Commissioners Present: Melinda Bussino, Fred Bullock, Elaine Beckwith, Corky Elwell, John Kristensen, John Whitman, Tom Buchanan, Jodi French
Excused: Carolyn Partridge, Norm Wright, Matt Yakovleff
Staff Present: Chris Campany, Ashley Collins
Convened: 7:06pm

Administrative Reports:
Secretary’s Report: On a motion by Jodi, seconded by Corky the January 11th minutes were approved.
Treasurers Report: On a motion by Jodi, seconded by Fred the Treasurer’s report was approved.

Executive Director’s Report:
Chris explained that an invitation would be sent to all commissioners explaining the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Regional Planning Commission (RPC) survey, instructions, and a link to the survey. To facilitate participation in the survey, arrangements have been made to have access to the computer lab of the Windham Regional Career Center (WRCC) at 6:00 p.m. on February 22nd ahead of the meeting of the Full Commission, also to be held at the WRCC. Given that planning around the eventual closure of Vermont Yankee has been gaining interest in the region and Senator Peter Galbraith has indicated this is a priority for him, Chris asked if he should invite the Senator to be the guest speaker at the February meeting of the Full Commission. It was agreed that the Senator should be invited. Chris explained that he has spoken with Jeff Lewis about having a joint meeting in March with Pat Moulton-Powden, Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Community Development, as the guest. This idea was also supported.

Chris informed the Board that the Vermont State Nuclear Advisory Panel (VSNAP) would also be meeting on February 22nd from 6-9 p.m. at the Vernon Library. Tom Buchanan volunteered to attend that meeting.

The Regional Technology Planning Team has been formed. Dinah Reed, who is staffing this effort, attended the organizational meeting for all of the RPCs. Each RPC has been tasked with the creation of a Team to do the following:
- Guided by the Team, each RPC will develop a Regional Technology Plan.
- The Technology Plans will identify the needs and opportunities for each region in regards to new technologies, provide strategies to drive adoption of broadband, identify key partnerships that will benefit from the coordinated use of information technology (such as government services,
education, health care, business, etc.) and set targets for improvement among those key partnerships.

- Hold public events/meetings/workshops about these Regional Technology Plans and statewide technology initiatives.

The Energy Committee and Natural Resources Committee have developed a set of issues of potential interest to legislators as requested by the Executive Board. There was substantial discussion about how these lists of issues should be used. It was agreed that the lists of issues generated in February and March should be given to the PPLC to inform conversations with legislators. Issues developed in the fall (October-November) will be compiled by staff and reviewed by the Executive Board for submission to the region’s delegation of legislators for their information.

A Senate Economic Development Hearing has been tentatively planned for February 23rd to hear testimony about the potential economic impacts of the eventual closure of the Vermont Yankee plant. WRC Chair Melinda Bussino proposed that Chris present the WRC positions established in the most recent filings with the PSB.

Chris described a meeting with Pat Moulton-Powden on February 7th organized by the BDCC concerning planning around the eventual Vermont Yankee closure. The message Pat was taking back to Montpelier was that planning efforts need to be based in the region; resources need to be found to support regional efforts; and state actions should be coordinated with the region. The group meeting with Pat also proposed the formation of a Post-VY Regional Task Force that would facilitate regional participation in decisions related to the eventual closure, and which would coordinate the efforts of working groups focused on key planning areas (i.e., economic impacts and mitigation, municipal fiscal impacts and mitigation, the decommissioning process and the VY site, social and cultural impacts). This task force would be formed among local organizations and stakeholders.

Committee Reports:

**Energy:** Last meeting took place on January 13th. Tom explained that half of the EECBG Stimulus Funds that were awarded need to be spent by June 30, 2011. Staff will review those applications already received but not previously funded to suggest appropriate candidates. The Committee had finalized and approved its Purpose and Objective statement, and submitted it to the Executive Board for approval. Jodi moved approval, seconded by Fred; the Energy Committee’s Purpose and Objective Statement was approved by a unanimous vote. Tom also brought a proposal to the Executive Board concerning planning for the eventual closure and decommissioning of Vermont Yankee, whenever that may occur. It was noted that recognition of the need to plan for the eventual closure of the plant has grown among stakeholders throughout the region and state. He proposed that the Executive Director be given the authority to develop a separate committee to represent WRC concerns in the planning for an eventual shutdown. That change will take much of the anticipated future VY work load off the plate of the Energy Committee. The new committee will be closely aligned with BDCC and other stakeholders outside of WRC, and will focus on forward planning. The exact composition and operational structure of the new committee will be established by Chris over the coming weeks. All existing VY issues within dockets 7440 (the extended CPG) and 7600 (investigation into the leak) will continue to be handled by the Energy Committee because the Executive Board and outside stakeholders recognize that the Committee has established a strong history of neutrality, and an exceptional understanding of the two dockets. Jodi made a motion that the Executive Board
tentatively approve establishing another committee to handle VY issues, pending concurrence of this approach by the Energy Committee at its February 10, 2011 meeting, and that Chris be tasked with establishing membership of a new committee that be operational by mid-March, 2011. The motion was seconded by Fred, and approved by a unanimous vote.

