Full Commission Meeting
January 26, 2016
Townshend Town Hall

Commissioners Present: Jodi French (Chair), Andy Toepfer, Rod Francis, Elizabeth McLoughlin, Guy Tanza, Roger Turner, Liisa Kissel, Eric Stevens, Maggie Bartenhagen, Nick Bartenhagen, Piet van Loon, Jodi French, Alice Maes, John Whitman, Priscilla Margola, Jack Cunningham, Ray Mara, Jenepher Burnell, Robin Howe, Heath Boyer

Citizen Interest Commissioners Present: Prudence McKinney

Guests Present: Adam Grinold (BDCC), Wendy Harrison

Staff Present: Chris Campany, Ashley Collins

Introductions: There was a quorum of 14 towns present.

Convened: 7:06PM

Votes Subject to Ratification:
J. Cunningham made a motion to ratify the August minutes, September finance report, and The Executive Board Recommendations, motion was seconded by P. van Loon; ratification was approved.

Administrative Items & Reports:
Secretary’s Report: On a motion by J. Cunningham, seconded by M. Bartenhagen the minutes from the October meeting were approved.

Financial Report: On a motion by R. Francis, seconded by H. Boyer the December Finance Report was approved.

Economic Development Activities in the Region and Collaboration with the WRC: Adam Grinold, Executive Director at the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC), was present to discuss BDCC’s work within the Windham Region and different collaborations with the WRC; including the tri-state collaborative which is working with the closure of Vermont Yankee (VY) and looking at the how this has impacted employment and other elements in the local economy. He explained that the organization was in transition when he started just over a year ago. He also mentioned that $1.2 million has been disbursed to small
businesses through the first round of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery funds, and $941,000 in the second round of funding. BDCC has also worked with six area colleges to create workforce maps, career awareness, readiness, and to try and keep students in the area when they graduate. They provide students with skills and inform them of availability in the workforce, including internships around the region. BDCC has applied for a $250,000 USDA Grant to be able to work with communities in Windham and Bennington Counties to better coordinate economic development activities among communities and organizations. Adam summarized various areas of interest and programs that BDCC has been busy with including: the Windham County Economic Development Program, Green Building Cluster Program, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Projects, and the Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS).

**Executive Board Commission Recommendations:** The Executive Board made a recommendation to the Commission that the October – March meetings will begin at 6pm and the April - September meetings will begin at 7pm. A motion to approve the Executive Board recommendations was made by J. Cunningham, seconded by M. Bartenhagen; motion was approved with one opposed.

**Putney Town Plan:** The WRC received a request from the Town of Putney to review its plan for approval. 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. P. van Loon made a motion to approve the plan as presented, and was seconded by H. Boyer; motion was approved. On the confirmation of the town plan and process P. van Loon made a motion, seconded by R. Francis; motion was approved.

**Whitingham Town Plan:** The WRC received a request from the Town of Whitingham to review its plan for approval. 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. P. van Loon made a motion to approve the plan as presented, and was seconded by J. Whitman; motion was approved. On the confirmation of the town plan and process P. van Loon made a motion, seconded by J. Cunningham; motion was approved.

**Wilmington Town Plan:** The WRC received a request from the Town of Wilmington to review its plan for approval. 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. P. van Loon made a motion to approve the plan as presented, and was seconded by J. Whitman; motion was approved. On
the confirmation of the town plan and process P. van Loon made a motion, seconded by R. Francis; motion was approved.

Citizen Interest Commission Appointment: Wendy Harrison of Brattleboro has expressed interest in serving as the Community Development Citizen Interest Commissioner. On a motion by P. van Loon, seconded by M. Bartenhagen; the motion was approved to appoint Wendy Harrison as the Community Development Citizen Interest Commissioner. This was an amended agenda item.

Citizen Interest Appointment to Executive Board: Greg Brown, Citizen Interest Commission for Housing, has expressed interest in serving on the Executive Board, with one current member leaving the Board in March there will be two vacant spots. The Executive Board has put forth Greg Brown’s nomination to fill one of these vacancies. On a motion by R. Francis, seconded by J. Cunningham, to elect Greg Brown to serve on the Executive Board was approved.

Rutland Resolution: Commissioner Heath Boyer gave a brief overview on the Rutland Resolution’s purpose, and explained that several Windham Region towns have signed on to the Rutland Resolution concerning the standing of towns in the siting of solar and other renewable energy generation projects.

Project Review Update: Commissioner Jack Cunningham, chair of the Project Review Committee (PRC), mentioned that there was a dramatic drop off in cell tower applications in the last six months, with just three permitted towers, while the number of solar applications has been coming in more frequently. The majority of the PRC time has been consumed by the Hermitage/Haystack Club ongoing projects and applications. They filed a Master Plan that was missing important elements, and the State is backing up the PRC’s recommendations to include those elements before moving forward.

Executive Director’s Report:
- Executive Director Chris Campany mentioned that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns noted the Council of Governments Legislation in their most recent legislative update. The idea of the Council of Governments is to have towns work together with regional commissions to provide shared services. Examples of such services in our region could range from part-time town managers, to animal control, to municipal shared purchasing. The potential benefit would be possible cost savings, greater value for money spent, less administrative burden for towns, and better communication among towns.
- Chris noted there will be several water quality forums happening in the region related to the WRC’s contract to support implementation of the state’s new clean water act by the towns.
- The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) extended the comment period on decommissioning rulemaking from January 4th to March 16th.
- Chris mentioned that he is on a panel at an upcoming Nuclear Regulatory Commission conference in Rockville, Maryland regarding decommissioning policies.
- The Section 248 workshop was a success. Aaron Kisicki with the Public Service Department gave a presentation of the process and how to approach it within a town plan.

J. Cunningham moved adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22PM

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Collins