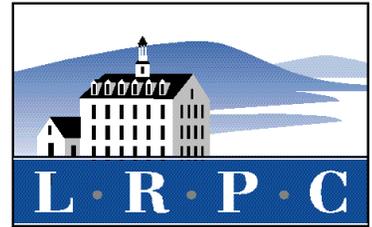


## LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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**MINUTES**  
**LRPC COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Beane Conference Center, Laconia, NH**  
**September 29, 2014**

**PRESIDING:** Warren Hutchins  
**QUORUM:** YES

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 p.m.  
**COMMUNITIES PRESENT:** 12

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>LRPC STAFF:</b>
John Cotton (Andover)	Jeffrey Hayes
Tony Guinta (Franklin)	David Jeffers
Jean Marshall (Freedom)	Gerald Coogan
John Ayer (Gilford)	Daniel Callister
John Morgenstern (Gilford)	Karin Landry, Recording Secretary
Robert Snelling (Holderness)	
Dean Anson, II (Laconia)	<b>OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES:</b>
Warren Hutchins (Laconia)	Sam Perry (Moultonborough)
William Bayard (Meredith)	Ian Marshall (Freedom)
Barbara Perry (Moultonborough)	Harry Viens (Center Harbor)
Paul Punturieri (Moultonborough)	Rosemary Landry
Wayne Crowley (Northfield)	Susan MacLeod (Ashland)
Douglas Reed (Northfield)	Ed Engler (Laconia)
Patricia Farley (Tamworth)	Hon. Elaine Swinford (Barnstead)
James Hidden (Tamworth)	Nancy Carr (Barnstead)
Steven Wingate (Tuftonboro)	Richard Gerken (Meredith)
Roger Murray, III (Wolfeboro)	
David Kerr (Barnstead)	
<b>EXCUSED:</b>	
Mitch Manseau (Hebron)	
Patricia Jones (Ossipee)	

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair W. Hutchins called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. and declared a quorum for the purpose of conducting business. Introductions were made by those in attendance.

**2. Approval of the July 28, 2014 Commission Meeting Minutes.**

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2014 LRPC Commission meeting was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Farley/Perry.*

**3. FY 15 Budget**

J. Hayes said the total budget is \$867,574. A smaller staff has reduced labor costs slightly and three quarters of the \$200,000 Brownfields grant has been subcontracted to an engineering firm. The NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) UPWP contract is the largest single contract item at \$260,000. A motion to approve the FY 15 Budget was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Farley/Favorite.*

**4. FY15 LRPC Annual Report**

J. Hayes said that the Annual Report covers what was done in FY14 as well as what will be done in FY15. The Report is forwarded to top elected officials in each member community to make them aware of what the Commission has done for them in the last year. A motion to approve the LRPC FY15 Annual Report was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Snelling Favorite.*

**5. FY16 Membership Appropriations**

J. Hayes said the assessment formula is based on the regional share of a community's population and evaluation, with an added inflation factor based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. A 2.1% inflation factor will be added into the dues formula this year. A motion to approve the FY16 membership appropriations was made. *M/S/P Wingate/Perry.* Speaking as a Moultonborough Select board member and LRPC Commissioner, P. Punturieri said that Moultonborough does not feel that using property values alone is a fair way to apportion membership fees. He explored the formula for dues apportionment in other RPCs and found that many use a different formula. He said that the Town thinks the services provided by LRPC are very good, but is concerned with the fairness of the assessment, and thinks that a straight population formula would be a lot more equitable. He asked the Commission to vote no in principal and asked the Executive Board to look at this more carefully next year and come back with something more equitable to the Town and its taxpayers. Chair Hutchins said that the Executive Board will review the matter in accordance with the request. R. Snelling said that the issue is legitimate, and noted that it was thoroughly reviewed by the Executive Board and voted on by the Commission at least twice when he was Chair. The motion was passed with one opposition (P. Punturieri).

**6. Public Hearing – Lakes Region Plan**

G. Coogan introduced the members of the Lakes Region Plan Advisory Committee: R. Snelling, S. Wingate, and Chair J. Marshall. He said the process began when the nine RPCs in the SONH collaborated to apply for a HUD grant for sustainable community planning, and that the regional plans will be pieced together to form a state wide plan. There were many successful opportunities for public involvement along the way including listening sessions, open houses, and topical workshops. He briefly reviewed findings from various chapters of the Plan that are included in the Executive Summary such as information on population projections, economic development, manufacturing, housing, transportation, and the environment. He said that land use policies were not a focus of the Plan because the pressure on growth and development is not as strong as it was five or six years ago.

