

1 CHITTENDEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
2 JOINT EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
3 DRAFT  
4

5 DATE: Wednesday, January 3, 2024  
6 TIME: 5:45 PM  
7 PLACE: Remote Attendance via ZOOM  
8

9 PRESENT: Chris Shaw, Chair Catherine McMains, Past Chair  
10 Elaine Haney, at large >5000 Jacki Murphy, Secretary/Treasurer  
11 Bard Hill, Vice-Chair Michael Bissonette, at large <5000  
12 Jeff Carr, Finance  
13

14 STAFF: Charlie Baker, Executive Director Taylor Newton, Planning Mgr.  
15 Forest Cohen, Senior Business Mgr. Amy Irvin Witham, Business Office Mgr.  
16 Anne Nelson Stoner, Equity &Engagement Mgr. Emma Vaughn, Communications Mgr.  
17

18 1. Call to Order, Attendance. The Joint Finance and Executive Committee meeting was called to order  
19 by the Chair, Chris Shaw, at 5:47 PM.  
20

21 2. Changes to the Agenda, Members items. Charlie asked that an item be added to review the draft  
22 January Board agenda after item 8. Chris added that as item 8.5.  
23

24 3. Approval of the December 6, 2023, Joint Executive and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes  
25 CATHERINE MCMAINS MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY JACKI MURPHY TO APPROVE THE  
26 DECEMBER 6, 2023, JOINT EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES, AS PRESENTED.  
27 MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

28 4. FY24 UPWP & Budget Mid-year Adjustment

29 Charlie referred members to the updated FY24 Mid-Year Budget and UPWP documents included  
30 with the packet. Charlie said the overall mid-year budget was slightly lower, coming in at  
31 \$9,309,535, down from the original budget of \$9,571,017. He highlighted various budget line items  
32 for members, including the following:  
33

- 34 • Transportation, Line 23, Regional Planning Grant Funds Match: Charlie explained that he is  
35 proposing to use an additional \$50,000 of regional planning funds for MPO match. This  
36 helps our bottom line at the end of the year, as we can preserve dues.
- 37 • Natural Resources and Energy, Line 37, EDA Planning Grant, Line 38 Municipal Vulnerability  
38 Index, and Line 39 EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Act: Charlie explained these projects are  
39 yellow because they are pending from the Department of Environmental Conservation.
- 40 • Natural Resources and Energy, Lines 51, ACRPC Basin 5 Streams Project, Line 54, Urban and  
41 Community Forestry Block Grant: These are coded blue because the funding agreements  
42 came through after the original budget was created.
- 43 • Emergency Management and Health, Line 59, United way Funding Committee: This was  
44 coded blue because the funding agreement came through after the original budget was  
45 created.  
46

1 Charlie said the Urban Community Forest and Block grant is a \$700K grant designed to fund a 3-year  
2 initiative to plant 2000 trees statewide. We will be distributing funds to municipalities across the  
3 state. He noted Darren Schibler was the lead on this.

4  
5 Jacki Murphy asked for clarification on the direct amounts on the budget sheet. Charlie explained  
6 this was something he and Forest added years ago; the funds listed as direct are funds that pass  
7 through us to consultants or other entities. They do not pay for our staff or office spaces. Charlie  
8 pointed out the ~\$6.25 million is mirrored on the expense side as funds that move through to  
9 consultants and ~\$3 million are operating expenses.

10  
11 Charlie said the revenue in excess of expenses amount went from \$69,000 to \$84,000 at mid-year  
12 and included an additional \$20K budgeted for staff bonuses. Charlie said he thinks it is the right  
13 thing to do, considering how much work we are asking staff to do right now. Charlie asked members  
14 if they were okay with the proposal. Jeff said he would defer to the Executive Director on rewarding  
15 staff for doing great work and thinks it is good for morale and retention. Members agreed.

16  
17 Charlie pointed out two capital investments. The first was \$12,550 for a server upgrade and the  
18 second was an estimate of \$70,000 for office renovations. He explained that with more staff  
19 working at the office again, we want to add two or three small meeting pods. Jeff asked why storage  
20 wasn't cloud based. Charlie explained we do have cloud storage for most of our work, but our  
21 accounting and GIS files remained on the server.

22  
23 Charlie said the indirect rates have leveled out over the last 5-6 years. He feels the ACCD funds, and  
24 our cash balances, helped stop these swings. Charlie said there are still some edits left for the larger  
25 work program, but it is consistent on the transportation side. Jeff reminded everyone it wasn't  
26 always this way, he said this is a testament to solid work from CCRPC leadership and staff. Jeff gave  
27 Charlie, Forest, and Amy kudos.

28  
29 JEFF CARR MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY BARD HILL, TO RECOMMEND THE BOARD APPROVE THE  
30 PROPOSED FY24 MID-YEAR ADJUSTMENT BUDGET AND UPWP. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

31  
32 **The financial portion of the meeting closed and Jeff Carr said goodbye to everyone and excused  
33 himself from the meeting.**

34  
35 5. Act 250 & Section 248 Applications


36 a) Little Ones University, Williston, #4C0388A-11

37 Taylor Newton referred members to the Act 250 notice application letter included with the  
38 packet. He provided an overview and screen share. This is an application letter for the  
39 construction of a retrofit conversion on an existing 5000 sf general office building to a childcare  
40 facility to serve 18 teachers and 114 students. The project is located at 620 Lawrence Place in  
41 Williston, Vermont. The CCRPC understands the scope of the hearing requested by Vt. State  
42 Colleges / Vt. State University has been narrowed to Criterion 5 (Transportation) and Criterion  
43 9K (Public Investments). The CCRPC finds the proposed project to be in conformance with the  
44 planning areas of the 2018 Chittenden County ECOS Plan Strategy 6, Action 8 (ensure adequate  
45 access to high quality and affordable early learning and education programs). The CCRPC  
46 understands the proposed development is estimated to add 42 trips to the area during peak  
47 hours and does not have any major concerns with the effects on traffic. These comments are

1 based on information currently available; we may have additional comments as the project  
2 continues.

