

LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

103 Main Street, Suite #3
Meredith, NH 03253
Tel 603.279.8171
www.lakesrpc.org



LRPC Executive Board Meeting

Minutes of March 13, 2024

Approved April 10, 2024

PRESENT	Dean Anson, Cristina Ashjian, Tavis Austin, John Ayer (Chair), Mardean Badger, Bill Bolton, David Katz (Vice Chair) [virtually], David Kerr (Treasurer), Lianne Prentice (Secretary)
ABSENT	Mark Hildebrand
STAFF	Jeff Hayes (Executive Director), Linda Waldron (Executive Administrative Assistant)
PUBLIC	Stephanie Maltais (Meredith), Richard Casale (Alton), Eric & Kristin Bredbury (Alton), Steven Parson (Alton)
LOCATION	LRPC Office, 1 st Floor Conference Room, Meredith

1. Call to Order

Chair Ayer started the meeting at 9:01 AM at which time a quorum was established. He recognized and welcomed Stephanie Maltais, who is the Administrative Assistant to the Community Development Department in Meredith and who has been nominated as an alternate member of the Executive Board. Chair Ayer also recognized that Vice-Chair David Katz is attending virtually. It was noted that several members of the public were in attendance who will be heard from shortly.

2. Minutes

The minutes of December's Executive Board meeting were presented for approval. Mardean Badger made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Treasurer Kerr. A voice vote was taken indicating all present were in favor.

Motion passed.

3. Finance/Treasurer Reports

Executive Director Hayes stated that there is currently a small deficit and noted this was primarily due to February having 3 payroll periods and that all quarterly contract payments have not been received yet.

4. Monthly Executive Reports

Executive Director Hayes provided a brief review of the three reports presented and there were no questions or comments.

Chair Ayer suggested that item #8 be taken out of sequence in order to accommodate our guests who would like to speak with us on a pressing matter of concern to them. There were no objections.

8. Public Input

Richard Casale, a resident of Alton, was the spokesperson for the group that assembled for the meeting. As abutters to the project property, not only are their concerns personal but they are also regional. Mr. Casale explained the proposed project to the Board, advising that at present it consists of a mountain top event facility near the Alton/Gilford town line comprising of an estate house, several outlying homes, an entertainment amphitheater/pavilion, a helipad, and other amenities. This will not only disrupt the neighborhood leading up to the facility, but create developments of regional impact including a significant increase in traffic, noise levels and visual impact (not only locally, but around the entire lake), a strain on water and other municipal resources, etc. Board members provided Mr. Casale's group with some information and suggestions moving forward, but advised that LRPC is not in a position to provide any formal input to the Town of Alton directly. Chair Ayer advised that he would look into the matter further insofar as it may pertain to or affect the Town of Gilford. The group departed after this presentation.

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5. Committee Reports

- a. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Treasurer Kerr stated that the TAC meeting in March was held in Holderness and was very well attended. Members were advised that proposals are being sought for the next ten year plan update and that there is \$20,000 in engineering assistance available. The impending solar eclipse which will occur on April 8th and its potential impact on communities was discussed in great detail. It was noted that the bike/ped plan has been completed and that the majority of the membership approved same to move forward for adoption. Treasurer Kerr feels that the final plan needs to be distributed in its entirety before being adopted by the Executive Board.
- b. Search Committee. Executive Director Hayes advised that we have received several applications and that three applicants stand out. The Committee will next be looking to conduct interviews after which it will be determined whether or not to extend an offer or continue with the search.

6. Old Business

- a. New Commissioners/Executive Board Vacancies. Chair Ayer introduced alternate nominee Stephanie Maltais who provided the Board with some background information on herself. The additional nominees were reviewed, and it was noted that all have been contacted and are willing to accept their respective positions. Vice Chair Katz proposed a motion to endorse the recommendations of the Chair which was seconded by Tavis Austin. A voice vote was taken indicating all present were in favor. **Motion passed**. A second motion was proffered by Vice Chair Katz to place all members of the Executive Board, as currently constituted, on the ballot for election at the June annual meeting. The motion was seconded by Tavis Austin. A voice vote was taken indicating all present were in favor. **Motion passed**.
- b. Transformational Planning Grant Pilot Awarded. Executive Director Hayes announced that the application filed through Grafton County on behalf of three regional planning commissions has been awarded in the amount of \$100,000 and is now pending Governor and Executive Council approval. Funds will be split among the awardees and are to be used to focus on affordable housing with an eye towards water and sewer or renewable energy projects.

7. New Business

- a. Draft FY25 Budget. Executive Director Hayes reported that the budget has increased significantly – 30%. This is primarily due to new contracts and increased HHW income. There was a slight increase in municipal dues also noted. Investments are doing very well, and we have healthy reserves. This budget also proposes to dip into those reserves for use in the possible creation of an executive deputy director position.

Tavis Austin left at approximately 10:35 AM

There was some discussion regarding this new proposed position had as well as a review of the projected duties and responsibilities of same such as balance of leadership, assistance in the management and pursuit of economic development programs and federal funding, expansion of grant writing services, funding prioritization, etc. Executive Director Hayes went on to say that there is a significant increase for consultants which includes UPWP, Brownfields, targeted planning grant, website updates and renewal.

