Executive Board by unanimous vote, went into Executive Session at 7:06pm. Adjourned Executive Session at 7:32pm.

Commissioners Present: Dora Bouboulis, Heath Boyer, Tom Buchanan, Fred Bullock, Jenepher Burnell, Jodi French, Charlie Goodwin, Brad Horn, John Kristensen, Alan LaCombe, Alice Maes, Edie Mas, Bill Murray, Eric Stevens, Roger Turner, Piet van Loon,

Citizen Interest Commissioners Present: Corky Elwell

Guests Present: Barb Sondag, SeVEDS, Bob Stevens, SeVEDS

Staff Present: Chris Campany, Susan McMahon, Ashley Collins

Introductions: There was a quorum of 14 towns present.

Convened: 7:40pm

It was explained that Vice Chair Jodi French would be chairing the meeting because Melinda Bussino had reportedly suffered a major heart attack and was at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital. Only immediate family was allowed to visit, and they asked that donations to the Drop In Center be made in lieu of flowers.

Administrative Items & Reports:

Secretary’s Report: On a motion by Piet van Loon, seconded by Charlie Goodwin, the minutes from the January meeting were approved.

Financial Report: On a motion by Edie Mas, seconded by Brad Horn, the January Finance report was approved.

Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategy SeVEDS:

SeVEDS board chair Bob Stevens, and board member Barb Sondag, presented the Commission with the latest data and summary about the state of the economy in the Windham Region, and economic development planning strategies going forward. The presentation included information about the decline in wages, GDP, and the workforce in Windham County over the last decade. It also compared Windham County data with that of
the State of Vermont and northern New England States, demonstrating that Windham County indicators are relatively weaker in most areas. Residents of the Windham Region also depend less on income derived from wages and salaries, and this may explain what has been perceived as a lack of demand and engagement by more people in the region in economic development discussions. SeVEDS has identified 5 year goals, objectives and strategies. Examples of SeVEDS goals include ending the population decline, raising the average wage, and improving quality of employment in the region. Objectives going forward include the development of a Certified Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which is required to participate in U.S. Economic Development Administration programs. The presentation in its entirety, including the detailed initial objectives, can be found on the Community Development page of the WRC website at http://windhamregional.org/community-development.

**Commissioner Bylaw Amendment:**
The Executive Board approved proposed changes at their most recent meeting on February 14th. The primary purpose of the changes is to bring the bylaws in line with WRC operations that have been are currently in place and have been for some time. Chris gave a brief explanation of each of the proposed revisions, which was followed by a short discussion. There was a motion made by Piet van Loon, seconded by Fred Bullock, to have Chris provide a brief executive summary of the reasoning behind the proposed changes, and that the amendments be voted upon at the March Full Commission meeting. The motion was approved.

**Emergency Planning Committee Proposal:**
The Commission was provided a handout summarizing the development of an Emergency Planning Committee within the WRC. Chris explained that this Committee would primarily focus on municipal and regional emergency planning needs, and would: provide a means for Commissioner input into the WRC Emergency Planning Program; would develop a cadre of emergency planning advocates that could reach out to towns on a peer-to-peer basis; and would develop a group of Commissioners who could supplement staff resources in the event of another widespread event such as Irene. This Committee would function differently than the established Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC 6) which focuses on planning for emergency operations. Grafton Commissioner Eric Stevens further explained the differences between planning and operations. The Executive Board approved this proposal at their most recent meeting on February 14th; there was no action needed by the Commission at this time.

**Executive Director’s Report & Other Business:**
1) Chris informed Commissioners that WRC Staff will be planning a farewell reception to celebrate the retirement of WRC Special Projects Planner, Kendall Gifford. This is most likely to be held just prior to next month’s Commission meeting, but we will
keep Commissioners updated on details. (Note: this plan has changed; the reception will not be held ahead of the March meeting.)

2) Chris provided a brief explanation about how the position vacated by Kendall will be filled. WRC will be looking to hire someone with GIS and other technical skills who can serve as a GIS/Planning Assistant on transportation issues. It is our intent to evaluate this new direction prior to the end of the fiscal year to determine if any changes should be made going forward.

3) Chris explained that Matt Mann is working together with Cullen Meves on the update of the Transportation Plan.

Charlie Goodwin moved adjournment, seconded by all who were present.
Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Collins