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## VPA Annual Meeting Minutes September 27, 2019 Judd Hall, Vermont Technical College Randolph, VT

*Executive Committee members present:* M. Kane, S. Lotspeich, D. Rugh, A. Weinhausen, M. Tuttle, S. Hadd, R. Francis, R. Venkataraman, C. Bryars, C. Sargent and S. Jensen

*VPA Members:* S. Murray, D. Schibler, T. Bamford, J. Hemmerick, J. Donovan, D. Hall, N. Kramer, M. Zachery, T. Newton, C. Rock, S. Westa, K. Lalley, J. Rasmussen, B. Saxton, T. Cook, A. Friedkin, N. Kramer, E. Vorwald, D. White, M. Boulanger, I. Hitchcock, J. Mojo, M. Miller, K. McCarthy, R. Mahoney, E. Nosse-Leirer

*Meeting began at 10:33 a.m.*

### 1. **Call to Order**

M. Kane called the meeting to order and gave some general announcements. All EC members in attendance introduced themselves. There was a brief moment of remembrance for Hal Wilkins from southern VT, who passed away recently on 9/13. Hal's commitment to planning in Vermont was strong and clearly evident, as he continued to work with VPA till his last few weeks. VPA will be sending flowers or a similar token of goodwill and condolences to Hal's memorial service.

### 2. **VPA Year-in-Review**

There was a lot of work this year on the transition from VPA as independent entity to becoming a NNECAPA State Section. Kudos to M. Kane, M. Tuttle and S. Lotspeich, who did most of the heavy lifting. Only a few more hurdles are left to finalize the transition, but the biggest is membership registration. The EC feels strongly that the transition will result in better outcomes for VPA.

The other important work VPA did this year was with the new Act 250 legislation that is pending in the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife. VPA set strong policy tones that the Legislature is looking at and taking into consideration as it undertakes updating Act 250. VPA's work and recommendations kept it at the forefront of planning in Vermont, and VPA is well-respected by the Legislature. Kudos to the Act 250 Working Group members for all their hard work.

One new development this year is the Zoning for Great Neighborhoods and Model Housing Initiative that is being spear-headed by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development and its Department of Housing and Community Development. VPA will work with its partners and the State as this initiative moves forward in the coming months.

### **3. NNECAPA Next Steps**

M. Tuttle gave an overview of NNECAPA next steps. Being a few months away, VPA members are going to start registering as NNECAPA members, and January 1st is the date of the official transition from VPA being an independent entity to becoming an official State Section of NNECAPA.

NHPA, MAP and VPA have been working hard to align their work so the transition runs smoothly. The State Sections have tried to coordinate their work, which will hopefully lessen the workload for all three organizations' volunteers, especially now that there's a new NNECAPA Administrator. NNECAPA's Administrator is Nancy Kilbride from Events Your Way, and she is assisting NNECAPA on a part-time basis.

From the members' perspective, the biggest impact from the transition will be that they will now only pay dues for NNECAPA, not separate dues to NNECAPA and VPA. Dues amount for next two years will be \$80 per individual member, which includes membership in VPA as a section. For those who were only VPA members, we will continue organizational memberships for the next two years, as both VPA and NHPA have consistently had organizational membership for many years. For VPA-only individual members, they will pay dues to NNECAPA and will be member of both NNECAPA and VPA. At some point, APA will send out membership solicitation since they manage membership for NNECAPA. There will be discounted membership for students and retirees of \$25 through NNECAPA. Multi-state members will need to pay a membership in each state.

Nancy Kilbride, the new NNECAPA Administrator, has been a great help. Having Nancy's assistance makes it much easier for the volunteers especially since the NNECAPA 2020 Conference will be in Vermont. She's also helping NNECAPA with a lot of day-to-day stuff like membership management. In the next year, we're starting to see the benefit of the transition as workload for the EC and its members steadily decreases as a result of the transition.

The NNECAPA 2020 Conference will be at the Hilton Burlington on Battery Street on September 30 and October 1, 2020. Volunteers are needed for the conference committee. The first few organizational meetings will be in the coming months.

