



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, January 14, 2022
Conference Call

Executive Committee members present: A. Weinhagen, C. Bryars, S. Lotspeich, D. Rugh, S. Wraight, G. Brunswick, C. Sawyer, R. Venkataraman, E. Vorwald and S. Westa.

VPA Members: C. Cochran, J. Hemmerick, B. Cooke

Meeting began at 10:02 a.m.

2022 Officers

Alex Weinhagen
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Catherine (Cat) Bryars, AICP
Vice President

Steve Lotspeich, RLA
Treasurer

David W. Rugh, Esq.
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Meagan Tuttle, AICP
Past President

Sarah Wraight, AICP
NNECAPA Conference Representative

Vacant
NNECAPA Section Representative

At-Large Members

Greta Brunswick

Chip Sawyer
VT Downtown Board Rep.

Ravi Venkataraman, AICP

Eric Vorwald, AICP

Sue Westa, AICP

1. Agenda Modifications

The EC agreed to move the consideration of the legislative position papers earlier in the agenda and delay the Treasurer's Report. The EC also added an item under New Business to discuss cannabis legalization guidance.

2. Announcements

None. C. Bryars had a general question regarding availability of guidance for cannabis legalization for municipalities.

3. Minutes of November 12, 2021 Executive Committee Meeting

Action: Motion approve the minutes of November 12, 2021 Executive Committee Meeting: 1) E. Vorwald. 2) S. Lotspeich. *Motion passes unanimously.*

4. Appointments

The EC has a number of appointments to make at the start of the calendar year, as follows:

A. Conference Representative to NNECAPA – S. Wraight

Action: Motion appoint S. Wraight as NNECAPA Conference Representative: 1) A. Weinhagen. 2) D. Rugh. *Motion passes unanimously*



A section of the
**Northern New England Chapter
American Planning Association**
nne.planning.org/sections/Vermont

The Vermont Planners Association (VPA) is a non-profit advocacy and educational organization of planners and related professionals. We are dedicated to advancing community planning in Vermont at the local, regional, and state levels, to foster vibrant communities and a healthy environment.

B. Section Representative to NNECAPA

Action: Motion appoint E. Vorwald as NNECAPA Section Representative: 1) A. Weinhagen. 2) S. Lotspeich. *Motion passes unanimously.*

C. Alternate to the Vermont Downtown Board

Action: Motion appoint S. Hadd as Alternate to the Vermont Downtown Board: 1) A. Weinhagen. 2) C. Sawyer. *Motion passes unanimously*

D. Legislative Liaison

No one has expressed interest in taking on this position full-time. As a result, the Legislative Liaison position will remain vacant, and the Legislative Committee will take a team approach and cover the same ground with the help of VPA's legislative intern.

5. Legislative Position Papers

A. Housing Crisis

A. Weinhagen presented this position paper. The EC discussed changing the title from "Housing Crisis" to "Addressing the Housing Crisis." R. Venkataraman and others on the EC suggested that the paper include mention of first-time homeowner programs, reaching out to historically disadvantaged and diverse communities, and diversity not just in opportunities but also in housing types.

B. Funding for Planning

A. Weinhagen discussed the recommendations in the Position Paper. The EC discussed need for funding for general plan maintenance, particularly in smaller municipalities. Otherwise, it had no changes to suggest to the draft position paper as presented.

C. Climate Action

A. Weinhagen presented the recommendations in the Position Paper to the EC. The EC expressed concerns regarding a portion of the last recommendation, which advocated for the State taking over regulatory oversight of river corridor protection with a provision for municipal delegation. The EC decided to remove the second sentence of Recommendation #7 and to slightly revise the first sentence of that last Recommendation.

D. Capability and Development Plan

A. Weinhagen discussed the recommendations in the Position Paper, including tying the Capability and Development Plan to the Climate Action Plan. This was in part because substantive Act 250 Reform isn't likely to move forward, so linking the two plans will make it easier to move legislation regarding both plans into another climate-related bill.

