

LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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MINUTES
LRPC COMMISSION MEETING
 Carroll County Community Action Program Office
 Tamworth, NH
March 26, 2012

PRESIDING: Stanley Bean, Jr.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

QUORUM: No

COMMUNITIES PRESENT: 12

MEMBERS PRESENT:**OTHERS:**

Janet Towse (Alexandria)	Jan Collins
Jean Marshall (Freedom)	Samuel Perry
Stanley Bean, Jr., Chair (Gilmanton)	Bob Ward
Mitch Manseau (Hebron)	
Dean Anson, II (Laconia)	LRPC STAFF:
Warren Hutchins, Vice Chair (Laconia)	Kimon Koulet
William Bayard (Meredith)	Karin Landry, Recording Secretary
Herbert Vadney (Meredith)	
Herbert Farnham (Moultonborough)	SPEAKERS:
Barbara Perry (Moultonborough)	Wayne Crowley, Chair, Northfield PB, LRPC Comm.
Wayne Crowley (Northfield)	Kimon Koulet, Executive Director, LRPC
Douglas Read (Northfield)	
Patricia Jones (Ossipee)	
Patricia Farley (Tamworth)	
Karen McNiff (Tamworth)	
Tom Peters (Alt., Tamworth)	
Stephen Wingate (Tuftonboro)	
Roger Murray, III (Wolfeboro)	
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	
John Cotton, Scott Dunn, Steve Favorite, Richard Waitt,	

1. Welcome and Introduction

S. Bean called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. A motion to declare a quorum for the purpose of conducting business was made and unanimously approved. *M/S/P Farley/Perry.*

2. Motion for Approval of the January 12, 2012 Commission meeting minutes.

S. Bean called for a motion to approve the January 12, 2012 Commission meeting minutes, as presented. A motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2012 Commission meeting was made and unanimously approved. *M/S/P Crowley/Perry.*

3. **The Economics of Shared Community Services**

W. Crowley, Northfield Planning Board Chairman and LRPC Commissioner, provided an overview of regionalization efforts that the town of Northfield and surrounding communities participate in. He encouraged those in attendance to pose questions throughout the presentation, and the information provided in response to said questions is included in the summary of Mr. Crowley's presentation:

- **Internet/Cable Procurement** - In an effort to attain increased leverage and decreased legal costs, 13 communities have joined forces to negotiate the contract with Metrocast. An individual contract will be tailored for each community.
- **Water District** - The Village District of Tilton and Northfield joined to form a not for profit water district that is governed by an elected Commission.
- **Tilton/Northfield Fire & EMS District** - The District serves 9-10,000 residents and shares equipment, resources, facilities, one command structure. The community exhibited its support for the arrangement when it rejected a proposal to dissolve the District a few years ago that lowered costs by reducing coverage.
- **Fuel Procurement** - An intergovernmental agreement has been entered into by Tilton, Northfield, Winnisquam School District, TN Fire District, and TN Water District to procure and store gasoline and diesel fuel. According to the terms of the agreement, a supplier agrees to an annual reduced rate for delivery based on bulk consumption. The School District is the largest user and has the authority to negotiate all pricing under the agreement. Gasoline and diesel fuel is stored in one tank with separate compartments on fire district property located in Northfield and overseen by the Northfield highway garage. There is no incentive for the tank being located on fire department property. Each party is assessed a surcharge per gallon used that is used to build a fund for tank replacement and clean up costs in the event of tank failure. In the event of tank failure, fuel would be procured from a local dealer until the problem is resolved. The group has not obtained liability insurance.
- **Winnisquam Regional School District** - The District is comprised of Tilton, Northfield and Sanbornton and serves 1,500 students with one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools. One School Board is elected by the District, with three representatives from each town serving on the Board. For the last six years, a formula has been used allocating 70% of costs to the number of students served and 30% of costs to each town's total assessed evaluation. The arrangement originally called for a 60%/40% split, but evolved to the present arrangement. When state aid received by the towns of Northfield and Sanbornton is considered, all three towns effectively pay about the same per student.
- **Energy Procurement** - ISO-NE is responsible for buying all electricity produced from entities generating power in New England. In turn, they sell that electricity, typically on the wholesale market. About 10 years ago, the State of New Hampshire authorized resellers to sell electricity in the state to public entities, commercial businesses and private households. There are currently 51 authorized resellers in New Hampshire. The towns of Belmont, Sanbornton, Tilton, Northfield, and the Winnisquam School District joined to pool their usage and negotiate with resellers for a reduced price. While the resellers were not willing to sell electricity to the group as a whole, they agreed to sell to the individual towns at a reduced price. Approximately a year and a half ago, the group contracted with Halifax America at a reduced cost per kilowatt hour. Mr. Crowley explained that energy bills include transmission charges and energy procurement charges. PSNH owns all transmission lines in the state of New Hampshire, and all transmission charges are paid to them. A separate bill is issued from the reseller for charges related to energy usage. The town of Northfield is saving approximately \$1,500 annually in energy costs by procuring energy from Halifax-America. Resellers offer a variable energy rate based on when the energy is used, and allow buyers to

revert to PSNH without penalty. Mr. Crowley informed that the reseller Resident Power (residentpower.com) supplies energy to homeowners at a rate lower than PSNH.

