



**TRORC Board Meeting
September 25, 2024 – Board Meeting Minutes**

Attendance:

Name	Town	9/25/24								
Steve Cota	Barnard (Alt)									
Paul Vallee	Bethel (Alt.)									
Gene Kraus	Bethel									
Nancy Jones	Bradford									
Marcey Carver	Bradford (Alt)									
Megan O'Toole	Braintree (Alt)									
Sandy Vondrasek Cooch	Braintree	X								
Lynne Bertram	Bridgewater									
Gwynn Zakov	Brookfield									
Jon Binhammer	Brookfield (Alt.)									
Carl Pepperman	Chelsea									
Steve Devoto	Corinth	X								
Peter Berger	Fairlee									
Mark Belisle	Granville									
Monica Collins	Hancock									
Lori Hirshfield	Hartford	X								
Bruce Riddle	Hartford (Alt)									
Charles Jeffries	Hartland									
Tony O'Meara	Newbury	X								
Larry Scott	Newbury (Alt.)									
Brian Loeb	Norwich	X								
Herb Kuendig	Pittsfield									
Anne Brown	Plymouth	X								
Bill Emmons	Pomfret	X								
Regina Lawrence	Pomfret (Alt)									
Chris Sargent	Randolph									
Patricia Harvey	Rochester									
Doon Hinderyckx	Rochester (Alt)									
Patrick Dakin	Royalton	X								
Bushrod Powers	Royalton (Alt)	X								
Ira Clark	Sharon	X								
Kevin Travis	Stockbridge									
John Echeverria	Strafford	X								

William Emmons, III, Chair ~ Peter G. Gregory, AICP, Executive Director
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Angela McCanna	Thetford	X							
Jim Masland	Thetford (Alt)								
Jim Clark	Topsham								
Michael Sacca	Tunbridge								
Kevin Rose	Tunbridge (Alt)								
Andrea Herrington	Vershire								
Nancy Malmquist	W. Fairlee	X							
Don Bourdon	Woodstock								
Brad Prescott	Woodstock (Alt)	X							
Meghan Butts	At-Large								
Ken Alton	At-Large	X							
Dan Rudell	At-Large								
Andrew Winter	At-Large								
Meg Emmons	At-Large	X							

Staff: Peter Gregory, Kevin Geiger, Geena Baber, Pete Fellows, Sarah Wraight, Christina Scott
Guests: Paige Waters, Student from VT Law School

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

The 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.

2. Approval of July 24, 2024, TRORC Board Minutes

On a motion from Commissioner Powers, and seconded by Commissioner Prescott, the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Acceptance of unaudited Financial Reports for July and August 2024

On a motion from Commissioner Powers, and seconded by Commissioner Echeverria, the July and August unaudited Financials were approved unanimously. Peter Gregory shared that the Audit field work is complete, and we are in hopes that our Auditor will attend the October Board meeting. We expect a draft audit anytime. It was a clean audit, no questionable costs or material weaknesses or findings. We had a good audit, good year, and improved our fund balance.

4. Regional Plan’s Commissioner Comments to date and Action on setting Regional Plan public hearing format and dates

Chief Planner Geiger presented. Geena Baber has been a huge contributor to these efforts. Together they have prepared the Regional Plan in a newer format, cleaner, 3 column format and managed to eliminate approximately 120 pages. Sent out responsiveness summary and appreciate the feedback that has been received on that.

TRORC received Legal opinion that staff are completely authorized to run the hearings on behalf of the Board.

Hearing dates are as follows:

November 4th, 2024, in person at the Bethel Town Office from 5-7:00pm

November 6th, 2024, Virtual Zoom ONLY from 6-8:00pm

November 7th, 2024, in person at the Fairlee Town Office from 5-7:00 pm

Final Public Hearing to be in December or January that would involve the Full Board. The process requires a 30-day digital mail out, so everyone on the distribution list could be included to receive the email. Chair Selectboards, Regional Planning Commission, Directors, Town Managers and Commissioners, and State agencies, etc.

Nancy Malmquist motioned *“to approve the regional plan draft with appendices and maps as needed for first hearing conducted by staff”*, seconded by Commissioner Brad Prescott and approved unanimously.

5. ARPA Funding

Sarah Wraight presented, ARPA is a program out of Federal Treasury intended as Covid Relief to every municipality in the State, which included all our towns and our 3 incorporated villages.

Less restrictive, now allowing any community that received under 10 million dollars (all our communities) could categorize that money as revenue replacement. Can be used for a wide variety of government services. December 31, 2024, is the deadline to file Obligation of Funds. Funds have to be spent by December 31, 2026.

Treasury has new rules, selectboard resolution. Exact money and what it was spent on, lock down contracts with vendors (contractors or organizations) by December 31, 2024

Any money not obligated by this date, will be lost.

Surplus Strategy: approved by legal team, allows use of these funds to pay off line items. Most towns have taken that approach. Sarah has been educating and assisting towns with these filings and reporting, as TRORC will continue to do as reporting will continue through April 2027.

6. Keys to the Valley housing implementation

As changes occur with Act 250, it heavily affects housing and local and regional planning. Our team has created some mockups which will be posted to the website.

Second Housing Expo was well attended by both Property Owners and small developers, architects and engineers. We held it at the Career and Tech Center in Hartford and found that to be a great spot.

Housing development targets will filter down to town level Regional Plans. Goal for current/ projected housing in part based on Population and Housing Growth. There is not currently a comprehensive database in our state, but we are working on creating a housing utility to better determine how much housing/ rentals there are currently, and how much is necessary, as well as types/ sizes/ housing starts.

Will also look into developments in motel program; conversions of Motels to housing units in our areas to address homelessness.

7. FY 26 Dues

Gregory stated that the FY26 Town Dues chart reflects an automatic 3% increase, just as in past years, Gregory noted that the Executive Committee had recommended that the Board approve the FY26 Town Dues. It was agreed to get notices out to towns for budgeting purposes in October.

On a motion made by Commissioner Prescott and seconded by Commissioner Powers the FY26 Town Dues were approved.

8. Staff/ Commissioner Updates

a. Commissioner Items

Sydney Steinle will be physically leaving TRORC and working remotely for a period of time, starting October 9th

Next Board Meeting will be October 30th which is the 5th Wednesday of October. We will again be meeting at the Thompson Senior Center. After which it will be unavailable until Spring.

Save the Date, December 11, we will have our December Board meeting at the Quechee Club, starting at 5:30pm

b. Act 250 changes

Will outline changes/ updates roll out to communities in Newsletter and in meetings with towns. December 2026 deadline for Land Use Maps, therefore TRORC will be meeting with every community. Once our Regional Plan is adopted by the board, and approved by the new Land Use Regulatory Board, some communities can apply for Act 250 exemptions.

c. Other

Emmons recommended the book What If We Get It Right

A good read on Planning that emphasizes focus on climate and environment and planning for Nature, Culture and Joy. Three very simple planning goals that would fit anywhere.

Scholarship Committee needs one more member. They meet in the fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:
Christina Scott, Finance Manager, October 2, 2024