

TRORC Board Meeting
May 24, 2023 – Board Meeting Minutes
Attendance:

Name	Town	9/28/22	12/14/22	3/22/23	4/26/23	5/24/23				
Jerry Fredrickson	Barnard	X	X	X	X	X				
Steve Cota	Barnard (Alt)									
Paul Vallee	Bethel (Alt.)	X								
Gene Kraus	Bethel			X	X	X				
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X	X	X	X	X				
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)	X	X	X	X					
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater			X		X				
Gwynn Zakov	Brookfield		X		X	X				
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield (Alt.)									
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea	X		X	X					
Tim O'Dell	Corinth					X				
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X		X	X	X				
Mark Belisle	Granville		X	X	X					
Monica Collins	Hancock	X			X	X				
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford	X		X	X					
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)	X		X	X	X				
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X	X		X	X				
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury			X	X	X				
Larry Scott	Newbury (Alt.)									
Brian Loeb	Norwich					X				
Jaci Allen	Norwich (Alt.)		X							
Sarah Gallagher	Pittsfield	X	X		X					
Anne Brown	Plymouth	X	X							
Jim Allen	Plymouth (Alt.)									
Bill Emmons	Pomfret		X	X	X	X				
Regina Lawrence	Pomfret (Alt)				X					
Chris Sargent	Randolph		X			X				
Patricia Harvey	Rochester									
Doon Hinderyckx	Rochester (Alt)		X	X		X				
David Brandau	Royalton	X		X	X	X				
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)		X		X					
Ira Clark	Sharon		X	X	X	X				
Sue Sellew	Sharon (Alt.)					X				
Kevin Travis	Stockbridge			X						

John Echeverria	Strafford	X								
Angela McCanna	Thetford		X	X		X				
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)									
Jim Clark	Topsham			X						
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge				X					
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)									
Andrea Herrington	Vershire			X		X				
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee		X	X	X	X				
Don Bourdon	Woodstock	X				X				
Brad Prescott	Woodstock (Alt)	X	X	X	X	X				
Meghan Butts	At-Large	X		X		X				
Jennifer Colby	At-Large	X	X		X	X				
Ken Alton	At-Large		X	X	X					
Dan Rudell	At-Large									
Andrew Winter	At-Large					X				
Meg Emmons	At-Large		X	X	X	X				

Staff: Peter Gregory, Kevin Geiger, Connor Rigney, Lori Kay

Guests: John Moore, Pomfret Planning Commission

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

The meeting opened at 6:32 p.m. A quorum after roll call was declared. No changes to the agenda were made. There were no comments from the public.

2. Public Hearings – Pittsfield and Woodstock Town and Village Plan review and Pittsfield and Woodstock Confirmation review.

Planner Connor Rigney explained that he had conducted the formal staff review of Pittsfield’s Town Plan, noting that TRORC worked with the Planning Commission and Selectboard as they developed their Town Plan. Rigney stated that following a thorough review, TRORC staff is recommending that it receive approval. No comments were made during the public hearings. Commissioner Frederickson closed the public hearing.

Director of Planning Kevin Geiger provided information on the Woodstock Town and Village Plan review. He said the Plan has all the necessary components and that it is compatible with the Regional Plan. He went on to share his recommendation, also noted in the Town Plan Review, that Woodstock identifies Policies within the Town Plan text. Some sections read like Policies but are not labeled as such. Woodstock should go ahead and label them as Policies, and list them separately.

Commissioner Frederickson closed the public hearing.

3. Pittsfield and Woodstock Town Plan Approvals and Confirmation of Planning Effort

On a motion from Commissioner Bill Emmons, and seconded by Commissioner Colby, the Town Plan reviews for Pittsfield and Woodstock Town and Village were approved unanimously.

On a motion from Commission Bill Emmons and seconded by Commissioner Colby, the Town of Pittsfield's and the Woodstock Town Plan planning processes were confirmed and approved unanimously.

4. Public Hearing – Determination of Energy Compliance, Pittsfield Town Plan

Planner Connor Rigney spoke regarding the Determination of Energy Compliance. He stated that Pittsfield's Town Plan meets every question and threshold regarding energy compliance. He recommended that Pittsfield receive its Determination of Energy Compliance.

