

# TRORC Board Meeting

Thompson Senior Center

Woodstock, VT

March 23, 2016

## Meeting Minutes

### Attendance:

Name	Town	3/23/16	2/24/16	1/20/16	12/9/15	10/28/15
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard	X	X	X	X	X
Carl Russell	Bethel	X			X	
Nancy Jones	Bradford		X		X	
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)	X			X	X
Mark Bannon	Braintree			X		
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater	X		X	X	X
Dee Montie	Brookfield	X		X	X	X
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea			X	X	X
Frank Roderick	Corinth	X	X	X	X	X
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X			X	X
Mark Belisle	Granville			X	X	X
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford		X		X	
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)	X	X		X	
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X	X	X	X	
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury	X		X	X	X
Jeff Goodrich	Norwich	X		X	X	X
Matt Corron	Pittsfield					X
Anne Brown	Plymouth		X	X	X	X
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X	X	X	X	X
Ramsey Papp	Randolph	X	X	X	X	X
Larry Straus	Rochester					X
David Brandau	Royalton					X
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X		X	X	X
Paul Haskell	Sharon	X	X	X	X	X
Bill Edgerton	Stockbridge	X		X		X
Steve Campbell	Strafford	X			X	X
Mark McElroy	Thetford	X	X	X	X	X
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)			X	X	
Jim Bulger	Topsham		X		X	X
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge	X			X	
Bill Baylis	Vershire			X	X	
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee				X	X
Don Bourdon	Woodstock		X	X	X	
Nate Miller	At-Large		X			X
Jennifer Colby	At-Large		X	X	X	X
Ken Alton	At-Large			X	X	X
Andrew Winter	At-Large				X	X

**Staff:** Peter Gregory, Dee Gish, Chris Damiani, Tory Levite, Lorelee Morrow, Michael Storace

**Guests:** Michael Kane, Consultant; Tom Kennedy, SWCRPC; Susanne Smith

**1. Call To Order/Agenda Changes/Public Comments:**

Chair Bill Emmons convened the Board meeting at 6:35 p.m. A quorum was declared. There were no public comments. Bruce Riddle requested that the topic of water quality be added to the agenda.

**2. Public Hearing – Bradford Town Plan Approval and Confirmation Action:**

Tory Levite reported that Bradford had used the recommendations from the Enhanced Consultation to draft a Town Plan that TRORC feels should be approved. There are still a few discrepancies regarding land use. Peter Gregory described that the land use maps of the Regional Plan and Town Plan differ, but Vermont law does not require that the maps match exactly. The revised land use chapter of the Regional Plan may reflect some of the changes associated with the Bradford Plan when the Regional Plan is revised next year.

Steve Campbell asked about Bradford's plan for the lower plain. Marcey Carver reported that the Lower Plain District 1 focusses on the interchange and North and allows primary retail. In District 2, primary retail is discouraged but not prohibited. Marcey reported that Bradford is also in the process of updating their zoning bylaws.

Chairman Emmons closed the Public Hearing.

**3. Approval of Bradford Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning efforts per 24 VSA §4350:**

A motion was made by Dee Montie and seconded by Frank Tegethoff to approve the Bradford Town Plan. So moved. A motion was made by Frank Tegethoff and seconded by Jerry Fredrickson to confirm the planning efforts of Bradford. So moved.

**4. Approval of February 2016 Minutes:**

A motion was made by Bushrod Powers and seconded by Jerry Fredrickson to approve the February minutes. So moved.

**5. Acceptance of February Financial Reports:**

A motion was made by Paul Haskell and seconded by Dee Montie to accept the February Financial Reports. Peter Gregory noted that the HUD Buyouts DR II budget had been set based on the total contract amount, but the actual income and related expenses will be substantially less than budgeted. Peter also noted that VTrans payments have been slow, but that TRORC has been following up with the receivables and VTrans funds are being released soon. Peter also

reported that an RFP for audit services for the next three years will be released soon, with a decision in late May or early June. Bushrod asked if the auditor selection should be voted on by the entire Board. Peter will add it to the Board meeting agenda and will have the Executive Committee make a recommendation. So moved.

## **6. Creative Economy Project presentation:**

Michael Kane, lead consultant for the project, began his presentation by asking Commissioners "what do you want your town's economy to look like in 10 years? Do you want things to change?" Commissioners gave brief descriptions of the economic drivers in their respective towns. Most towns were described as "bedroom" communities with critical issues being agriculture, open space, small businesses, and specialty foods. There seemed to be consensus that economic activity be sustainable and aligned with the current quality of life. Michael then gave a brief power point presentation about the current project and thanked Commissioners for their thoughtful comments. He assured attendees that their comments will be woven into the report. Lorelee noted that all Creative Economy materials, including Michael's power point, are posted to [ecvedd.com](http://ecvedd.com).

## **7. Staff/Commissioner Updates:**

Act 250: Peter Gregory reported that briefs for the Vermont Supreme Court have been submitted by TRORC and several other RPCs and environmental organizations regarding the Quechee Highlands project. Oral arguments will be heard this summer. Copies of the TRORC Brief regarding the Quechee Highlands was distributed.

Legislative: Peter reported that S.230 related to energy siting is going through the Senate. The bill allows for Town and Regional Plans to have substantial deference in Section 248 proceedings if the Plans are certified by the RPC and PSD, respectively. There is funding attached to the bill for RPCs to help towns attain certification of their energy elements. The economic development bill currently under discussion would change ACCD contracts to grants to make it easier for state government's internal review. The Vermont Arts Council is setting up a creative economy network, which is also part of this bill. H.789 related to forestry includes fragmentation and habitat blocks, but with no new funding. H.249 Intermunicipal Services, is formerly the COG (Council of Governments) bill. The bill has passed the house and is currently in the Senate. H.517 water classification bill has passed the house. This bill paves the way for an anti-degradation rule that is required by the EPA.

Projects: The FEMA home buyout project is now led by Kevin Geiger with Tory working on environmental clearances for Public Facilities projects and Dee assisting with financial reporting. Rita is working with 12 towns on Better Roads project applications.

Bruce Riddle wished to discuss the Bennington area water quality problems and the possibility of TRORC organizing town-wide well water testing. Bruce is worried

that since pollutants can affect wells miles from the source that some private wells in our region may be contaminated and that most citizens find water testing confusing and onerous. Bruce feels that it would be a great service if TRORC could facilitate well testing for towns and then perhaps use GIS to plot regional water quality data. Jerry Fredrickson asked if the Clean Water Advisory Committee that is to be formed could discuss Bruce's idea. Peter responded that yes, the Committee could advise on any water quality issue. Bill Edgerton asked how Bruce's suggestion could move forward. Paul Haskell responded that the Executive Committee could discuss the idea and Peter noted that he could report back at the next Board meeting.

Carl Russell voiced his concern about the overwhelming number of tasks of town highway departments – from road and culvert inventories to hazard trees, to invasive species control. Carl reported that Bethel is working on a draft highway department management plan for annual and multi-year projects and is also considering a liaison position between private landowners and highway crew. He believes the plan will help towns manage highway projects in a cost effective and time efficient way.

**8. Adjournment – 8:20 pm:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Bushrod Powers. Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

The next Board meeting will be held Wednesday, April 27 at the Thompson Senior Center in Woodstock.

Minutes Prepared By Dee Gish – March 24, 2016.