Commissioners Present: Jodi French (Chair), Maggie Bartenhagen, Nick Bartenhagen, Heath Boyer, Tom Buchanan, Jenepher Burnell, Tom Consolino, Jack Cunningham, Charles Goodwin, Craig Hunt, Alan LaCombe, Ray Mara, Priscilla Margola, Bill Murray, Jenna Pugliese, Lew Sorenson, Eric Stevens, Andy Toepfer, Piet van Loon, John Whitman

Citizen Interest Commissioners Present: Greg Brown

Guests Present: Nancy Bell, The Conservation Fund; Christopher Crafts, Wilmington

Staff Present: Chris Campany, Ashley Collins, Jeff Nugent

Introductions: There was a quorum of 15 towns present.

Convened: 7:04PM

Administrative Items & Reports:

Secretary’s Report: On a motion by T. Consolino, seconded by J. Cunningham, the minutes from the April meeting were approved with one abstention.

Financial Report: On a motion by C. Hunt, seconded by L. Sorenson, the Finance Report was approved.

The Conservation Fund – Windham Region Forests: Nancy Bell was present to discuss her work with conserving forest land in the Windham Region through The Conservation Fund. The Fund’s mission is to provide economic health and vitality while working within communities to conserve lands. Windham County is ranked in the top three in the State for quality of forest, especially hardwoods used in the veneer trade. Nancy has been working on a proposal through the Forest Legacy Program, a highly competitive federal program that provides funding for permanent conservation easements on working forestland. There are many factors that are considered when looking at the possibility of a managed forest: stewardship of the land, public access, major wildlife crossings, road frontage, connectivity and value. Nancy presented several maps of the region which displayed critical habitat, proposed conservation areas included in the Forest Legacy proposal, and already conserved...
areas. Nancy encouraged Commissioners to reach out to their Legislators to support the Forest Legacy Projects proposed for the Windham Region.

**Newfane Town Plan:** The panel reviewed the town plan and reported their findings back to the Planning Coordination Committee (PCC). While the panel recommended the PCC and Full Commission not approve the plan due to gaps in and accuracy of information upon which the plan is based, the PCC recommended approval of the plan, and confirmation of the town plan and process. There was extended discussion regarding the basis of town plan updates, re-adoptions of current plans, statutory requirements related to updating information upon which the plan is based and the extent to which the WRC should advise towns on the extent to which that information should be updated, and the process by which public hearings are held with panel members, and then brought to the PCC for reported findings and comments. Some Commissioners felt that certain elements of the plan did not meet the minimum requirements and requested they have the opportunity to review the plan before voting at this month’s meeting. After an extended discussion on the Town Plan Review process, C. Goodwin made a **motion** to approve the plan as presented, and was seconded by C. Hunt; motion was **approved with 11 votes in favor of the plan, 4 opposed and 3 abstentions.** On the confirmation of the town plan and process, L. Sorenson made a **motion**, seconded by T. Consolino; motion was **approved 11 votes in favor of the planning process, 4 opposed and 3 abstentions.** Newfane Commissioners J. French and P. van Loon did not participate in the discussion at the Full Commission meeting as well as within the Planning Coordination Committee, and abstained from voting on both actions for the Newfane Town Plan. There seemed to be agreement that this was a worthwhile discussion that should be revisited in the near term. Executive Director Chris Campany also suggested discussing the statutory requirements at a future Commission meeting.

**Dummerston Town Plan:** The panel reviewed the town plan and reported their findings back to the Planning Coordination Committee (PCC). The PCC recommended approval of the plan, and confirmation of the town plan and process. J. Cunningham made a **motion** to approve the plan as presented, and was seconded by J. Whitman; motion was **approved; with an abstention from Dummerston Commissioner L. Sorenson.** On the confirmation of the town plan and process, C. Hunt made a **motion**, seconded by J. Cunningham; motion was **approved.**

**Bylaw Amendment:** on May 13th the Executive Board approved a proposal to bring before the Full Commission to amend Article 9-F in regards to town appointments and quorum count at Commission meetings. The Board also recommended that the Commission review the bylaw amendment and vote at the June Commission meeting.

**Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF):** Executive Director Chris Campany explained that the Executive Board approved proposed testimony to be delivered before a CEDF Hearing, stating the Public Service Department would collaborate with the WRC in the development of a plan that would allow for the most effective and impactful use of approximately $2.6 million that is to be spent within Windham County, per the settlement agreement between Entergy and the State of Vermont. This position was arrived at during a joint meeting of the
WRC’s Natural Resources, Project Review and Energy Committees. Subsequent to that hearing, Chris developed a proposal for the development of such a plan at the request of the Public Service Department and members of the CEDF Board in response to the WRC’s testimony. Chris developed the proposal with input from the chairs of the previously referenced committees.

Executive Director’s Report:

- Executive Director Chris Campany informed the Commission that Alyssa Sabetto will begin working with WRC as a Planner on June 2nd. She will focus on Project Review and Emergency Planning. He also mentioned there are two part-time employees working with Susan McMahon and Kim Smith on economic development projects and town profiles.
- Chris mentioned that a new committee has been formed to plan events throughout 2015 to commemorate WRC’s 50 years of service.
- Chris reminded Commissioners that there will be an Executive Board vacancy that will need to be filled, and that interested commissioners should contact Carolyn Partridge.
- Chris mentioned that there had been another meeting of the TransCanada Appeals Group and that they are further refining a white paper that explains the issues confronting the affected towns.

J. Cunningham moved adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:28PM

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Collins