

**Commission Meeting**

**Friday, December 20, 2024 9:00-10:30 AM**

**Hybrid Meeting (Conference Rm 1A, SRPC Office & via Zoom)**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Dave Landry, Dover, called the meeting to order and asked for introductions:

**Members attending in person:** Chris Kinville, Brookfield; Marshall Goldberg, Brookfield; Michael Lehrman, Durham; Katrin Kasper, Lee; Tom Falk, Madbury; Kate Buzard, Middleton; John Mullen, Middleton; Peter Nelson, Newmarket; Barbara Holstein, Rochester; Kevin Sullivan, Rochester; Joe Boudreau, Rochester; Rick Healey, Rochester; Mark Richardson, Somersworth; Michael Bobinsky, Somersworth

**Guests in person:** Abigail Lyon

**Staff in person:** Jen Czysz, Kyle Pimental, Michael Polizzotti, Rachel Dewey  
Owen Corcoran, Blair Haney

**Members attending on Zoom:**

Lindsey Williams, Dover; Steve Brown, Dover; Mary Woodward, Lee; Steve Diamond, Barrington

**Guests attending on Zoom:** Sarah Wrightsman, Newmarket; Vanessa Price, Barrington; Jack Wade, NHDES; Jeff Schloss; Mac Bavier, NHDES

**Staff attending on Zoom:** Mark Davie, Megan Taylor-Fetter

**2. Commissioner Roundtable**

K. Kasper reported that Clean Energy NH will support communities on their DERA grant application. They are working closely with DES and helping towns identify what machines/vehicles are eligible, getting quotes, and most happily looking for EV replacements when available. Right now, most of the applications are for diesel to diesel.

S. Diamond stated that he was in the market for electric powered transportation and ultimately went with a one-wheel electric unicycle. He said he would need to go through the Route 4 roundabout to get to Durham, which will be a challenge.

K. Pimental reported that 4 municipalities in our region, Rochester, Somersworth, Farmington, and Dover have been recognized as Housing Champions. SRPC provided technical assistance to those municipalities in the application process.



### **3. Action Items**

#### **a. Approval of Mid-Year Budget Amendment**

Tabled to January meeting.

### **4. Presentation**

K. Pimental introduced Abigail Lyon. Abigail, who is the Community Engagement Manager at the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP), provided an overview of the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership and the Piscataqua Region Environmental Planning Assessment (PREPA) Grant Program. PREP is a field-based program and a non-governmental, non-regulatory agency housed under the US Environmental Protection Agency. PREP is charged with hearing from stakeholders in communities, bringing federal resources down to the local level, collecting information and data across our region and sharing it. PREP focuses on the two estuaries and looks at the full watershed called the Piscataqua Region Watershed.

A. Lyon reported that funding for the program varies. Based in the EPA and part of the National Estuary Program, PREP receives an operating grant from EPA which is administered through the University of New Hampshire. In addition, PREP receives funding through the bipartisan infrastructure law for which there is no match requirement.

Examples of successful projects that were completed using this funding were shared with the Commissioners. Attendees participated in a facilitated discussion to brainstorm ideas for eligible projects to be submitted as part of the next round of proposals. March 31 is the proposal deadline, and awards will be announced on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

PREPA is hosting a grant webinar on January 15. Abigail will be hosting office hours in February and March. Abigail can be contacted by email at [Abigail.Lyon@unh.edu](mailto:Abigail.Lyon@unh.edu). More information can be found on the PREP website: [PREPestuaries.com](http://PREPestuaries.com)

### **5. Discussion Items and Announcements**

#### **a. Data Snapshot Update Cycle Kick Off**

R. Dewey provided an update on the Data Snapshot update. The US Census Bureau released the American Community Survey 5-year estimates for 2019-2023 on Thursday December 12, 2024. This data release marks the beginning of the Regional Data Snapshot update cycle as it will provide data for about 45% of the Snapshot metrics. This year's Snapshot will be published on April 18, 2025. For any questions or to provide input about things you'd like to see in this year's Snapshot, reach out to Rachel Dewey at [rdewey@strafford.org](mailto:rdewey@strafford.org).

#### **b. Debrief 12/10/2024 Train Tour**

Members and staff from Strafford and Rockingham Planning Commissions met at the Dover Transportation Center on Tuesday December 10th for an interregional tour from Dover to Exeter on the Amtrak Downeaster. The group represented 28 communities throughout the Seacoast.



During the trip we learned from NNEPRA and station community officials about Downeaster ridership growth, recent and planned service improvements, and planned station improvements. In between southbound and northbound trains in Exeter, the group continued the conversation with NNEPRA and Town of Exeter staff.

In discussion about the trip, the group was in consensus that the event was successful and informative. The group discussed funding and the lack of support that the state gives for that type of transportation. In addition, it is a challenge for some communities that are struggling to find a way to access the rail; we have work to do as far as planning. The State funding level is zero in NH. In thinking about extending the rail to Portsmouth, we have to take into account that there would be competition/conflict with current bus service. The group stated they were not aware that the elements and the platforms are so independent. There is a need for data and studies to determine the need for rail in other communities.

## **6. Other Business**

D. Landry stated that he is stepping down as chair and from the commission and that it has been a privilege and an honor to serve. The Executive Committee appointed Katrin Kasper as chair and appointed Michael Lehrman as a regular member. The EC has two vacancies for alternates and Dave asked for volunteers.

Jack Wade announced NHDES has a new funding round for the Clean Diesel program.

M. Bobinsky expressed his gratitude to Dave Landry and appreciation for his steady leadership and sense of humor.

J. Czysz thanked Dave for being a wonderful chair to work with and bringing humor to the meetings. She invited the group into the office to join the staff for some baked goods they prepared for a staff bake off.

## **7. Citizens Forum**

There were no members of the public in attendance that wished to speak.

## **8. Adjourn**

Following a motion and a second and a vote in favor to adjourn, the meeting adjourned at 10:25am.