3  
4 BARD HILL MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY CATHERINE MCMAINS, TO APPROVE THE ACT 250  
5 APPLICATION LETTER AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6 6. Draft Code of Conduct

7 Charlie introduced this topic noting that this is an initial draft. This will also be discussed at our  
8 February meeting. Anne Nelson Stoner said the process has been slower than she anticipated, and  
9 she will solicit feedback from staff and members over the course of January. Anne Nelson provided a  
10 Code of Conduct presentation for members. The presentation can be found through the following  
11 link:  [the Slide Deck](#).

12  
13 The presentation included the following:

- 14 • Timeline
- 15 • Resources
- 16 • Organizational Values
- 17 • General Conduct
- 18 • Staff Expectations
- 19 • Conflict of Interest
- 20 • Political Activity (allowed and not allowed)
- 21 • Free Speech
- 22 • Unacceptable behavior
- 23 • Implementation and Accountability
- 24 • Conflict Resolution and Discipline/Process
- 25 • Restorative Justice/Process
- 26 • Employee Grievance

27  
28 Bard Hill said he is ruminating on staff expectations, specifically remote work. In his experience  
29 people with the option to work remotely want to work at the office one day per week. He wonders  
30 what staff wants and how it is related to productivity. Jacki is confused about the hours of work and  
31 the expected hours of work. Bard said in state government flexibility was approved on a case-by-  
32 case basis. There was a core set of hours in each day, and within the core hours there was flexibility,  
33 depending on individuals and the specific position. Charlie said these expectations were set up 20  
34 years ago or so. The current CCRPC staff balance flexible work schedules with their individual work  
35 demands.

36  
37 Chris Shaw asked about Conflict of Interest and how the Hatch Act comes in to play at CCRPC.  
38 Charlie and Anne Nelson explained this is included because the CCRPC receives Federal funding.  
39 Member discussion regarding the Hatch Act ensued. Anne Nelson said many of the expectations  
40 applied to CCRPC staff and not committee and board members. She wonders where boundaries and  
41 lines should be, in terms of conflict of interest for board and committee members. Elaine Haney said  
42 CCRPC Board and committee members should be clear they are not representing the CCRPC in  
43 outside activities, political or otherwise, they participate in. Anne Nelson said expectations should  
44 be rolled out to new members, she feels there is space for training on conflict resolution and  
45 restorative justice and there should be avenues for regular feedback in the form of workshops and  
46 training and orientations. Charlie said our bylaws currently have a conflict-of-interest rule for board

1 members requiring an annual form to be signed by members. Anne Nelson suggested we'd look at  
2 something similar for board and committee members in the future. Discussion ensued. Members  
3 think a document should be distributed to all members, new and existing, for their signature  
4 annually. Charlie said we do have this type of guidance in our bylaws. Our mission and vision  
5 statements also need to be re-examined in our bylaws. He proposed a bylaw review by the Board  
6 Development Committee in 2024 in order that we deal with these issues at once. Members agreed.  
7

8 7. Equity Update

9 Anne Nelson said she continued her work with the Equity Advisory Committee on various initiatives  
10 including: EAC membership, EAC meeting to discuss Climate Action in partnership with Climate  
11 Action Office, Equity Action Plan draft, ECOS public engagement plan, participation in the Ethical  
12 Performance Improvement Campaign (EPIC) at VLCT, continued mentorship and coaching from the  
13 Creative Discourse Group and an individual consultant, Siri Russell.  
14

15 8. Chair/Director Report

- 16 a) Legislative Update. Charlie said the Legislators are in start-up mode. There is movement on Act  
17 250 and flood resilience, which is good.  
18 b) Compensation Study. Charlie reminded members we had a compensation study done. There will  
19 be information shared in February and substantive information will be available in March. He  
20 explained we are looking at total compensation, salaries, and benefits.  
21 c) Staffing Update. Charlie said we hired a new transportation planner, Eliana Fox. She started  
22 January 2. He reminded members we are currently interviewing for the open business office  
23 position. We have many good candidates and hope to announce a new hire soon.  
24

25 8a. Draft January Board Agenda review

26 Charlie screenshared the draft January 17, 2024, Board meeting agenda with members. Agenda  
27 items include the FY24-UPWP Mid-Year Adjustment and Budget, Minor TIP amendment, minutes,  
28 Board Development committee to perform a review and update of bylaws, Equity update, draft  
29 Code of Conduct discussion, and approval of town plans for Essex and Jericho. Mike Bissonette  
30 suggested moving the Jericho and Essex Town plan approvals into the consent agenda. Taylor  
31 Newton said he doesn't see any reason not to. Catherine McMains and Elaine Haney agreed. Mike  
32 asked if a discussion on dispatch could be scheduled for a future meeting. Charlie added it to the list  
33 for a future meeting. Catherine asked about funding for emergency service calls and rescue services  
34 being discussed in the legislature. Charlie said he will check.

35 9. New Business: None.  
36

37 10. Executive Session: None needed.  
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39 11. Adjournment: MICHAEL BISSONETTE MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY BARD HILL, TO ADJOURN THE  
40 MEETING AT 7:21 PM. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.  
41

42 Respectfully submitted,  
43 Amy Irvin Witham