



Connecticut River Joint Commissions

October 8, 2014

CRJC Office, 10 Water Street, Lebanon, NH

**In Attendance:** VT Commissioners Present: Jason Rasmussen (for SWCRPC), David Deen, Michaela Stickney, Tara Bamford, Chris Campany, Jim Doing, and Alison Meaders. NH Commissioners Present: Donna Drouin, Robert Ball, Cleve Kapala, Elaine Levlocke, Jim McClammer, Rick Walling, Mary Sloat, Dick Sanders, and Chris Thayer. Others Present: Patricia Crocker and Greg Somoff, UVLSRPC staff.

President Rick Walling called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm. Introductions followed.

### **Minutes of the June 16, 2014 Meeting**

Cleve Kapala move to approve the minutes as presented. Jim McClammer seconded. Commissioner Levlocke abstained as she was not present at the June meeting. Motion approved.

### **August 2014 Financial Report**

New UVLSRPC Finance Manager Greg Somoff was introduced to the Commissioners. He joined UVLSRPC on September 29 and will replace Yutian Zhang who is moving out of state with his family. Commissioners Bamford inquired about the methodology for distributing expenses equally between the two state grants. The grant billing periods differ question arises about how to recognize the revenue. Greg Somoff promised to review this and report back to the Commissioners after he had gotten more settled into his new position. Donna Drouin moved to accept the July August Financial report as presented. Commissioner Levlocke seconded the motion. Motion Approved: Unanimous.

### **Report & Recommendation of the Executive Committee – Response to RFP**

UVLSRPC staff left the room for the purposes of this discussion in order to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.

The Executive Committee reported on their review of the proposal received in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for staff and administrative support for the Connecticut River Joint Commissions (CRJC). One proposal was received in response to this proposal. This proposal was from the Connecticut River Watershed Council. Richard Walling reported that after reviewing the proposal in relation to the requirements of the RFP, the Executive Committee unanimously recommends rejecting this proposal for the following reasons:

1. The proposal only included a portion of the scope of work as identified in the RFP (i.e. only three meetings were identified in the proposal); and,

2. There was a lack of staff assignment in the proposal, with much of the proposed work to be done by an unidentified contractor.

The Executive Committee also recommends renegotiating the existing agreement with the UVLSRPC to continue staffing the CRJC for a period of 18 months.

Michaela Stickney indicated that the contract with UVLSRPC could be extended for an additional 6 months, but an 18 month extension is not allowable under these circumstances.

Jason Rasmussen reported for Tom Kennedy who expressed concern about hiring an organization for an 18 month period that did not respond to the RFP. It is common practice to re-release the RFP if all proposals are rejected. In order to have a fair and transparent process, it would be better to hire the UVLSRPC, if needed, for a short duration of time, which allows more time to re-release the RFP in an effort to get more responses. This would also provide an opportunity to modify or clarify the RFP as discussed here today.

Chris Campany suggested that the CRJC needs more time in order to determine what support services we need.

Cleve Kapala indicated that NH law may be murky with respect to contractors of the State.

Dick Sanders suggested that we reject the proposal because it was not responsive and start the RFP process all over again.

Robert Ball stated that he felt the proposal was responsive and that the Watershed Council has a synergy with the CRJC.

Jim McClammer offered that we modify the RFP to allow proposals to prioritize the scope of services based upon the organization's limited budget. Board members may be able to take minutes and take other measures to save money to be used for important CRJC programs. A strategic planning session may be helpful to determine the best way forward.

*Chris Campany made a motion to authorize the Executive Committee to enter into discussions with the proposer to seek more detail in order to determine if the proposal is responsive to the RFP and to identify the manner in which the funds can be disbursed. Elaine Levlocke seconded the motion.*

*Motion approved:*

- *8 aye votes by Cleve Kapala, Robert Ball, Chris Thayer, Elaine Levlocke, Chris Campany, Alison Meaders, Mary Sloat, and Michaela Stickney.*
- *4 nay votes by Tara Bamford, Jim McClammer, Dick Sanders, and Jason Rasmussen.*
- *2 abstained (David Dean and Donna Drouin).*

## **Next Steps**

Staff member Pat Crocker rejoined the meeting and resumed taking the minutes.

Discussion of the procedures and time schedule for carrying out the Commissioners' directive to the Executive Committee followed, along with discussion of the CRJC mission, current budget and development of a work plan and program for the future. The role of Commissioners within the Commission and their capacity to play a more active role in the Commission's work should be studied. An Update to the organization's strategic plan with an outside facilitator might be appropriate. Commissioner Campany noted that the Commission had to have a clear idea of what it wants to do before pursuing new, project specific funding.

Depending on the outcome of the discussions, an extension of the agreement with UVLSRPC may be necessary. Commissioner Stickney noted that the ANR agreements are annual. Her business office would extend the sub contract for 6 months through the end of the fiscal year which is the duration of the existing contract. Beyond that a new contract between CRJC and VT ANR would have to be issued.

The CRJC Bylaws were reviewed and to determine the authority for the Executive Committee to carry out the business of CRJC under Article 8. They are authorized in the key section to:

- *Carry out the decisions and instructions of the Corporation.*
- *Oversee the month-to-month administration of the Corporation work program and budget.*
- *Authorize the execution of contracts, memoranda of understanding, and other agreements necessary to implement the Corporation work program within the constraints of the approved budget...."*

The Executive Committee will add two additional Commissioners to their decision making process. Dick Sanders from New Hampshire and Chris Campany from Vermont volunteered to serve. To meet the very tight time-frame the Committee set a 4-week deadline to complete its work. The group set a date of Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 9:30 AM at the CRJC Office to prepare for a discussion of the Watershed Council's proposal. A meeting will then be quickly arranged with the Executive Director of the Watershed council. Following that they will make a decision about the most prudent course which may include accepting the current proposal as clarified, extending the current agreement with the UVLSRPC and/or revising the RFP and reissuing it for bid.

### **Public Comments**

Commissioner Stickney reported on the new inventory of roads at risk of erosion along water bodies that is available on line for towns to use in the preparation of capital improvement plans.

Commissioner Drouin moved and Commissioner McClammer seconded the motion to adjourn at 3:45 p.m.

Approved at a meeting on December 15, 2014