### **4. Minutes of 2018 Annual Meeting**

*Action:* Motion to approve the minutes of 2018 VPA Annual Meeting: 1) K. McCarthy. 2) T. Bamford. *Motion passes unanimously.*

### **5. Treasurer's Report and Approval of 2020 Budget**

S. Lotspeich walked everyone through the budget for 2020 as part of reorganization with NNECAPA and the switch to VPA becoming a NNECAPA Section. VPA's Fiscal Year is calendar year, which matches up with NNECAPA, so the creation of the temporary budget and the financial transition has been pretty easy for VPA and NHPA. However, MAP had to do an 18month budget to switch its fiscal year from July 1-to-June 30 to the calendar year.

There are a few differences between VPA's 2019 budget and VPA 2020 budget. VPA will have Nancy Kilbride's assistance, as she will be leading the book-keeping for all the NNECAPA sections.

NNECAPA and VPA had corresponding budget categories for the most part, so that makes the budget transition easier too. It is important to keep in mind that the budget is just an estimate.

Other than conference revenue, there are two key sources of income: 1) a \$3,000 flat payment from NNECAPA; and 2) a pro-rata payment from NNECAPA based on the number of VPA members that make up the NNECAPA membership. The other item of income is from Section meetings, which come from conference dues and related sponsorships and which will hopefully cover conference costs. That's typically been the case, and conferences are intended to be a wash financially with expenses roughly equivalent to revenue. The \$5,000 income estimate from Section meetings and conferences is more in line with actual receipts from 2017, 2018 and 2019, as opposed to the \$4,000 that was estimated in 2019. It is also possible that if the NNECAPA 2020 Conference makes money, then NNECAPA and VPA will share any revenue, though the basis for that share is still to be determined.

On the expense side of the budget, many expenses were equivalent to previous years. The EC proposed increasing the budget for the awards ceremony so it reflects actual costs, which have been higher in recent years. As to legislative support, the current structure will stay the same with a legislative liaison and splitting legislative intern with VNRC. There is no longer a legislative expense line in the budget because the EC combined the mileage expenses and stipend into the legislative support item. Since VPA traditionally reimbursed members for mileage and paid for lobbyist registration, the actual expenses for this item may end up higher, and we may want to make an adjustment from the floor.

Another item of income is that VT ALSA will be paying VPA for distribution for legislative reports to VT ALSA members, subject to ALSA approval. VPA will be charging \$500 for this service.

The EC needs to keep in mind that to remain eligible for its 501(c)(3) non-profit status that lobby expenses can only be 20% of the organization's total budget. The point is that it's only lobbying expenses, and our volunteer's time is not captured. The EC needs to be mindful of this and check it out since our budget is generally smaller now that VPA is a NNECAPA State Section. VPA's expenses for the legislative intern, which is a significant chunk of the budget, are not all technically lobbying expenses. The EC will need to be cognizant of how the legislative support expenses get broken down into lobbying versus non-lobbying expenses. It will be easy to track the legislative intern's activities, however, as some of those expenses are for lobbying support, but the other aspects of the intern's responsibilities are reporting or monitoring

Downtown Board representatives – C. Sawyer and R. Francis – will continue to receive the \$1,000 stipend, plus expenses, and VPA will keep that the same. There is a fair amount of travel time involved with this position.

The special projects expense item has been removed because those expenses are covered elsewhere in the budget. VPA does sponsor other conferences like VECAN, but it's likely VPA will drop sponsoring an event or two over the next year since it will become a NNECAPA section and NNECAPA may sponsor such events.

One other expense that's been eliminated in 2020 is the annual fee for Constant Contact. That expense will go away because NNECPA will have its own Constant Contact membership for all three state sections. Also, VPA no longer needs to budget for the NNECAPA conference in 2020 because that's being handled entirely by NNECAPA.

VPA worked hard over the last year to build a nice financial buffer to weather the transition to NNECAPA and even proposes a \$1,000 transfer to reserve in 2020. VPA also has a solid investment fund of \$8,000, up from roughly \$5,300 a year or more ago. The increase came from revenues from Future of Act 250 Conference, but that increase doesn't show up in the budget.

