Commissioners Present: Jodi French (Chair), Maggie Bartenhagen, Nick Bartenhagen, Tom Buchanan, Jenepher Burnell, Jack Cunningham, Charles Goodwin, Mary Alice Herbert, Emily Kunreuther, Alice Maes, Ray Mara, Jane Morano Purdy, Edgar Rice, Lew Sorenson, Roger Turner, Piet van Loon, Nicolas Wallaert, John Whitman, Norman Wright

Citizen Interest Commissioners Present: None Present

Guests Present: Brian Searles – VT Agency of Transportation, Olga Peters – The Commons, Dora Bouboulis, Gary Fox, Todd Lawley, Leona Linney – Members of the public

Staff Present: Chris Campany, Matt Mann, Ashley Collins

Introductions: There was a quorum of 14 towns present.

Convened: 7:07PM

Administrative Items & Reports:

Secretary’s Report: On a motion by J. Whitman, seconded by J. Cunningham, the minutes from the March & April meetings were approved.

Financial Report: On a motion by N. Wright, seconded by J. Cunningham, the March & April Finance reports were approved.

Brattleboro Town Plan & Process: On a motion by C. Goodwin, seconded by M. Bartenhagen; to ratify the vote from the April 30th Commission meeting, the Brattleboro Town Plan Confirmation and Planning Process was approved.

Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT)

Vermont Secretary of Transportation, Brian Searles was present to discuss the AOT’s plans, and to hear about transportation needs and issues in the Windham Region. Secretary Searles outlined Vermont’s mission and vision, and the state of the current transportation system including, highways and bridges, park and rides, public transit, airports, and state owned rail lines. He presented slides that detailed how the system is performing as well as the current conditions of bridges and paved roads. Secretary Searles discussed Act 153 Section 40 Funding Study where they have identified the funding gap, and explained the transportation revenue sources, one of which is the gasoline tax. The annual decline in vehicle miles traveled and gas consumed has reduced this revenue stream. The budget for FY 2014 was
reviewed, as well as other funding proposals; and Secretary Searles explained how they were able to avoid certain budget cuts. Commissioners mentioned that there has been support by the Commission for a gas tax tied to the rate of inflation. The WRC’s role in facilitating the review of the aesthetic components of the I-91 Bridge 9 replacement bridge over the West River/Route 30 was mentioned. The Secretary was both thanked for including us in the project and asked for his thoughts about the applicability of the process elsewhere. He was also given feedback on how the process went. There was a request that in the future when visitor centers are constructed that Vermont products be used, and there was a suggestion that rail service should be established between Brattleboro and the Northeast Kingdom. Support was voiced for the park and ride lots in the region, and appreciation that the state park and ride in Putney will finally be constructed.

Highlights from Committee Chairs:
Transportation: The Committee’s priority is seeking approval on the Transportation Plan Update.
Brownfields: Norm Wright mentioned that Associate Director, Susan McMahon, and Planner, Cullen Meves are currently attending the Brownfields Conference in Atlanta, GA.
Emergency Planning: Jodi French asked Commissioners to consider becoming a member of the Emergency Planning Committee.
Project Review: Jack Cunningham noted that the Committee is currently working on the Regional Plan Update.

Executive Director’s Report & Other Business:
1. Executive Director, Chris Campany reminded Commissioners that the Executive Board is in need of two new members, and asked Commissioners to send nominations to Carolyn Partridge, or to him; the vote will take place at the June Commission meeting.
2. There will be a Commissioner Orientation held just prior to the June Commission meeting if at least two Commissioners sign up. This meeting will likely take place in the Bellows Falls area.
3. Executive Director, Chris Campany provided a brief update on the Energy Generation Siting Policy Commission Report that had just been released.
4. WRC has applied for a National Endowment of the Arts Grant to work with the Town of Londonderry to engage the community in envisioning how the community could use the land that will be owned by the town as a result of Hazard Mitigation Grant buyouts.

C. Goodwin moved adjournment.
Meeting adjourned at 8:32PM

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Collins