

TRORC Board Meeting – Zoom Meeting
April 28, 2021 – Board Meeting Minutes
Attendance:

Name	Town	2/24/21	4/28/21						
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard	X	X						
Steve Cota	Barnard (Alt)								
Paul Vallee	Bethel	X	X						
Carl Russell	Bethel (Alt)								
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X	X						
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)		X						
Vacant	Braintree								
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater								
Gwynn Zakov	Brookfield		X						
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield (Alt.)	X							
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea	X							
Tim O'Dell	Corinth	X	X						
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X	X						
Mark Belisle	Granville								
Monica Collins	Hancock	X							
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford		X						
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)	X	X						
Charles Jeffries	Hartland		X						
David Ormiston	Hartland		X						
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury	X	X						
Larry Scott	Newbury (Alt.)								
Rod Francis	Norwich	X	X						
Jeff Lubell	Norwich		X						
Sarah Gallagher	Pittsfield	X	X						
Anne Brown	Plymouth								
Jim Allen	Plymouth (Alt.)								
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X	X						
Phil Dechert	Pomfret (Alt)		X						
Ramsey Papp	Randolph	X	X						
Gary Dir	Randolph (Alt)	X	X						
Anni Mackay	Rochester	X	X						
Doon Hinderyckx	Rochester (Alt)	X	X						
David Brandau	Royalton	X	X						

Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X	X						
Ira Clark	Sharon	X	X						
Deborah Jones	Sharon (Alt.)								
Bill Edgerton	Stockbridge								
John Echeverria	Strafford		X						
Jesse Anderson	Thetford	X	X						
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)								
Jim Clark	Topsham								
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge		X						
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)								
Bill Baylis	Vershire								
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X	X						
Don Bourdon	Woodstock	X							
Brad Prescott	Woodstock (Alt)								
Meghan Butts	At-Large	X	X						
Jennifer Colby	At-Large								
Ken Alton	At-Large		X						
Vacant - Conservation	At-Large								
Beth Long	At-Large	X	X						
Meg Emmons	At-Large	X	X						

Guests: Richard Cogliano, VT Emergency Management; Alex Binzen, Randolph Herald; Grace Vinson, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

Staff: Peter Gregory, Lori Kay, Tory Littlefield

1. Call to Order, Approval of the Agenda, Roll Call, and Public Comments:

The virtual meeting opened at 6:30 p.m. A quorum after roll call was declared. No changes to the agenda were made. There were no comments from the public.

Commissioner Hinderyckx asked for clarification regarding Two Rivers' involvement with the issue of the legal trails in Tunbridge, having read the letter to the editor in the Randolph Herald.

Executive Director Gregory stated that there is no additional information at this time, and that some portions of the letter of the editor were not entirely factual. The issue of conflict of interest was discussed at two recent Executive Committee meetings and minutes for those meetings are available on the TRORC website. Additionally, the draft minutes of the April 14 Executive Committee meeting were included in the April 28 Board packet.

Commissioner Sacca noted that while a finding was determined by the Executive Committee, it was not dealt with to his satisfaction. He requested that the issue be added to the agenda for the next TRORC Board meeting.

2. Acceptance of Minutes from February 24, 2021 Meeting

On a motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Brandau, the February Meeting Minutes were accepted unanimously.

3. Acceptance of the Unaudited February and March 2021 TRORC Financial Reports

On a motion made by Commissioner Emmons, and seconded by Commissioner Powers, the unaudited February and March 2021 Financial Reports were approved unanimously.

Gregory noted that 75% of the year has gone by and TRORC has exceeded its original projection in revenue and expenses. The second round of the Sole Proprietor business grant program is up and running. Four staff are now working on this project so processing of the grants should be faster. Accounts Receivable is in good shape. Pre-planning work will start shortly for the annual audit. The FY22 budget is being developed. Gregory will share a rough draft of the budget at the May Executive Committee meeting. The final version of the budget will be presented at the June Board meeting.