4. Bicycling and Walking: Transportation choices for New Hampshire's Lakes Region.

LRPC Principal Planner M. Izard was actively involved in putting the plan together, but was unable to attend the meeting because of illness. In his absence, LRPC Executive Director K. Koulet presented on an overview of the draft plan, which was completed in December 2011 and submitted to the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) in January 2012. The objective of the plan is to enhance previous efforts such as the bicycle and pedestrian plan of 2006. The planning process showed that there is a perception that safe walking and biking plans are difficult to find in the Lakes Region. K. Koulet shared statistics relating to pedestrian fatalities, health issues, and medical costs related to obesity in the Lakes Region. In 2010, a caucus of municipal representatives, bicycle and conservation groups, and individuals with a vested interest in an active community was held. In 2011, five public meetings were held and an internet survey was conducted. Local bicycle clubs were invited to participate in the public meetings and outreach efforts were made to solicit input and make the study known. As a result of said efforts, an assessment of the Region's strengths and weaknesses was made, and a Vision Statement was crafted for a bicycle and pedestrian plan: *A purposefully connected network of trails, sidewalks, road shoulders, and markings promoting safe and enjoyable bicycle and pedestrian mobility. Design and maintenance of livable, complete streets that support transportation, recreation, health, and economic interests throughout the Lakes Region.* Local bicycling clubs support the plan. D. Hanley, President of the WOW Trail and member of the NH Rail Trail Coalition informed that the plan is supported by both organizations. Dialogue ensued regarding the economic benefits of a connected network of trails, including the number of jobs created within a state by a bicycle infrastructure project, which is higher than a road infrastructure project without bike or pedestrian facilities. A study administered by BCEDC on the impact of the WOW trail on the City of Laconia and Belknap County showed an economic impact of \$1.8 million annually, including 31 permanent jobs, and \$780,000 in annual earning. D. Hadley informed that studies of a similar nature in other parts of the county resulted in similar findings.

K. Koulet reviewed examples of the sites that were nominated and evaluated in 15 communities, including the Winnisquam Scenic Trail, Northern Rail Trail, Merrimack County, corridor improvements along Rte. 25 in Center Harbor, and the Ossipee Lake Trail. A design supplement including additional information is available online at the LRPC office. He explained the lane modification program, which decreases lane width and creates a wider shoulder when resurfacing is done by the DOT. To date, all municipal requests for lane modification have been granted. The request must come from the Board of Selectmen, and is a no cost technique for increasing the opportunity for wider shoulders for bicycling and walking. The program calls for a decrease in speed limits, which results in a drop in the number of collisions. K. Koulet encouraged commissioners to publicize it in their communities. He shared the walkability index for a number of Lakes Region communities, which is based on proximity to businesses and services and results in increased property values.

Recommendations were compiled to guide LRPCs efforts to support the vision for livable streets and walkable communities. Subsequently, DOT submitted additional recommendations:

- Prioritization of planned improvements
- Identify existing funding opportunities
- How do identified improvements rank in comparison to other modal improvements?
- Implementation schedule for goals.

TAC voted to recommend the plan for adoption at their February meeting. P. Farley suggested that LRPC provide information to municipalities regarding the lane modification program and pointed out that doing so will be particularly helpful to those who were unable to attend the meeting. Several

of those in attendance expressed support for doing so. K. Koulet will provide additional data regarding a decrease in accidents when lane widths are decreased. D. Hanley will use information included in the plan when applying for grant funding for the WOW trail. K. Koulet will post the slides for the presentation on LRPCs website in the next few days.

A motion to approve Bicycling and Walking: Transportation Choices for New Hampshire's Lakes Region was unanimously passed. *M/S/P Crowley/Farley*

5. Other Discussion

K. Koulet informed that the topics for the April commission meeting are the FY 13 budget and broadband. The location is yet to be determined.

8. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8 p.m. was made and unanimously passed. *M/S/P Perry/Farley.*