*Action:* Motion to approve 2020 Budget as amended to add \$300 to the Legislative Support expense item and to add "Lobbying" to Legislative Support expense item to be clear that that item includes both types of expenses: 1) S. Murray. 2) J. Donovan. *Motion passes unanimously.*

## **6. Review and Approval of Bylaw Changes**

M. Kane discussed the proposed Bylaw changes that are proposed to incorporate electronic voting for the Slate of Officers and for future bylaw amendments. This allows for VPA members who cannot attend Annual Meeting to participate in election of EC members either by mail or electronically. The thinking is that it improves access to the organization and hopefully will broaden participation in voting. The amendment for electronic voting on officers removes the ability to make officer nominations from the floor, which has rarely been done.

Regarding the amendment to allow for electronic voting on bylaw amendments, this change would allow VPA to adjust its bylaws after NNECAPA's Annual Meeting, if necessary, to align VPA Bylaws to NNECAPA's Bylaws as part of the transition. NNECAPA's annual meeting sometimes comes after VPA's Annual Meeting, so this will allow VPA to be flexible and to implement the intent of NNECAPA's Bylaws

A discussion among membership ensued regarding the proposed bylaw language. Many felt more work was needed regarding electronic voting for the Slate of Officers or for EC positions, so that was to be given more thought at a later date.

Regarding proposed Amendments to Article IV and electronic voting of bylaw amendments, most members thought this was a good idea, though it was suggested to add "with as much advanced consideration as feasible" to the end of the first sentence to alert future members that those proposing bylaw amendments should do it well in advance of the annual meeting.

*Action:* Motion to divide question and take up amendments to Art. IV, Section VI and Article VII independently: 1) D. White. 2) S. Hadd. *Motion passes unanimously.*

*Action:* Motion to approve proposed amendment of Article VII VPA Bylaws, as proposed and amended on September 27, 2019: 1) D. White. 2) S. Hadd. *Motion passes unanimously.*

*Action:* Motion to approve tabling Article VI: 1) R. Francis. 2) E. Vorwald. *Motion passes unanimously.*

## **7. Executive Committee Slate of Officers for 2020**

M. Kane clarified an error on Slate of Officers as distributed in that R. Francis is alternate Downtown Board Representative. C. Sawyer from St. Albans is VPA's Downtown Board Representative. A. Weinhagen noted that he would like to share Legislative Liaison duties in 2020 if possible to prepare his successor. His position as Legislative Liaison is not up for election this year,

as election for that position tracks the legislative biennium. A. Weinhagen will continue serving till end of his term. Also, M. Tuttle was to serve as both the President and the NNECAPA Section Representative in 2020, but J. Donovan volunteered from the floor to be NNECAPA Section Representative. As a result, S. Lotspeich nominated J. Donovan to be the NNECAPA Section Representative, which was seconded by S. Murray. J. Donovan accepted.

*Action:* Motion to approve 2020 Slate of Officers with revisions so that J. Donovan will become NNECAPA Section Representative and M. Tuttle will hold only the President position: 1) E. Vorwald. 2) D. White. *Motion passes unanimously.*

All congratulated M. Kane for his service as President of VPA for the last three years.

## **8. Other Business**

J. Zicconi, Chair and Executive Director of the Vermont Transportation Board, spoke about process for approval of private helipads and private airstrips. Many towns do not have a process for municipal approval, but municipal approval is a statutory prerequisite for approval by the Transportation Board of a helipad or airstrip. Without language in municipal bylaws, local communities have no say over these types of land uses. Applications to the Transportation Board for private helipads and airstrips have increased from one per year to three or four per year in the last several years as more interest has developed in private flights by both plane and helicopter. The Transportation Board is putting together working group to discuss model bylaw language to handle these types of uses. This is because the Transportation Board only looks at safety concerns when it reviews private helipads and airstrips. Local bylaws look at other things like external impacts of these land uses on the community. A few VPA members volunteered to help out the Transportation Board in drafting model language for private helipad and airstrip uses.

## **9. Adjourn**

*Action:* Motion to adjourn: 1) J. Donovan. 2) S. Lotspeich. *Motion passes unanimously.* Meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.