4. Rich Cogliano, VT Emergency Management – Continuity of Operations Plan

Rich Cogliano provided a presentation on COOPs – Continuity of Operations Plans. COOPs are designed to continue meeting essential functions within a town, business, or other entity, regardless of interrupting incidents, such as loss of power, flooding, pandemic, etc.

Cogliano is available to work with towns to develop their own COOPs. TRORC's Tory Littlefield is also available to assist towns in the region with developing their COOPs.

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

5. Regional Energy Scorecard

Tory Littlefield shared a presentation on the development of an energy scorecard for the TRORC region. The scorecard looks at each town's progress toward meeting the State's mandated goals for energy efficiency in Vermont. Representatives from each town are in receipt of their town's scorecard.

Littlefield noted that overall, the TRORC region currently has an average grade of C-. An annual review will be conducted, and updated scorecards will be distributed. Littlefield stated that there are limited sources that provide trackable data at this current time. For instance, information on the number of home heating pumps installed per town is collected from Efficiency Vermont. Efficiency Vermont is only counting the number of heat pumps that are purchased and installed through their program. They are not counting the number of heat pumps that are being installed by homeowners who are not enrolled in the Efficiency Vermont program. However, most electricity in the TRORC region is provided by Green Mountain Power. Trackable data can be collected and used to assess the region's progress toward its renewable resource goals.

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

6. **Communications Plan**

One of the goals in TRORC's Strategic Plan has been to increase TRORC's outreach and communication efforts. Littlefield, who has taken on the communications responsibilities for TRORC, shared a draft Communications Plan outline with the Board.

During the follow-up Q&A session, Commissioner Butts suggested that TRORC think about its varied audiences as it refines the Communication Plan, noting that different audiences can require different communication strategies. Littlefield confirmed that she has incorporated defining best communication approaches for Selectboards vs. the general public, etc.

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

7. **Executive Director Updates**

Gregory shared the following information:

Strategic Plan – The Strategic Plan was adopted in 2013 and it is time to review and assess the Plan, looking at what has been accomplished as well as identifying new action items. Work on the Plan will continue into late summer/early fall and will be brought before the Board when it is complete.

Executive Director FY21 Performance Goals – Gregory provided an overview of the status of his goals that were set by the Executive Committee earlier in the fiscal year. They included:

- Adopt a new Regional Plan - completed

- Hire Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator - completed

- Identify a candidate for Conservation At-Large Board position- a candidate has been identified and will be invited to the Annual Meeting.

- Obtain Public Service Department Determination of Energy Compliance with the new Regional Plan – completed

- Adoption of a TRORC investment policy – completed

- Strategic Plan update – this is ongoing with an estimated completion date of early Fall

- Begin multi-year discussion with Executive Committee on a transition plan for the Executive Director position – not yet started; note that there is no urgency to this goal

- Secure additional resources to fund the Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Foundation – funds were secured through the Foundation to help fund the Housing Study. No other progress to report as available staff time has been diverted to COVID-related activities.

Legislative Updates – Gregory noted that interacting with Legislators is challenging when working with them remotely. TRORC has provided testimony on various topics including a rental registry bill and shared services. The Legislature is supporting ongoing core funding for Regional Commissions through the ACCD. Funding from the State's share of ARPA funds for helping communities understand what types of projects they can undertake with their direct allocation of Federal funding has passed. Some

portion of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding will come to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and the Regional Commissions to cover their technical assistance services.

The Legislature is scheduled to adjourn the third week of May. The veto session, if needed, will take place in June. Gregory offered to answer any questions that the Commissioners may have about legislature issues.

8. TRORC Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is typically held in June. Gregory proposed postponing the dinner and speaker portion of the Annual Meeting until September. The rest of the standard Annual Meeting activities – voting, adoption of annual budget, scholarship awards, etc. - would take place in June. There were no follow-up comments or questions on this proposal.

Gregory stated that TRORC's offices are not yet open to the public. Metrics are being developed to help determine how/when the office will be open to the public once more.

The next Board meeting will be held on May 26, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:
Lori Kay, Finance Manager, May 5, 2021