Commissioners Present in Person: Gabby Ciuffreda (Chair), Tim Arsenault, Joel Bluming, Everett Wilson, John Whitman, Bobbi Kilburn, Lise, Fortin, Jenepher Burnell, Edie Mas, Jim Pinkerton, George Mora, Liisa Kissel, Lynette Hamilton, Greg Brown, Piet van Loon, Steve Lembke, Gretchen Havreluk, Jack Cunningham, Karen Astley

Commissioners Participating via Conference Call: None.


Guest Speaker: None.

Guests: Jodi French (Newfane)

Staff Present: Chris Campany, Executive Director; Alyssa Sabetto, Planner

Introductions: There was a quorum of 12 towns present.

Convened: The meeting was called to order by Chair Gabby Ciuffreda at approximately 6:06 p.m.

Everyone in attendance was asked to introduce themselves. There were no changes to the agenda.

Administrative Items & Reports:

Approval of October 30, 2018 Meeting Minutes: Commissioner Arsenault made a motion to approve the October 30, 2018 minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Commissioners Lembke, Fortin and Brown asked that the minutes be amended to reflect their attendance. It was noted that the October meeting reference at the end of the minutes be struck. Commissioner amended his motion to approve to reflect the changes to the minutes. The motion was passed with Commissioners Mora and Kilburn abstaining.

Approval of Treasurer’s Report: Treasurer Bobbi Kilburn noted that expenditures had been made to replace the WRC’s antiquated telephone system, and that there had been costs associated with changes to the email and website hosting. The beginning of the audit had been delayed but will commence shortly. On a motion by Commissioner Kissel, seconded by Commissioner Arsenault, the Treasurer’s Report was approved.
Proclamation of Appreciation of Service of Commissioner Jodi French: A proclamation was read by Chair Ciuffreda, which thanked former Newfane Commissioner, Vice Chair, and Chair, Jodi French for her many years of service. On a motion by Commissioner Cunningham, seconded by Commissioner Arsenault, the proclamation was approved. Chair Ciuffreda presented the proclamation to Ms. French, who was in attendance.

Proclamation of Appreciation of Service of Commissioner Tom Consolino: A proclamation was read by Chair Ciuffreda, which thanked former Wilmington Commissioner, Executive Board Member, Secretary, and Chair of the Public Policy and Legislative Committee, Tom Consolino, for his many years of service. On a motion by Commissioner Cunningham, seconded by Commissioner Arsenault, the proclamation was approved.

Overview of the WRC’s Emergency Planning Responsibilities: WRC Planner Alyssa Sabetto provided a very comprehensive review of the WRC’s emergency planning activities. These activities include support for town local hazard mitigation planning, flood hazard and river corridor bylaw development, floodplain administrator trainings, and local emergency management plan development. She also explained the WRC’s role in supporting the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and serving as a liaison between the Region’s towns and the SEOC in the event of a disaster. She reviewed the many emergency planning tools the WRC had developed, and the new Emergency Management Director/Fire Chief roundtables that the WRC organizes. The presentation was capped by an appeal for Commissioners to join the new WRC Emergency Planning Committee. Commissioners Bluming and Lembke volunteered to join.

Elections: Commissioner Cunningham had been nominated to serve as Treasurer to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Commissioner Consolino. Commissioner Lembke nominated himself to fill a vacancy on the Executive Board also created by the resignation of Commissioner Consolino. Kathy Urffer, River Steward for Vermont and New Hampshire with the Connecticut River Conservancy, was nominated to serve as Citizen Interest Commissioner for Natural Resources. Commissioner Arsenault moved approval of the slate, seconded by Commissioner Kissel. The slate was approved by a unanimous vote.

Legislative Priorities Overview: Executive Director Campany explained how the legislative priorities were developed. They are typically built upon a platform developed by the state’s 11 regional planning commissions as a group, and the WRC also adds its own priorities. The priorities are subsequently endorsed by the WRC Executive Board. Commissioner Whitman asked Project Review Committee Chair for his thoughts on proposed Act 250 legislation. Chair Ciuffreda explained this would be discussed at the upcoming Natural Resources Committee meeting.

Executive Directors’ Report: Executive Director Campany reviewed current staff assignments, and improvements being made to the office. Staff have gone through many decades of documents and recycled those no longer needed. New furniture will replace outdated desks, and furniture that is no longer needed will be given a new home.
From the Chair: Chair Ciuffreda encouraged Commissioners to join the Planning Coordination and Project Review Committees, which have suffered declines in membership.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m. on a motion by Commissioner Lembke.

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Collins