

**TRORC  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Virtual Meeting**

**June 9, 2021**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Jerry Fredrickson, Chair; Bill Emmons, Vice Chair; Nancy Jones, Treasurer; David Brandau, Secretary; Bill Edgerton, Nancy Malmquist, Peter G. Gregory, Executive Director; Lori Kay, Finance Manager.

**1. Call to Order/Changes to Agenda:**

Chair Fredrickson convened the meeting at 3:10 p.m. A quorum was declared by the Chair. No changes were made to the agenda.

**2. Public Comment:**

No public comments were received.

**3. Approval of the May 12, 2021 Minutes:**

On a motion made by Emmons and seconded by Edgerton, the Minutes of May 12, 2021, were unanimously approved.

**4. Acceptance of the unaudited May 2021 Financial Reports:**

The unaudited May 2021 Financial Reports were unanimously accepted as presented on a motion made by Edgerton and seconded by Emmons.

Gregory noted that TRORC incurred \$1,500 in early closing penalty fees for closing two CD accounts with Bar Harbor Bank. The balances of the CDs were deposited into the Mascoma Wealth Management account.

The Accounts Receivable are in good shape. TRORC will be processing lots of year-end billing – approximately \$150,000 worth - in early July.

**5. Project and Legislative Updates**

ACCD will be providing an additional \$25,000 per year for three years to supplement TRORC's annual core funding amount. This funding comes with no additional deliverables beyond our statutory duties.

Gerald Fredrickson, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director  
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TRORC is waiting to hear more on a few potential projects:

Agency of Commerce and Community Development funds for Energy Plan Implementation - These funds would be used to implement local energy plans in the region. Overall funding is expected to be \$1 million for the 11 RPCs next year. It is unclear how much will be allocated to each of the RPCs or when that will happen.

Funds to update zoning bylaws - \$650,000 may become available for this effort. It is unclear how this money will be distributed. If the money is provided to the RPCs, then the RPCs could offer their services at no cost to the Towns.

Brownfields assessment funds – Funds for assessment of Brownfields sites is expected. It has not yet been determined how much may come to TRORC. Most of the funds will be paid to consultants rather than covering staff time.

None of the Broadband appropriation of \$150,000,000 will be coming to the RPCs.

Chairperson Fredrickson sought input from the Executive Committee and Gregory on the May Board meeting's discussion of the Conflict-of-Interest allegations. One response was received from Commissioner Riddle. Consensus among the Executive Committee was that the May Board meeting discussion did not bring closure.

## **6. Final draft FY22 Budget:**

Gregory began the discussion by stating that the Executive Committee was reviewing the final draft version of the FY22 budget. The final version of the budget will be brought before the full Commission for review and approval in June.

The budget now includes an additional \$25,000 per year for three years from ACCD. The money supplements TRORC's annual core funding and comes with no additional deliverables beyond statutory duties.

Budget considerations for FY22 include no new hires currently, a merit increase pool for current staff, and an increase to TRORC's Student Loan Repayment benefit. As new funding becomes more certain, the Board may be asked to approve an amended budget in September.

A discussion followed regarding TRORC's compensation vis a vis compensation offered by other RPCs as well as similar competitors in the private sector. Gregory stated that TRORC participates in an annual salary/benefit survey with the other RPCs. While TRORC's salaries may not match those offered in the private sector, the combination of salary and benefits that TRORC offers makes it very competitive within the field.

Chair Fredrickson and Commissioner Edgerton requested a review of TRORC's benefits package to identify and research possible savings. Edgerton also requested that Gregory conduct research on salary surveys of private sector and non-profit organizations providing similar services. This information could be available from national organizations of planners (American Planning Association, APA) and National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

Insurance - Chair Fredrickson requested that TRORC review its various insurance coverages to

ensure TRORC has enough coverage.

Rent – TRORC’s landlord will be raising the rent 5% as of July 1 – there was not rent increase in the previous year. This change in expenses needs to be incorporated into the FY22 budget.

Office equipment and software – Chair Fredrickson requested that TRORC discuss productivity of equipment and software monthly. Fredrickson added that TRORC should have the best and most flexible systems and equipment.

At the request of Commissioner Edgerton, Gregory share his thoughts on the financial future for RPCs. Gregory’s response:

TRORC’s FY22 income projections are solid. As noted earlier, TRORC is awaiting word on three possible contracts that could have an impact on staffing.

The next two to three years will be good for RPCs because of the Federal pandemic relief funds coming to the State and the increase in Vermont’s tax receipts. Vermont has exceeded their forecast for tax receipts over the last few years. After the pandemic relief funds are used up, it will be back to normal.

Growth could come from diversifying the staff’s knowledge base and developing other services and clients in hospitals, energy, and housing.

On a motion made by Edgerton and seconded by Jones, the Executive Committee recommends this budget be placed on the Annual Meeting agenda. Motion also grants the Executive Director the authority to make minor adjustments before mailing. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **7. Project and Legislative Updates**

The Local EPC #12 project is ending. The last meeting is June 17, 2021.

The Velomont Trails and the Creative Economy projects are starting up. Subcontracts are being drawn up and work should begin in earnest in July 2021.

Intermunicipal Regional Energy Coordinator (IREC) – Contracts have been sent to each town for signature. The costs for this position are based on Geoff Martin’s full-time position. Commissioner Emmons indicated his desire to receive Geoff’s monthly IREC updates, in addition to the Towns that are funding the IREC. A further suggestion was made to send the monthly IREC updates to all TRORC Commissioners as this information could be useful to the other Towns and could grow the IREC shared-services model.

## **8. Future Commission Meetings**

The June Commission meeting will be held on June 23, 2021. The agenda will include the election of officers and Commissioners-at-Large, the adoption of the FY22 budget, and affirmation of the 2022 Scholarship awards. Gregory offered to find a speaker for the meeting – possibly someone from NADO who could present on American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funding.

The next Commission meeting will be held on September 22, 2021. It will be a dinner meeting with Commissioners and their significant others.

**9. Executive Director Annual Performance Review**

Chairperson Fredrickson confirmed that members of the Executive Committee were in receipt of Gregory's FY21 performance goals.

**10. Executive Session**

At 4:45 pm, the Executive Committee entered an Executive Session to discuss Gregory's annual review. Lori Kay and Peter Gregory left the meeting.

At 5:49 pm, the Executive Committee came out of Executive Session. Gregory's compensation for FY22 was determined during the Executive Session.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:49 pm.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:  
Lori Kay, Finance Manager, June 15, 2021.