

**TRORC Board Meeting**  
**May 22, 2024 Board Minutes**  
**Attendance:**



Name	Town	9/27/23	10/25/23	12/13/23	3/27/24	4/24/24	5/22/24		
Steve Cota	Barnard (Alt)								
Paul Vallee	Bethel (Alt.)		X		X				
Gene Kraus	Bethel	X				X	X		
Nancy Jones	Bradford	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)	X		X	X	X			
Megan O'Toole	Braintree (Alt)	X							
Sandy Vondrasek Cooch	Braintree					X	X		
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater				X	X			
Gwynn Zakov	Brookfield	X		X					
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield (Alt.)								
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea	X				X			
Steve Devoto	Corinth					X			
Peter Berger	Fairlee	X		X	X	X	X		
Mark Belisle	Granville			X			X		
Monica Collins	Hancock	X				X			
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford	X	X			X			
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)		X	X	X	X	X		
Charles Jeffries	Hartland	X	X	X	X	X			
Frank Tegethoff	Newbury	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Larry Scott	Newbury (Alt.)						X		
Brian Loeb	Norwich	X	X				X		
Jaci Allen	Norwich (Alt.)				X	X			
Herb Kuendig	Pittsfield	X					X		
Anne Brown	Plymouth	X		X		X	X		
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Regina Lawrence	Pomfret (Alt)								
Chris Sargent	Randolph		X			X			
Patricia Harvey	Rochester	X	X		X	X			
Doon Hinderyckx	Rochester (Alt)								
David Brandau	Royalton		X		X	X	X		
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X				X	X		

William B. Emmons, III, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director  
**128 King Farm Rd. Woodstock, VT 05091 ~ 802-457-3188 ~ [trorc.org](http://trorc.org)**

Barnard ~ Bethel ~ Bradford ~ Braintree ~ Bridgewater ~ Brookfield ~ Chelsea ~ Corinth ~ Fairlee ~ Granville ~ Hancock ~ Hartford  
Hartland ~ Newbury ~ Norwich ~ Pittsfield ~ Plymouth ~ Pomfret ~ Randolph ~ Rochester ~ Royalton ~ Sharon ~ Stockbridge ~ Strafford  
Theftord ~ Topsham ~ Tunbridge ~ Vershire ~ West Fairlee ~ Woodstock

Name	Town	9/27/23	10/25/23	12/13/23	3/27/24	4/24/24	5/22/24		
Ira Clark	Sharon	X	X		X		X		
Sue Sellew	Sharon (Alt.)					X			
Kevin Travis	Stockbridge								
John Echeverria	Strafford		X	X	X	X	X		
Angela McCanna	Thetford	X	X		X				
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)								
Jim Clark	Topsham	X							
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge								
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)								
Andrea Herrington	Vershire		X	X		X	X		
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X	X	X			X		
Don Bourdon	Woodstock	X	X	X		X			
Brad Prescott	Woodstock (Alt)	X			X				
Meghan Butts	At-Large	X	X		X				
Jennifer Colby	At-Large	X	X	X		X			
Ken Alton	At-Large	X	X			X	X		
Dan Rudell	At-Large								
Andrew Winter	At-Large	X				X			
Meg Emmons	At-Large		X	X		X	X		

**Staff:** Peter Gregory, Executive Director; Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner; Harry Falconer, IREC & Planner; Bryan Kovalick, Planner; Sydney Steinle, Planner; Geena Baber, Planner

**Guests:** Dave Snedeker, Executive Director, NVDA; Devon Neary, Executive Director, RRPC

**1. Call to Order, Approval of the Agenda, Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Bill Emmons as Chair. Introductions were made in person and virtually. The Chair asked for any needed changes to the agenda. None were made.

**2. Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**3. Public Hearing for Newbury and Barnard Town Plans**

Chair Emmons opened the hearing for both towns and introduced Sydney Steinle, TRORC Staff, to walk through the Newbury plan. Sydney walked through the update process and her comments from the town plan review rubric. Commissioner Kraus asked how staff comments made during the review process are incorporated into the plan. Peter Gregory replied that unless they would prevent regional approval, these comments are treated as potential areas of improvement for the next plan update cycle.

Chair Emmons introduced Bryan Kovalick, TRORC Staff, to walk through the Barnard planning process. Bryan noted that he was impressed with the plan and its incorporation of several recommendations from the previous plan update process. Commissioner Powers noted the poor quality of roads in Barnard, particularly during the

winter, and suggested that town plans better account for road improvements. Commissioner Malmquist commented that provision of childcare in small towns is difficult to plan for. Peter replied that childcare advocates were successful in getting childcare added as a goal for town plan approval, so we are required to plan for it, regardless of the size of town. Commissioner Herrington noted that childcare is a tiered system with multiple standards including home daycare, licensed center, etc. She recommended that town plans acknowledge these different levels.

Chair Emmons called for a motion to approve the Newbury Town Plan. Commissioner Kraus made the motion and Commissioner Belisle seconded. A vote was taken, and the plan was approved.