Commissioner Bourdon asked for clarification on why a Determination of Energy Compliance is sought by a Town. Peter Gregory stated that the Public Utility Commission (PUC) provides "substantial deference" to what is written in the Town Plan so long as it's written in clear language and can be understood by the PUC. Approximately 10 Towns in the TRORC region have received a Determination of Energy Compliance. TRORC is expecting it will be reviewing another five Town Plans in the next few months and expect most of those Towns will be seeking the energy determination as well.

5. Determination of Energy Compliance for Pittsfield

On a motion from Commissioner Bourdon and seconded by Commissioner Sargent, the Town of Pittsfield's Determination of Energy Compliance was confirmed and approved unanimously.

6. Approval of TRORC Board Minutes from April 26, 2023

On a motion made by Commissioner Prescott and seconded by Commissioner Bill Emmons, the April meeting minutes were approved.

7. Acceptance of the Unaudited TRORC Financial Reports for April 2023

Gregory made a few comments regarding the April Financial Reports. He noted that under Income, TRORC has received the last quarterly advance payment for its annual ACCD contract. In the expense section, Gregory stated that TRORC's annual audit began with a pre-audit visit and a corresponding \$3,000 expense was incurred. The balance sheet as of 4/30/23 shows net income of -\$385.81. That number will change again when we close out the fiscal year. The Accounts Receivable report shows a number of unpaid invoices but a number of checks have already come in since the report was created.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bill Emmons, and seconded by Commissioner Sargent, to approve the unaudited Financial Reports of April 2023. The Motion was approved unanimously.

8. Summary of S. 100, VT Housing Bill

Kevin Geiger provided some highlights of the newly approved Housing Bill.

- a. Most parts of the Housing Bill take effect December 1, 2024.
- b. One part of the Housing Bill will go into effect on July 1, 2023 – wherever the Town allows single-family residences, they must also allow duplex residences.

- c. If your Town has municipal sewer and water, and zoning, the Housing Bill will override some parts of your Town's zoning if the zoning limits the development of housing in your town. Not all of the region's Towns fit neatly into "areas served by water and sewer." A Town might have municipal sewer but don't have municipal water, for instance. The State will need to provide additional guidance on this issue.
- d. The new law requires Towns to offer an additional 40% density bonus for affordable housing, as well as adding another floor to the building (if fire code allows).

9. Staff/Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Updates:

- Randolph now has Police coverage.
- Pomfret held a Town Meeting discussion on voting. Going forward, Pomfret will require an information session for citizens to learn about the items on the ballot. The info session would be held no later than 10 days prior to voting, when voting would be conducted vote by Australian ballot.

Project Updates:

- Municipal Technical Assistance program has started. VT's Agency of Administration has awarded \$1.65 million to TRORC for the program. Most of the funding will be allocated to the State's Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) to assist Towns in their regions. TRORC will be using its portion of the funding to assist eight towns in the TRORC region.
- The State's RPCs will be pooling some of their resources to update some of the 10 educational publications that are used by RPC staff as well as Town staff.
- Additional funding is expected for another year of flood hazard and bylaw assistance for Towns. Towns will need to apply for this funding when applications open in July 2023.

Legislative Activities:

- TRORC was involved in a number of activities in the Legislature before it closed for the summer on May 12, 2023. These included the new Housing bill and obtaining a \$1.5 million increase of planning funds for RPCs. A Conservation bill is still in play which would have TRORC providing educational outreach on defining what "conservation" is and isn't.
- In FY24, TRORC will be working on an Act 250 study.

Other:

- Act 250 – No news on the two open cases in Royalton and Hartland.
- Rochester now has a few electric vehicle charging stations in the Town's Park and Ride.
- Mac's Market in Rochester has a new owner. It has been purchased by a gentleman from Plattsburgh NY, who currently owns gas station mini-marts.
- Annual Dinner Meeting – On Wednesday, June 21, 2023, we'll have a full dinner, social hour, and a speaker - Educator Meg Mott, who will present on the "Right to be Cranky in Public." Invitations will be e-mailed next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:
Lori Kay, June 2, 2023