

Name	Town	9/27/23	10/25/23	12/13/23	3/27/24					
Sue Sellew	Sharon (Alt.)									
Kevin Travis	Stockbridge									
John Echeverria	Strafford		X	X	X					
Angela McCanna	Thetford	X			X					
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)									
Jim Clark	Topsham	X								
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge									
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)									
Andrea Herrington	Vershire		X	X						
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X	X	X						
Don Bourdon	Woodstock	X	X	X						
Brad Prescott	Woodstock (Alt)	X			X					
Meghan Butts	At-Large	X	X		X					
Jennifer Colby	At-Large	X	X	X						
Ken Alton	At-Large	X	X							
Dan Rudell	At-Large									
Andrew Winter	At-Large	X								
Meg Emmons	At-Large		X	X						

Staff: Peter Gregory, Executive Director, Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner, Geena Baber, Planner, Mary Olmo, Finance Manager

Guests: Aly Richards, Let's Grow Kids
 Erin Roche, First Children's Finance
 Shana Louiselle, VELCO
 Hans Presume, VELCO

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

The meeting started at 6:30 p.m. A quorum after introductions were declared. No changes to the agenda were made. There were no comments from the public.

2. Approval of the December 13, 2023, Board Minutes

On a motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Echeverria, the minutes were approved.

3. **Let's Grow Kids Presentation by Aly Richards and Erin Roche. To discuss their organizations and the current state of childcare assets in the state and how that affects families and our business sector.**

Aly Richards, CEO of *Let's Grow Kids* (<https://letsgrowkids.org/>) opened the presentation by introducing Erin Roche, Vermont Director of First Children's Finance (<https://www.firstchildrensfinance.org/vermont/>)

A question was asked by Peter Gregory, Executive Director of TRORC- The Boards would like to know how it affects towns and local infrastructure?

Richards- Emphasized the demand was high but the business model of past is not sustainable for small businesses and communities. Since 2017, we have been very optimistic that there will be more childcare businesses opening than closing.

Let's Grow kids has two new offerings. One is a loan program for relatively small loans such as \$50,000, specifically for childcare business.

Second, Let's Grow Kids offers a planning program where they will provide professional planning for businesses.

Peter Berger, Commissioner stated "There is a childcare in Fairlee that is ready to close, is that something that Let's Grow Kids could help?"

Aly Richards- We are happy to come out and assess the site and what might make sense in a particular space.

Erin Roche of First Children's Finance- Stated that they offer Financial Literacy Programs for small businesses, specifically catering to childcare businesses, but will also offer to other small businesses.

Peter Gregory, Executive Director of TRORC stated "Thank you for being here, your passion and your hard work. This Board asked me to invite you, which I was happy to do. A side note TRORC offers, \$10,000 for employees for childcare."

For more information please visit: <https://letsgrowkids.org/> and <https://www.firstchildrensfinance.org/vermont/>

4. **VELCO Long Range Transmission Plan presentation. Shana Louiselle and Hantz Presume from VELCO will Zoom into our meeting to discuss the latest draft of the Plan and what it means for our region and Vermont.**

Shana Louiselle of Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) introduced her colleague Hans Presume. Presume, gave information regarding VELCO's Long Range Transmitting Plan that will expand over the following years. VELCO established that Vermont will continue to need transmission. Vermont's roadmap forecast will lead to stability concerns in the next 10 years. Significant distributed generation growth in the same pattern will exceed capacity. New collaborations and innovation will be needed to achieve renewable goals, but action is needed now to meet the future needs of Vermont.

5. **Confirmation of Town Planning Efforts. Per Statute, twice in an eight-year period, each RPC shall review and confirm the planning efforts of member municipalities. To ensure that TRORC meets the statute, the following towns have met the requirements and are proposed to be confirmed: Barnard, Bethel, Bradford, Braintree, Bridgwater, Brookfield, Corinth, Fairlee, Granville, Hancock, Hartford, Hartland, Norwich, Pittsfield, Plymouth, Pomfret, Randolph, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Strafford, Thetford, Topsham, Tunbridge, Vershire, West Fairlee and Woodstock.**

Peter Gregory, Executive Director of TRORC- This agenda item is a blanket confirmation that TRORC staff researched to ensure all towns had a plan that was approved, a functioning planning commission and a Town allocating money for local and regional planning. These tests are done twice within an eight-year period. Echeverria, Commissioner asked if all towns had town plans that were approved? Gregory stated

there are still towns that are working on plans that will need to be approved. Commissioner Carver, asked if towns would need a new plan in eight years? Gregory stated yes.

On a motion made by Commissioner Allen and seconded by Commissioner Bourdon, the Confirmation of Town Planning Efforts was approved.

6. Acceptance of unaudited Financial Reports from December 2023 and January and February 2024.

Executive Director, Peter Gregory stated that December income and expenses were low as it was the end of a quarter. January was high as we do most of our new quarterly billing. February inflows and outflows were also very heavy. TRORC took out Municipal Technical Assistance Program funds from planning consultants on the TRORC Financial Report, which is about \$700,000 and put it in its own category, for better transparency.

On a motion made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Vallee, the Financial Reports were accepted.

7. TRORC Regional Plan Update – Attachment. Kevin Geiger will update Regional Commissioners on the work on the Regional Plan update to date, and the plan of action going forward leading to a December 2024 adoption.

Chief Planner Kevin Geiger stated he had provided a memo in the packet outlining the adoption timeline. Geiger and Planner Geena Baber have cut 40 pages out of TRORC's Regional Plan. Of that TRORC is well on the way to cutting 60 pages total. The next two chapters coming up will be Transportation in April, and Energy in May. Housing, unfortunately, must wait for data to be available. Commissioner Clark asked if the land use will be later? Geiger stated that due to ACT 250 legislation, that is correct.

Commissioner Carver stated land use and housing are the two most important chapters. Commissioner Carver inquired to the time frame of receiving land use and housing chapters. Gregory stated that unfortunately due to legislation it could take some time, probably in 2025.

8. Staff and Commissioner Updates: Act 250, Projects, Legislative, Other

Executive Director Gregory presented information regarding a new bill, S213 the Flood Safety Act, that deals with a new state regulatory permit program that will roll out over several years, most of our communities do not regulate the river corridors. It can be a challenging issue to administer locally. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns supports a state program versus a local regulatory effort. The bill also addressed dam safety and flood hazard bylaw administration and requirements.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:

Mary Olmo, April 5, 2024