Executive Board
January 10, 2012
WRC Conference Room

Commissioners Present: Maggie Bartenhagen, Elaine Beckwith, Tom Buchanan, Melinda Bussino, Tom Consolino, Corky Elwell, Jodi French, John Kristensen, Alan LaCombe
Excused: Carolyn Partridge, Norm Wright
Guests Present: Eric Stevens, WRC Commissioner- Grafton
Staff Present: Chris Campany, Ashley Collins
Convened: 7:05pm

Administrative Reports:
Secretary’s Report: On a motion by Jodi, seconded by Tom B., the minutes from the November meeting were approved with small grammatical corrections.
Treasurer’s Report: On a motion by Jodi, seconded by Tom. B., the Treasurer’s Report was approved.

Emergency Planning Efforts: At the most recent Commission meeting held in November the topic of Commissioner involvement with emergency planning efforts was raised by Grafton Commissioner Eric Stevens. Eric attended the Executive Board meeting to explain that Commissioners needed to become engaged to serve as advocates for emergency planning within the towns. Eric also explained that while training and planning for emergency operations are coordinated through the Local Emergency Planning Committee 6 (LEPC6), there is not a similar entity that advocates for planning for emergency response and recovery. Examples of operations include the setting up of shelters, or the evacuation of residents in low-lying areas. Examples of planning for emergency response and recovery includes establishing funding and finance mechanisms to carry a town through until FEMA reimbursements are completed, or establishing a structure to report road status and infrastructure damage. Chris noted that this is the largest program within the WRC that does not benefit from direct Commissioner involvement, other than Commissioner representation on the LEPC6. Extended discussion ensued. It was agreed that the development of such an Emergency Planning Committee should be considered, and that Chris should draft a proposal to be presented to the Executive Board for consideration.

Executive Director’s Report & Other Business:
1) Bylaws & Committee Procedure Revisions: Chris provided a brief overview of proposed minor to the Bylaws for consideration by the Executive Board. The Executive Board was provided with handouts on these changes, and it was agreed that the proposed amendments would be discussed at next month’s meeting. Chris noted that the most significant changes
related to the required approval for the acceptance and commitment of funds, and that what is being proposed would bring the bylaws in line with current and past practice.

2) SEVEDS has asked for a letter supporting its application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for a technical assistance grant that would provide funding to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). A CEDS is necessary to participate in most of the EDA’s programs. Chris explained that the WRC has been active in the SeVEDS process, and that the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation has agreed to take the lead on economic development planning for the region. On a motion by Tom C. seconded by Jodi, the motion for Chris to write the letter in support of the SeVEDS application was approved. Chris also mentioned that SeVED’s would like to be on the agenda for the February Full Commission meeting.

3) Chris mentioned that the Irene Recovery Report produced by the Irene Recovery Coordination Team under the leadership of Neal Lunderville had been released, and that information about the report would be sent to the towns and commissioners through a WRC update. Chris noted that RPC involvement in the response and recovery, and proposed roles going forward, was referenced in the report.

4) The WRC is working under contract with ANR to meet with towns and ANR staff to identify, describe and map areas of concern within rivers and streams. The contract focuses on 11 priority towns identified by ANR, but the WRC will also meet with towns that are not among those 11 that have asked that areas of concern be identified within their rivers and streams as well.

5) The deadline for hazard mitigation planning grant support has been extended to February 17, 2012.

6) Representatives from Green Mountain Power and CVPS will be present at the January Commission meeting to discuss what the proposed merger between Green Mountain Power and Central Vermont Public Service means for the region, as well as how smart meters work and how they’ll be used.

Committee Reports:

Brownfields: The Committee minutes were distributed for review but there was no discussion.

Energy: There was no recent meeting of the Energy Committee. However, Tom B. explained that a decision in the federal case concerning Entergy Vermont Yankee (VY) was anticipated any day. He would like the WRC to file a petition with the Public Service Board (PSB) seeking reimbursement by Entergy for further work in the PSB docket. He asked the Executive Board to authorize the development of a petition to the PSB for reimbursement, and that Chris is authorized to reach out to Jim Matteau for his recollection of past events and information. On a motion by John, seconded by Jodi, the Executive Board approved the drafting of a petition for reimbursement.

LEPC: The Committee minutes were distributed for review, after which Corky briefly outlined the main topics. He mentioned that the Windham County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is still seeking volunteers.

Project Review: The Committee met immediately before the convening of the Executive Board. Blue Heron Hydro: FERC has issued a license for two projects in Townshend, and Jamaica. The Committee will respond to the decision with Comments, and will file a letter regarding concerns about the safety of the Ball Mountain Site.
Deerfield Wind: The final environmental impact statement was released. The two line, fifteen tower proposal, if developed, will impact two ridge lines. The Committee will be submitting Comments on this regarding the bear habitat.

There was discussion about the extension of an electrical distribution line in Jamaica on a legal town trail. The Committee plans to send a letter requesting that action be taken to minimize impacts.

Purpose and Objectives Statement: There was extended discussion concerning when and how towns should be notified that a matter within their jurisdiction is coming before the committee. It was suggested that WRC Commissioners from the specified towns and abutting towns should be made aware of any project that is being considered by the Committee, and that the towns’ Commissioners should be responsible for notifying the town. The Executive Board did not reach a conclusion on this issue, and will be further discussed at next month’s Project Review Committee meeting.

Public Policy & Legislative: Senator Jeanette White served as guest speaker on January 9th. She shared issues with the PPLC that are being discussed within her committees, including a Vital Records Bill that the committee is working on with the FBI. The bill is aimed at lowering the amount of identity theft cases by not authorizing certified birth or death certificates to be obtained except through the State’s application process. There was also brief discussion about broadband proposals.

Transportation: The Committee minutes from the December meeting were distributed for review with no discussion.

Community Development: 
Finance: 
Natural Resources: 
Nominating: 
Planning Coordination: 

No Meetings

Jodi moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by all present.
Meeting Adjourned: 9:35pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Ashley Collins