The following action plan outlines priorities that will guide the Executive Director's activities over the next six months. The action plan, developed with board input, is intended to serve as a tool for tracking progress, identifying obstacles, and areas where a change in approach made be needed. Action items under each heading are listed in rough order of priority. It may be necessary over the next six months to evaluate whether implementation of lower priority items needs to be extended over a longer period of time.

Key Priorities

1. **Maintain and improve customer service provided to our member municipalities.** Proactively engage communities to better understand their needs and, to the extent possible, respond to those needs through services and technical assistance.
2. **Maintain the financial stability of the agency.** This will entail developing a sound budget for the coming fiscal year and securing a steady flow of grant and contract work.
3. **Continue and enhance SWRPC's role as a resource connector for Monadnock Region municipalities.** This will be especially important over the next couple of years, since we are in a unique moment, with a surge in funding opportunities at the federal level. This moment won't last forever. SWRPC can help Monadnock Region communities better understand what opportunities exist, evaluate how those opportunities might address local needs, and develop proposals for funding.
4. **Recruit and retain a skilled, dedicated staff of planning professionals.** Our ability to serve our towns depends on assembling a top-notch team of qualified staff. We're lucky to have such a team today, but we have certain gaps in subject matter expertise and, overall, the agency work program would benefit from additional staff capacity.

Outreach and Engagement

1. **Inventory with staff current and recent projects/activities that have directly involved our member municipalities.** Such an inventory will help reveal gaps in engagement and where we might need to be more proactive in reaching out to specific communities.
2. **Embark on a listening tour,** visiting with selectboards, planning boards, and municipal staff to introduce myself as executive director, learn about local priorities, and to review the services that SWRPC provides to the region and member municipalities.
3. **Identify opportunities for facilitating multi-town discussion and coordination on planning issues.** For example, board members and other partners have expressed interest in organizing round table discussions with planning board members as a means of peer learning and support.
4. **Develop an organizational brochure that summarizes what SWRPC is and what we do.** It will be helpful to have such promotional literature on hand when meeting with member municipalities and other stakeholders.
5. **Strengthen partnerships with regional organizations.** Partnerships with organizations such as the Greater Monadnock Collaborative, Monadnock Economic Development Corporation, Cheshire County Conservation District, Monadnock United Way, the Hannah Grimes Center for

Entrepreneurship, and many others are critical to our ability to serve our municipalities and to reach target audiences related to different projects and subject matter areas,

6. **Cultivate relationships with state and federal agencies, along with elected officials.** These relationships are essential for our ability to communicate on behalf of our towns to higher levels of government.
7. **Evaluate marketing and promotional practices, e.g., newsletters, social media, website.** Identify potential improvements.

Programs and Projects

1. **Meet regularly with program and project managers** to support them as needed and to maintain working knowledge of the agency's full scope of activity.
2. **Build capacity to provide land use and zoning technical assistance.** We regularly receive inquiries for assistance on master plan work, zoning revisions, and other matters related to local land use regulations. In order to respond to this need, we will likely need to use a combination of contract employees, in-house staff, and partnerships with other resource providers.
3. **Identify unmet needs for technical assistance among our member municipalities** and evaluate potential projects and programs to meet those needs.
4. **Kick off and supervise an update to the regional plan, Monadnock Region Future.** Substantial funding has been secured for this work, creating an important opportunity to take stock of where we've made progress as a region over the last decade, assess old and emerging challenges, and highlight opportunities for future collaboration and coordination among local communities.

Operations

1. **With the assistance of staff and a qualified consultant, implement measures to enhance financial systems and streamline accounting processes.** For example, oversee migration of the agency's accounting system from QuickBooks Desktop to QuickBooks Online, which will facilitate distributed access to financial information among senior management, project managers, and consulting accountants.
2. **Move towards full utilization of BigTime, the agency's timesheet and project management system.** While we've made use of some of the platform's features, we're still in the process of incorporating it into our existing systems and workflows. When fully adopted, BigTime will be a key tool for allocating staff resources across current and anticipated projects. (At any given time, we have 2-3 dozen active projects).
3. **Transition to technology systems better suited to a hybrid work environment.** For example, staff working remotely are unable to dial through our organization's phone system. In addition, call forwarding needs to be turned on or off on a manual basis. Staff have researched alternative providers and have identified a suitable option.

Governance

1. **Begin a process with the Board of Directors to review the agency's bylaws and update as needed.** Such a review could help clarify for the board and staff the organization's current governance structure and where changes might be appropriate.

2. **With the Board's oversight, consider indexing municipal dues to the rate of inflation.** This concept has been discussed previously with the Board and perhaps should be revisited to help ensure the financial sustainability of the organization.
3. **Endeavour to fill Commissioner vacancies.** Reach out to communities that have vacancies on the Commission and assist them with the nomination/appointment process.