Chair Emmons called for a motion to approve the Barnard Town Plan. Commissioner Brandau made the motion and Commissioner Herrington seconded. A vote was taken, and the plan was approved.

Chair Emmons called for a motion to confirm that the planning process has taken place in both towns. Commissioner Brandau made the motion and Commissioner Powers seconded. A vote was taken and the processes were confirmed.

#### **4. Public Hearing for Newbury and Barnard Determinations of Energy Compliance (DEC)**

Sydney walked through the DEC rubric for Newbury. Commissioner Echeverria asked for clarification on the plan's regulation of the siting of energy generation facilities.

Bryan walked through Barnard's DEC rubric.

Chair Emmons called for motion to approve both DEC's. Commissioner Brandau made the motion and Commissioner Belisle seconded. A vote was taken and both DEC's were approved. Chair Emmons closed the hearing.

#### **5. Approval of the April 24, 2024 Board Minutes**

On a motion made by Commissioner Powers and seconded by Commissioner Kraus, the minutes were approved. Kevin was commended for the quality of his minutes.

#### **6. Acceptance of unaudited Financial Reports from April 2024**

Peter noted that high interest rates and strong stock market have led to high yields and that TRORC's interest income is at 230% of what was budgeted. Peter also noted that expenditures will increase soon as work proceeds on the Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP), for which TRORC acts as the passthrough organization. The balance sheet currently shows a net income of \$260,000. Overall receivables are low. Commissioner Brandau motioned to approve the reports and Commissioner Alton seconded. A vote was taken and the report was approved.

#### **7. Discussion and Action on draft Transportation Chapter 4 of the Regional Plan**

Peter introduced Kevin to facilitate discussion on the chapter. An open discussion followed, largely centering around the need for expanded public transit and better pedestrian/cyclist facilities. Staff took note to better emphasize safety in the chapter. Commissioner Riddle raised concerns about road salt's effect on drinking water supply.

Chair Emmons called for a motion to advance the chapter. Commissioner Echeverria made the motion and Commissioner Kuendig seconded. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

#### **8. Discussion and Action on draft Energy Chapter 11 of the Regional Plan**

Peter introduced Harry Falconer, TRORC Staff, to discuss the new energy chapter. Harry briefly described the new goals, policies, and recommendations in each section of the chapter. Discussion of the Electricity Conservation and Renewable Generation section centered around how the state and electric utilities account for Renewable Energy Credits (RECs). In the Transportation section, Harry introduced a new policy mandating the installation of EV

chargers at new residential, commercial, and industrial developments that trigger Act 250. Commissioner Echeverria commented that the plan's goal of capping Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) at 2011 levels should be more ambitious.

In the thermal section, Harry outlined a policy that mandates no fossil fuel combustion as a primary heating source at new developments that trigger Act 250. Commissioner Kraus requested a stronger policy supporting geothermal. Finally, Harry described the new policies in the Siting section, which prohibit ground-mounted solar arrays in areas served by sewer and water and in forest-based resource areas and a policy requiring large solar array facilities to be permeable to small animals and manage their sites as a pollinator or grassland habitat. Commissioner Riddle raised concerns that the grassland policy would present a wildfire risk to solar developers. Kevin responded that we would make inquiries and revise the policy as needed. Commissioner Kraus requested that a policy be added to make carbon emissions a factor in the region's regulation of generation facilities.

Commissioner Echeverria motioned to advance the chapter and was seconded by Commissioner Malmquist. A vote was taken, and the motion was passed.

## **9. Staff/Commissioner Updates**

### **a. Legislative Update**

Peter gave brief updates on the status of the Flood Safety Act, the Act 250 Act/housing bill, the Renewable Energy Standard bill, the changes to Open Meeting Law, and the Municipal Ethics Bill. These changes will be very consequential to our work at TRORC. The act 250 bill in particular is why work on the regional plan's land use chapter has been put on hold.

### **b. TRORC Annual Meeting – June 26, 2024**

Same vendors as last year. Speaker will be Ben Kilham, from the Kilham Bear Center in Lyme.

### **c. Other**

Peter briefly mentioned a new funding opportunity from the Vermont Bond Bank that will provide emergency funding and technical assistance to small water systems throughout the state. The funding comes from \$6 million in repurposed ARPA funds. RPCs will play a role in providing technical assistance.

Mary Olmo, TRORC's Finance Manager, has decided to move on. Christina Scott will be the new Finance Manager. She was formerly the CFO of a dry-cleaning business with over 130 employees. She will start at TRORC in June. TRORC is also looking to hire a Grants Administrator.

Dave Snedeker from NVDA raised his hand to mention the next steps for VAPDA's peer review process of TRORC and thank TRORC for its leadership on several statewide initiatives, including the Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) and the Resilience Initiative for Vermont Resilience and Recovery (RIVER).

## **10. Adjourn**

On a motion made by Commissioner Kraus and seconded by Commissioner Malmquist, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Harry Falconer  
May 30, 2024