Advisory Committee Chair J. Marshall said that most of the efforts are based on things that are happening on Lake Winnepesaukee or economic development, but noted that she spent a lot of time on the Committee working for and defending communities in the Region who benefit from the impact of tourists and investigations of land quality, but who also have different concerns than the majority of larger communities. She would like to have seen more investigation into increasing rail usage in the state, but because planning is an ongoing effort that may be done in the future. She said the entire Plan is available online and was forwarded to every Planning Board, Select Board, and Library in the Region on CD.

J. Hayes said that one of the things that attracted him to the Lakes Region is that it has more of a reason to plan because of the lakes, which presents a multi-jurisdictional issue. The Commission is obligated under state law to develop a regional plan, but it had not been updated in quite a few years because state funding was not available. He said that LRPC staff was involved in developing most parts of the Plan. The RPCs are hoping the Regional Plans will provide a big advantage to the state as it moves forward with developing an umbrella plan for the state.

R. Snelling has given quite a bit of thought to what will be done with the Plan. He said that while we are all involved in zoning and planning issues at the local level, we are part of a larger ecological, social system and that this work puts that into context. Issues such as lake pollution and storm water management require collaboration and coordination between towns and cities. He finds it interesting and encouraging that no

matter what specific issues are being talked about, he heard that people in this Region value the natural environment in which we live and that it needs to be protected and maintained, which provides a context for all decisions that are made. While it remains to be seen what the State will do with the document, it is hoped that it can be drawn on as municipalities update their master plans.

S. Wingate said all the things that are really valued in the Region are included in the Plan. Very important decisions are made in our communities every year, and the Plan contains the information that is needed to make good decisions. As an example, the demographic data in the report can be referred to by the Town of Tuftonboro as it considers an investment in a \$2-\$3 million library. He said that the document also contains great transportation planning.

W. Hutchins encouraged all to look at the unsolicited three page document from Meredith Community Development Director J. Edgar setting forth his perspective on regional planning, which is included in the Executive Summary.

Chair Hutchins opened the Public Hearing in accordance with RSA 36:4 at 6:48 p.m.

Paul Punturieri, Select Board Member and Commissioner, Moultonborough:

Comment: Moultonborough is in the process of updating its master plan and a lot of the information in the Plan will be very valuable. What happens to the Plan at the State level - will it be integrated/coordinated with other state plans?

Response: J. Hayes said that LRPC has basically fulfilled its purpose in completing the Regional Plan and is asking for adoption of the Plan. The common themes of all the Regional Plans will be compiled to develop a statewide snapshot that can be readily used for a State development plan.

Ed Engler, Mayor, Laconia:

Comment: There seems to be something glaringly missing from it, which is leadership. He realizes that Planning Commissions do not have the statutory authority to enact anything, but do play an advisory role. The plan is lacking from the standpoint that it doesn't seem to take the next step in terms of addressing the consequences of this information for the long term prosperity of our region and for the long term well-being of the people of our region. Secondly, it makes no specific recommendations of any kind in terms of action items or even for further study in these two critical areas. His interest is in linkage – i.e. cause and effect, and he is looking to LRPC for guidance for Laconia and other member communities. By linkage, he means that if we are looking for a higher general level of prosperity, the fact of the matter is that the status quo that we love in this part of NH and all of NH hides a very unacceptable high level of grinding generational poverty. For him prosperity is about a more dynamic economy that significantly overall raises the standard of living for most, if not all of our citizens. Population Growth: The Mayor said that a study undertaken by the Center for Public Policy a couple years ago draws a direct line between historical prosperity in our state and a healthy level of population growth. Other recent studies from throughout the country have pointed to a direct linkage between population growth and housing costs. The biggest single determining factor in population growth is the cost of living in general, with the cost of housing being a significant contributing factor. Land Use Policy: What, if anything, are we doing from a land use policy in NH that is unnecessarily raising the cost of housing in NH, which is extremely high? The guidance this organization needs to provide is to advise Laconia and other member communities as to the real long term cost in terms of prosperity, if any, to the land use policies that have evolved in the state of NH.

Response: R. Snelling said that it seems that he is inferring on a broad scale that NH land use regulation drove an increase in housing costs and a down turn in population. He pointed out that data indicates that something happened around the 2004-2005 timeframe that changed housing starts, the rate of growth, etc., and that for the most part existing ordinances covering land use have been in place for decades. Mayor Engler said that market forces have a lot to do with the numbers that are being talked about, and that we

don't have market forces working on our behalf in the current situation, and given that reality, how does that change the equation. If the market is really hot, we may have restrictive land use policies that slow down the train, but no forward momentum is a different equation. That is why he is asking for further study.