Natural Resources: The Deerfield Wind project was a major discussion topic at the meeting on January 19th. Experts have differing opinions on placement of turbines on specific ridges; a major factor in these discussions continues to be the potential impact on bears. The experts were unable to come to agreement about whether or not the bears will be harmed by the project itself but they did agree that bringing more people into the area would be harmful. The majority of committee agreed that the Public Service Board’s position was a good compromise. It was noted that the PRC was the Spokesman on this not the NRC.

Planning Coordination: The Brookline Public Hearing was rescheduled for February 9th due to weather conditions. The Halifax Public Hearing was held on February 3rd. The Committee has not received comments on this hearing, but believes it went smoothly. Rockingham has requested regional approval of their town plan, and a panel has been formed. The PCC discussed the town plan review process and will be revising the chart of duties and responsibilities, as well as the letter that goes to towns. The Committee is also reviewing its Purpose and Objective Statement and will discuss suggested revisions at their next meeting on February 16th.

Project Review: The meeting was held immediately prior to Executive Board because of the postponement of their February 1st meeting due to severe winter weather.

Blue Heron Hydro – FERC has accepted License Applications for both Ball Mountain and Townshend Dam projects. The deadline for Comments and Motions to Intervene is March 21st. The PRC plans to meet this deadline. Representative David Deen has submitted a Motion to Intervene and Comments on behalf of the Connecticut River Watershed Council. The PRC agrees that the WRC should also file a Motion to Intervene and Comments on the Ball Mountain and Townshend Dam projects.

Mount Snow Master Plan - The hearings will resume on February 23rd. There are many outstanding questions regarding criteria and insufficient information about major aspects of the application.

Section 248 Transmission Upgrade - This project will be taking place in Readsboro and Whitingham. The deadline for Comments on this project is March 2nd. The issues of concern related to this project are primarily related to invasive species and wetlands. This project also involves towns in the Bennington region, and John Bennett will touch base with the Bennington RPC regarding their position.

Deerfield Wind – The PRC is in the process of preparing Comments.

AT&T – Applications are in for Rockingham and Jamaica cell towers. There was some discussion about the ability of towns to influence the review process in light of the provisions of Section 248a.

Public Policy & Legislative: Representative David Deen of Westminster was the guest on January 31st. Mr. Deen is the Chair of Fish and Wildlife Resources, and has been the Chair for four consecutive terms. It is also his 2nd term on the House Rules Committee. He shared issues with the PPLC that are being discussed within his committee, including a bill concerning deer damage and management, restrictions against nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilizers for non-agricultural use, and a requirement that drug manufacturers be responsible for recycling unused drugs to prevent their being flushed into private and public septic and sewer systems. On February 7th Representative Mike Mrowicki of Putney, who serves on the Human Services Committee, was present to discuss current issues. He
shared that the Governor’s goal is to move the economy forward with no additional costs to taxpayers. He also discussed financial issues related to non-profit organizations getting assistance, costs for prison systems, elderly care and healthcare costs. He made mention of a bill that is being submitted that is similar to one passed in Main addressing property tax issues. The PPLC will meet February 14th with guest Matthew Trieber of Rockingham, and again on February 28th with guest Representative Carolyn Partridge of Windham. Representative Ann Manwaring had planned to participate on February 28th, but had to cancel due to the visit of the Speaker of the House to her district that day. She hopes to reschedule.

Brownfields:
Community Development:
Finance:
LEPC:
Nominating:
Transportation

No Meetings

On a motion by Jodi, seconded by Fred the committee reports were accepted.

Fred moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by all who were present.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:37pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Ashley Collins