WINDHAM
REGIONAL
COMMISSION

Executive Board Minutes
August 11, 2026

Location: Remote meeting via Zoom.
Members Present: Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair; Bonnie North, Rick Cowan, Bill Dunkel, Steve Lembke, Gretchen Havreluk, Stephan Chait
Absent: Ann Golob, Jim Pinkerton Jr.
Staff present: Chris Campany, Executive Director, Inessa Muse, Finance Manager
Public/Guests: Alan Block (Dover Commissioner)
Presenter: None.
Call to Order: Commissioner Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.

Administrative Reports:
Secretary's Report: On a motion by Commissioner Lembke, seconded by Commissioner North, the May 12, 2026 minutes were **approved with one abstention**.
Quarterly Financial Report & Audit were both accepted. Finance Manager, Inessa Muse was asked if the sweep account is covered by the FDIC, which it is. Inessa was also asked if we continue to maintain lines of credit. The WRC has access to two.

Proposed FY2027 Work Program & Budget:
Chris and Inessa presented the FY2027 draft work program and budget proposal. They noted the Finance Committee met last week and endorsed the budget. It was explained that the budget assumptions this year are quite solid as the relative uncertainty related to federal funding in FY2026 has diminished. On a motion by Commissioner North, seconded by Commissioner Dunkel, the Board voted to recommend adoption of the FY2027 work program and budget by the Full Commission. Staff were commended for the development of an easy-to-understand budget, budget narrative, and work program.

Nominating Committee Proposed Officer, Executive Board, and Citizen Interest Commissioner Slates: Nominating Committee Chair Lembke explained that all officers, Executive Board Members, and Citizen Interest Commissioners are interested in continuing their service. To that end he proposed that they be presented as slates at the Full Commission meeting, and that nominations also be taken from the floor. He asked that the Board endorse this approach. On a motion by Commissioner Chait, seconded by Commissioner Cowan, the board unanimously supported the nominations and election process as suggested.

Committee Appointments: None.

Executive Director's Report:
Chris said that Liana Rice had begun work as a Planner in July and is fitting in well. She will be taking on emergency planning and staffing the Project Review Committee, as well as a number of other tasks and projects. She is being directly supervised by Senior Planner Matt Bachler.

He noted that he and other staff had attended Land Use Review Board (LURB) meetings where they discussed their formal comments on the WRC draft regional plan. It appears most comments will be advisory and will not require significant substantive changes to the plan or policies. One policy that did garner a lot of attention relates to the WRC's somewhat prescriptive policy that "when appropriate" Act 250 applicants that propose to create 50 jobs or more should identify housing availability and may be required to contribute to a housing mitigation fund to be used in the region. This policy has been in the plan for at least the last 3 iterations but has never been supported by the District Environmental Commission as it has been deemed beyond plan authority. LURB members also questioned whether or not this policy might be at odds with economic development goals if it creates an impediment to development. Chris has asked staff to draft alternative language that asks major employers to assess availability of housing without the requirement that they mitigate any shortfalls.

It appears the long-delayed FY2026 Emergency Management Performance Grant through Vermont Emergency Management may become available within the next month, and that funding is also anticipated for the coming year. He announced his intent to retire when he turns 65 in 2032 and that while this is in the future, his retirement and that of several other staff over a similar time period has prompted plans for succession for project and program leaders among staff. He also suggested the Executive Board consider strategies to recruit new commissioners to serve as officers and Executive Board members over the coming years. The Board agreed with the idea and will discuss strategies at future meetings. Lastly, he explained that he will be working remotely over the next couple of weeks as he helps his brother recover from a medical procedure.

Committee Chair Reports: Gabby explained that a new commissioner orientation was held and thanked Commissioner Lembke for joining. It was recorded so it will be available for viewing as new commissioners come on board. She also explained that she had sent letters to chronically absent town-appointed commissioners but had not heard back from any of them. She asked that this be added as a follow-up item for the September Executive Board meeting.

Public Comments: None.

Review of Action Items: Make appointments to Personnel Committee; discuss Executive Board succession planning; follow-up on absentee commissioners.

Adjournment: On a motion by Commissioner Lembke, seconded by Commissioner Havreluk, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m. by a unanimous vote.