A slight interruption in the discussion occurred as Cristina Ashjian needed to leave. However, she provided her roundtable contribution in that she reminded the Board that Moultonborough does not have their town meeting until May, and that tonight there is a planning board zoning amendment hearing. Some of the proposed items may be relevant to Center Harbor as it relates to the town line project (which has been discussed in the past) such as density changes in the overlay district. Last week's school board hearing contained a bond request for \$8+ million which was approved by one vote. Cristina also expressed interest in serving on the Awards Committee. She left at approximately 10:55 AM.

Discussion picked back up with some further discussion concerning the proposed executive deputy director's salary and benefits package.

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- b. Brownfields Contract Update. Executive Director Hayes stated that we have recently signed a contract with Nobis Engineering after having received a recommendation from the Search Committee that they scored the highest of all proposals received. We have worked with them in the past and have begun meeting with communities interested in brownfield assessments.
- c. Title VI Policy. This has been updated with the addition of Appendix B which identifies the complaint procedure. Vice Chair Katz offered a motion to adopt the update as presented. A second was provided by Bill Bolton. A voice vote was taken indicating all present were in favor. **Motion passed.**
- d. Annual Meeting.
- *Establish Nominating Committee and Ballot*. Addressed in item 6a above.
 - *Establish Awards Committee*. Dean Anson, Lianne Prentice, and Cristina Ashjian (who volunteered earlier in the meeting). Discussion was had concerning the nomination forms, providing additional information, and distribution.
 - *Sponsorships*. It was noted that we have acquired 7 sponsors as of this date with a total of \$3,000 pledged.

We have secured our guest speaker, Laconia Mayor Andrew Hosmer, who will be discussing the Laconia State School rehabilitation project.

- e. Alton Event Facility Proposal | Possible DRI. Addressed earlier in the meeting in conjunction with Public Input.
8. **Public Input**. See above.
9. **Executive (Non-Public) Session**. N/A
10. **Announcements**
- a. LRPC FY23 Annual Report. This was provided to the Board via email and is posted on LRPC's website. No discussion.
- b. FY25 Congressionally Directed Spending. Executive Director Hayes announced that earmarks are back and urged communities to submit applications directly to Senator Shaheen's office.

11. Roundtable

D. Katz, New Hampton—New Hampton is applying for a grant to rehabilitate their 1798 Town House. He advised that if any municipality has historical property that needs work, the state, through the Division of Historical Resources, offers grants via the moose plate program for historic improvements of up to \$20,000.

L. Prentice, Tamworth—Lianne reports that the town transfer station is looking to upgrade its recycling capabilities and has been working with an engineer to this end. Unfortunately, it has been determined that the price to upgrade the current site is too costly, so they are considering the purchase of a new piece of property to accommodate this need which also has room for future growth. The Planning Board has engaged a contractor to do a build-out analysis of the town with an aim towards possible growth expansion.

B. Bolton, Plymouth—The Plymouth Selectboard has appointed a new Planning Board alternate as there is currently no election process in place. However, they are looking to change this procedure through ballot. Roadwork is ongoing and they are finally starting the downtown section. Highland Street is being redone again, which involves some repaving and a proposed rotary to aid in traffic control.

S. Maltais, Meredith—Stephanie informed that the old Girl Scout Camp on Meredith Neck Road has been sold to a local developer who is currently working on conservation efforts as a prelude to development. The short term rental controversy

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is still a hot topic and the proposed zoning amendment failed at last night's town vote. Meredith is also working on a license concerning same as well.

D. Anson, Laconia—The City of Laconia has hired a new Planning Director who formerly worked in zoning. In the past 2 months, he has hired personnel to fill various vacancies in the planning department. The Winnisquam Watershed Network has received a 319 grant for three properties, two of which are Deer Park in Meredith (erosion issues) and Gale Avenue in Laconia (stormwater runoff). A plan is underway to build rain gardens on Gale Avenue to slow the flow of stormwater and hopefully prevent materials from depositing into the lake. Also of note is a con scheme going around whereby scammers are attempting to sell property which doesn't belong to them. The Conservation Commission is working with the City to develop a strategy to control the milfoil.

M. Badger, Ashland—Ashland's Planning Board has granted conditional approval for a 12 lot subdivision on Thompson Street as well as a 2 lot subdivision on Routes 3 & 25 along the Squam River. They are still dealing with the golf course, the current issue being parking and clubhouse expansion. The property owners who were denied approval to construct a quarry have been doing some blasting in an attempt to convert a trail to a road. They have been served with a cease and desist order. All zoning amendments and building regulation amendments passed at town meeting. The regional waste energy plant proposal failed, however, with a no vote on the warrant article.

D. Kerr, Barnstead—David reports on the ongoing proposed subdivision project and the standing issues of wetlands, engineering, and traffic studies. The town is attempting to tie in the road improvements required of the developer with additional ones the town would like to have done.

J. Ayer, Gilford—There have been 11 new applications for this month's Planning Board meeting, 4 of which are short term rentals. Four zoning amendments passed at town meeting, one of which was a petition for a rezone of the old Arlberg property. Gilford had proposed to combine their senior housing and workforce housing provisions which also passed at town meeting. Lastly, they need to update their variance expiration from 1 year to 2 years to comply with state statute which also passed.

12. **Adjournment**

Chair Ayer adjourned the meeting at 12:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Waldron
Executive Administrative Assistant