Hon. Elaine Swinford, Planning Board, Barnstead:

Comment: Tourism is the driving force in the region - what is going to happen if Northern Pass comes through?

Response: W. Hutchins said that Northern Pass is before the State and is not a question for this Board. J. Hayes said there are different opinions throughout the region about the project and LRPC is a regional Commission trying to focus on areas where there is an agreement among Commission Towns so there hasn't been a lot of impetus for the Commission to get in the middle of something where there are member communities on both sides of the issue. The Plan includes significant material on maintaining environmental quality, water quality, and tourism being driving forces throughout the region.

John Morgenstern, Select Board Member, Commissioner, Gilford:

Comment: Are there any plans to present this to delegates and legislators in a way that speaks to them? The completion of the Plan may coincide with the new Delegation having been elected and making them conscious of what is in the Plan and the thrust of what we are doing in the context of what they are doing would help them generate legislation with our help, or at least guide them in voting for legislation.

Response: J. Hayes said that the Executive Board has talked about having more conversations within the region on legislative issues, but there are no plans at this time. There has also been some discussion about an infrastructure summit to look at getting different stakeholders to discuss infrastructure needs. He said that the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions (NHARPC) has a legislative committee that monitors legislation and communicates with legislators, but he thinks the suggestion of presenting to a regional legislative forum makes a lot of sense. Chair Hutchins said that legislators that are elected to the NH House and Senate many times have not served on different boards and committees and are unaware of planning, and role of planning boards, zoning boards of adjustment and regional planning commissions, and that this could be an excellent way of helping them understand the region they are elected from.

John Ayer, Planning and Land Use Director, Commissioner, Gilford:

Comment: It might be helpful to have a "How to Use This Document" section as part of the book that indicates that there are goals and proposals in some chapters, and not in others, and that if further guidance is needed, the Commission will assist you.

Response: Chair Hutchins said that once the Plan is adopted, a letter could be sent to all member communities asking them to review the Plan and raise any questions they may have. J. Hayes said that it is a good idea to create a crosswalk between the Regional Plan and the local master plan by developing a section offering guidance on how this document can be translated into a local master plan.

Bill Bayard, Planning Board Chair, Commissioner, Meredith:

Comment: What are the impediments and ways to achieve a much higher level and faster broadband services in this part of state?

Response: J. Hayes said that a separate regional broadband plan is being worked on so a broadband chapter is not included in the regional document. The draft broadband plan will be out soon and might be included as a commission meeting agenda item as early as next month.

G. Coogan said that broadband is considered very crucial to economic development, and business cannot be conducted without high speed internet service. He pointed to the examples of CruCon in Moultonborough

and Bank of New Hampshire in Laconia of successful businesses in the region that depend on a high level of broadband services.

Karen Garth, Laconia

Comment: K. Garth reviewed the Executive Summary and is pleased to see talk about farming. She observed that it seems that one of the assumptions we are operating with when talking about economic growth in our current economic system is what we have and what we will have. She would suggest that our economic system has brought us to this place of structural generational poverty that not necessarily is always due to failure on the part of the individual. She said that income has shifted from being more generally disbursed to being concentrated at certain levels of society and that it is a structural thing as opposed to a personal failure. In the system we have and will continue to have, she doesn't see much change in bringing everyone up to equal levels. She also noticed that people are looking at the issue of how we can have a prosperous community without growth because growth has been the mantra for a number of years. She does not necessarily see that growth is always creating a good outcome for everyone involved and wonders what else might be done in this region to help us all start to look at other ways of approaching local economies. It seems fundamental to any planning for us not to necessarily make our plans based on what is happening and how things are now but starting to envision what more could be different – not just cleaner water – but what is the bigger system.

Response: Chair Hutchins said that this is the kind of contribution of thinking that is hoped will take place in communities as they review the document and begin to realize that tomorrow can't be like yesterday and we have to be the agents of change. We have to stimulate our economy in whatever ways we think is appropriate for our own community.

S. Wingate said that he has done community planning in the past and growth is sometimes like borrowing – it stimulates prosperity initially but often creates problems that have to be paid for later such as more infrastructure and services. Another thing to consider when thinking about growth is that growth doesn't go on forever and that at some point all the resources will be used up.

Chair Hutchins declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:20 p.m. A motion to accept the draft plan as presented by the Advisory Committee was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Perry/Farley.*

**7. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. was unanimously approved. *M/S/P Perry/Favorite.*