



**Executive Board Minutes
April 8, 2025**

Location: Hybrid meeting via Zoom and WRC Conference Room.

Members Present: Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair; Jim Pinkerton, Bonnie North, Stephan Chait, Steve Lembke

Absent: Ann Golob

Staff present: Chris Campany, Executive Director, Matt Bachler, Senior Planner, Colin Bratton, Transportation Planner

Public/Guests: None.

Presenter: None.

Call to Order: Commissioner Gabby Ciuffreda, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Additions/Changes to Agenda: none

Secretary's Report: On a motion by Commissioner Lembke, seconded by Commissioner North the minutes from the February 11, 2025 meeting were **approved** unanimously.

VT Rail Plan Comments Referred by Transportation Committee

Commissioner Chait, Transportation Committee (TAC) Chairperson explained that VTrans held a hearing on the initiatives for the VT Rail Plan on March 10th. The TAC convened on March 17th with Senator Harrison and Representative Burke in attendance where they discussed the plan and whether a letter of support should be submitted. TAC met again on April 3rd to review and approve the letter drafted by WRC Transportation Planner, Colin Bratton; which was then submitted to the Executive Board for its review. If approved by the Board, the letter would then be submitted to VTrans. With focus on how the VTrans Rail Plan related to the region and the policies of the regional plan. Colin highlighted the extension of the Valley Flyer service out of Greenfield, the Bellows Falls Train Station, and providing details on expanding the existing service and how this would benefit the region. The Board appreciated the inclusion of the eye-opening statistics that highlight the intensity of use of the Brattleboro station. On a motion by Commissioner Chait, seconded by Commissioner North, the Board approved sending the letter to VTrans by a unanimous vote. Chris

commended Colin on 8 successful Transportation Alternatives Grants for the region out of a total of 19 statewide.

Winhall Town Plan Approval & Confirmation

Chair Ciuffreda reviewed the new procedure whereby staff reviews the plan and holds the hearing, as opposed to the Planning Coordination Committee which has been dissolved, and the staff recommendation if brought to the Executive Board for consideration. WRC Senior Planner, Matt Bachler reviewed the hearing and staff comments, noting that it meets all statutory requirements. He also reviewed the Winhall municipal planning process. Staff recommended approval of the town plan and confirmation of the planning process. Commissioner Pinkerton made a motion to approve the Winhall Town Plan and confirm its planning process, seconded by Commissioner North. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Windham Regional Plan Adoption Update & Hearings/Adoption Timeline

WRC Senior Planner, Matt Bachler reviewed the public engagement process. No comments were received that suggested changes to the plan. The Project Review Committee had specific plan policy update suggestions based upon their review of projects and application of the plan. Those changes were made and provided to the Project Review Committee for their consideration in March. The website/plan designer has been given the changes. Staff would like to share the plan the Wednesday ahead of the April 29th Full Commission meeting, and ask them to approve going forward to Public Hearing. He provided the full plan approval process schedule, with a target for approval being the July 29th Full Commission meeting. There was unanimous agreement to proceed with this schedule.

Committee Appointments: On a motion by Chair Ciuffreda, seconded by Commissioner North, the Board unanimously approved Commissioner Steven Lembke's appointment to chair the Nominations Committee and Commissioner Jim Pinkerton's appointment to chair the Project Review Committee. Commissioner Ian Hefele from Vernon was appointed to the Transportation Committee.

Executive Director's Report: Chris provided an overview of the March convening of selectboards in collaboration with VLCT and BDCC. At least 15 of the region's 26 selectboards were represented. Principal challenges include capacity to do work, opportunities for intermunicipal collaboration, and uncertainties related to changes in federal programs and funding. Related to the latter, Chris brought the Board up to date on the latest in federal funding shifts, including the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants, the Building Resilient Infrastructure & Communities grant program, and the Emergency Management Planning Grant program. Chris also called the Board's attention to comments staff filed on behalf of the Commission related to the state's draft water quality permit (401 permit) for the relicensing of the dams on the Connecticut River.

Committee Chair Reports: None.

Review of Action Items: Commissioner Lembke will convene the Nominating Committee.

Public Comments: None.

Adjournment: approved by a unanimous vote on a motion by Commissioner North, seconded by Commissioner Lembke, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.