



**Executive Board Minutes
March 12, 2024**

Location: Remote meeting via Zoom.

Members Present: Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair; Steve Lembke, Bonnie North, Jack Cunningham; Jim Pinkerton, Tim Arsenault,

Absent: Tim Arsenault, Carolyn Partridge, Jack Cunningham

Staff present: Chris Company, Executive Director; Inessa Muse, Finance Manager

Public/Guests: none

Presenter: none

Call to Order: Commissioner Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Additions/Changes to Agenda: none

Secretary's Report: On a motion by Commissioner Lembke, seconded by Commissioner Golob, the January 9, 2024 minutes were approved with one abstention. It was noted that the proper date of the minutes being approved were incorrect on the agenda.

Finance Report: Finance Manager Inessa Muse reviewed the status of the audit and the year to date actual revenues and expenses compared to the budget. It was noted that at this point in the budget year the WRC is on or very close to target across categories. Commissioner Chait asked about a specific item showing a negative entry under municipalities. Inessa said she would follow up (it reflected reimbursement to a town that had overpaid its annual assessment). It was noted that with the passing of long-serving Commissioner and Finance Committee chair that the WRC had lost someone with a lot of knowledge about public accounting and the WRC's finances, and that recruitment of an additional Finance Committee member was needed.

Winhall Town Plan Amendment & Planning Process Confirmation: Chair Ciuffreda introduced the Winhall Town Plan amendment and the Planning Coordination Committee's

recommendation for approval. On a motion by Commissioner North, seconded by Commissioner Golob, the Winhall Town Plan Amendment was approved by a unanimous vote.

On a motion by Commissioner Lembke, seconded by Commissioner North, the Winhall planning process was confirmed.

Brownfields Funding Request: Associate Director Sue Westa asked that the Board approve a request for \$50,000 from the state in brownfields assessment funding. On a motion by Commissioner Golob, seconded by Commissioner Pinkerton, the request was approved by a unanimous vote.

Committee Appointments: Kara Halpern, Commissioner from Weston, was appointed to the Community Development Committee on a motion by Commissioner North, seconded by Commissioner Golob. During the discussion it was confirmed that the WRC Bylaws require Executive Board “review and approval” of Chair appointments to committees.

Executive Director’s Report: At the beginning of the meeting it was suggested that the Board authorize a contribution to a philanthropic organization as a memorial in honor of the decades of service by John Bennett as a planner and Associate Director of the WRC. John had passed away earlier in the month. Chris suggested \$500 be contributed to either the Connecticut River Conservancy or the Deerfield Valley Watershed Association (the latter is now a part of the former). This was one of the organizations identified by John’s family. This amount was consistent with a memorial made after the passing of Finance Manager Mike Shaughnessy. The Board endorsed this approach. Chris provided an update on the following items:

- UVM Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships Wastewater Study
- Municipal Technical Assistance Program including outreach to “expansion towns.”
- 4-town Housing Planning Pilot with Jamaica, Londonderry, Weston and Winhall in collaboration with UMass Amherst and the American Institute of Architects Community by Design Program.
- UMass Amherst Route 30/West River corridor UMass Amherst landscape architecture capstone senior studio project.
- Norwich University Rock River Hydrology Methodology project.
- Lincoln Institute Climate Migration Discussion to be held in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- May Full Commission In-Person Meeting Planning
- 4-state regional planning commission flood and climate adaptation planning
- federal initiative
- March Full Commission (remote): Cory Ross, Windham County Natural Resources
- Conservation District living with rivers and streams project
- Legislative Update

Chris asked if the Executive Board felt comfortable with the nature of the projects he’s been moving forward and the pace, noting that often he’ll need to create opportunities as they arise.

Those present said they were happy with the approach, and the nature of the projects and engagement.

Committee Chair Updates: None.

Review of Action Items: Chris will follow up with Commissioners Golob and North about intermunicipal planning discussions going forward.

Public Comments: None.

Adjournment: On a motion by Commissioner Golob, seconded by Commissioner North, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.