Action: Motion approve Addressing the Housing Crisis Position Paper, the Restoring Funding for Planning Position Paper, the Vermont Climate Action Plan Position Paper, and the Act 250 Capability and Development Plan Position Paper, as revised by the EC: 1) S. Lotspeich. 2) C. Sawyer. *Motion passes unanimously.*

6. Treasurer's Reports for November and December 2021

S. Lotspeich gave the November and December Treasurer's Reports. Expenses in November and December were for C. Sawyer's stipend as Downtown Board representative, Annual Meeting reception and Capitol Copy P.O. Box fee. As far as income, VPA received its 1/3rd share of NNECAPA Conference revenue in the amount of \$1,026. For the year, it's estimated that VPA came out ahead of projections with roughly \$1,800 more in revenue than anticipated. The checking account balance end was \$9,515.03

As of the end of 2021, VPA's investments with Edward Jones total over \$13,000 in two new but separate CDs. The largest CD is roughly \$10,000 and there was a second CD in the amount of \$2,000, plus \$1,000 in a cash account, which will be moved to a CD in early 2022. Both CDs are short-term, but VPA hopes to consolidate the CDs in the next few months. Currently, the interest is so small that leaving some money in the cash account while waiting for other CDs to mature has minimal financial consequences.

Action: Motion approve September and October Treasurer's Reports: 1) A. Weinhagen. 2) C. Bryars. *Motion passes unanimously.*

7. Committee Reports & Officer Round Table

A. Downtown Board Report

C. Sawyer said there was no Downtown Board meeting since the last EC meeting in November. The Board's next meeting is later in January, and it is likely to focus on the Downtown Transportation Fund and review of Vermont's various designation programs. C. Sawyer thinks Board is likely to continue remote meetings for the foreseeable future.

B. Professional Development Committee

R. Venkataraman gave the Professional Development Committee report. He's focused on planning for a spring conference, workshop or webinar. An in-person spring workshop is looking pretty unlikely given the spread of the omicron variant. The Committee will attempt to coordinate with NNECAPA and ensure both VPA's and NNECAPA's professional development opportunities either complement each other or at least will not be duplicative.

C. Communications Committee

S. Westa has reviewed the website and proposed removing the Projects and Publications section of the site. No other state Sections have this page, the materials are pretty outdated and many of

the links are non-functioning. S. Westa will make a record of what is on this page, and then the page will be removed.

D. Nominating Committee

S. Westa had no report.

E. Awards Committee

C. Bryars gave the Awards Committee report. The awards reception cannot be held at the Statehouse's Cedar Creek Room this year, but VPA can hold a reception in the Statehouse cafeteria. Awards nomination materials will be updated and distributed to the membership via the listserv and VPA website later today. C. Bryars also made a request that new EC members join the Committee.

F. NNECAPA

E. Vorwald reported that NNECAPA is focused on planning for its 2022 Conference at Sunday River in Maine. A call for session proposals will be going out soon. NNECAPA sent out "save the dates" for the 2022 and 2023 NNECAPA Conferences.

G. Legislative Committee

A. Weinhagen gave the Legislative Committee report regarding a number of new bills that were introduced at the start of this year's session, which is the second year of the legislative biennium. A. Weinhagen is no longer the Chair; R. Mahoney has taken over as Chair of the Committee. The Committee meets every other Monday via Zoom, and there are weekly legislative reports sent to the listserv.

8. Other Business

A. Cannabis Legalization

C. Bryars asked the EC for those who have contacts regarding cannabis legalization and where things stand with the Cannabis Control Board's new regulations. The EC discussed how municipalities can best regulate certain aspects of cannabis legalization, such as signs for retailers, or whether they are different than general retail use. Also, it wasn't clear yet how municipalities are going handle cannabis growing operations. In order to regulate facilities, at the least towns will have to establish their own local Cannabis Control Commissions, which many municipalities will treat just like Liquor Control Boards. If municipalities do not establish Cannabis Control Commissions, then there is no other allowed local regulation of such facilities. Municipalities should focus on organizing and establishing their local Cannabis Control Commission first, then it can develop any rules or controls to govern cannabis facilities on a local level. The EC discussed that training materials are generally lacking, though individuals have been prodding VLCT to produce a FAQ. It is expected that the State Cannabis Control Board will provide some guidance to municipalities in the near future too.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. The next meeting is on Friday, February 11th at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom