



NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 18, 2022
In-Person Quorum is Needed
AHEAD Conference Room Mt. Eustis Commons
262 Cottage Street, Littleton, NH
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Robitaille, Chair; Jennifer Fish, Treasurer; Ben Gaetjens-Oleson, Vice-Chair; Mark Decoteau, Secretary, Carl Martland

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Moren-Grey, Executive Director.

Call to Order

Chairperson Robitaille called the meeting to order at 2:03

- **Attendance**
Roll call was taken. No one was in attendance virtually.

Minutes Approval

- **July 28, 2022**

MOTION to approve minutes as presented with spelling corrections: Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson moved to approve Minutes of July 28, 2022. It was seconded by Board Member Decoteau.

Chairperson Robitaille: Yes.
Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson: Yes.
Board Member Martland: Yes.
Board Member Decoteau: Yes.
Board Member Fish: Yes.

The motion carried. (5-0-0).

Financial

- **Review of Financials**
Michelle Moren-Grey provided a snapshot of the financial report with the addition of the requested narrative. Ms. Moren-Grey commented that the year started off on a positive note, that the vehicle will be paid off this month, and that Mr. Steel is now including the running trend of net income to expenses.

Ms. Moren-Grey asked for any questions – Comment from Member Martland that he liked the additional narrative.

Discussion regarding the update of the Regional plan work will begin in January and take approximately 18 months.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson moved to approve the financials, as presented. It was seconded by Board Member Decoteau.

Chairperson Robitaille: Yes.

Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson: Yes.

Board Member Martland: Yes.

Board Member Decoteau: Yes.

Board Member Fish: Yes.

The motion carried. (5-0-0).

- **Update Audit**

Ms. Moren-Grey went over the audit. She stated that it was close to being finished and that it should be wrapped up by the end of next month.

Other Business

- **Annual Commission Meeting**

Ms. Moren-Grey opened the discussion about the October commission meeting. She recommended that it be a regular meeting. Ms. Moren-Grey suggested that the topic be wildland fire-related and community responsibility. There was discussion regarding the benefit of a regular meeting vs an annual dinner in relation to cost and effort. Dates were discussed, and Ms. Moren-Grey will confirm the date.

In addition to a fire topic, we will need to bring the RHNA to the Commission for an update as well as any update to the Invest NH program.

Slate of officers will need to be presented Member Martland volunteered to present the slate.

- **HB-1661**

Discussion was had regarding whether the Boards would be able to take up this matter.

- **Personnel Policy**

Discussion was had regarding vacation time for Employees as the only change being considered at this time. Ms. Moren-Grey provided the BOD with a chart and reviewed the current vacation time and recommended changes. The handout included the average time an employee stays in a job.

Discussion was had regarding accrual rate/timing, carry-over, and maximum time.

MOTION: Board Member Martland moved to recommend for the Commission to approve changes to the accrual rate of vacation time, as outlined in the chart. It was seconded by Board Member Fish.

Chairperson Robitaille: Yes.
Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson: Yes.
Board Member Martland: Yes.
Board Member Decoteau: Yes.
Board Member Fish: Yes.

The motion carried. (5-0-0).

- **Update on HB 1188**

Application is live with no responses to date. Discussion was had regarding ways in which to evaluate applicants based on questions asked in the application. Ms. Moren-Grey stated that applicants will be evaluated based on their answers and do they meet the abutter criteria. The Board additionally discussed the qualities and what qualifies an applicant to be appointed to the Commission as well as the entire HB 1188 listed membership. Ms. Moren-Grey reminded the Board to direct all questions to her.

- **Review of Meeting Schedule**

Covered during the annual meeting.

- **Leadership NH Support**

Ms. Moren-Grey discussed that in 2021 she was accepted into LNH and deferred attendance due to challenges surrounding COVID till this year starting September 2022 to May of 2023. Ms. Moren-Grey asked if the Council would support the fee of \$2,000. The total cost is \$3,850 but a scholarship was received for \$1,850. These funds are in the budget under professional development.

MOTION: Board Member Decoteau moved to approve the LNH Support for Michelle Moren-Grey and to approve the amount of \$2,000 as professional development for Ms. Moren-Grey to attend Leadership NH. It was seconded by Board Member Fish.

Chairperson Robitaille: Yes.
Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson: Yes.
Board Member Martland: Yes.
Board Member Decoteau: Yes.
Board Member Fish: Yes.

The motion carried. (5-0-0).

Member Martland commented that professional development is important for keeping staff long-term and increasing skills.

- Member Martland encouraged Members to apply for an upcoming round of Byway Enhancement Awards
- **Salary Increase for Michelle Moren-Grey**

Ms. Moren-Grey thanked the Board on behalf of herself and James for salary increases. She provided the Board with a copy of the letter she provided Chair Robitaille of her counter-response to the Board's approval of a salary increase to \$85,000. Chair Robitaille commented that Ms. Moren-Grey contacted him regarding this with her reasoning and he understands her position coming from the financial place the organization was previously in. Ms. Moren-Grey commented that there is nothing indicating that the Council's positive trend will change and that Mr. Steel and her have reviewed the budget and it can support the \$85,000 as well as it is in comparison to other Directors. Part of the reasoning is making sure there are no unforeseen events that could happen. Member Decoteau provided a counteroffer the positive financial turnaround should be recognized as well as the increased cost, effort, and challenge of hiring for the position if Ms. Moren-Grey was not here. Member Decoteau countered with \$81,000 now and two increases of \$2,000 to get to \$85,000.

MOTION: Board Member Decoteau moved to counter Michelle Moren-Grey's Response to Salary Offer (\$78,00) dated 08/03/2022 to be \$81,000 annually with two incremental increases of \$2,000 each (January 2023 and June 2023), bringing it to the original offer of \$85,000, with changes to take effect on the first full pay period of September. It was seconded by Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson.

Ms. Moren-Grey indicated she was amenable to the counteroffer. Member Decoteau commented that he appreciated Ms. Moren-Grey's thoughtfulness. Chair Robitaille as well appreciated and was proud of Ms. Moren-Grey's actions. Ms. Moren-Grey thanked the board.

Chairperson Robitaille: Yes.
Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson: Yes.
Board Member Martland: Yes.
Board Member Decoteau: Yes.
Board Member Fish: Yes.

The motion carried. (5-0-0).

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (if needed)
 None.

Public Comment
 None.

Adjournment

MOTION: Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Board Member Fish.

Chairperson Robitaille: Yes.

Vice-Chair Gaetjens-Oleson: Yes.

Board Member Martland: Yes.

Board Member Decoteau: Yes.

Board Member Fish: Yes.

The motion carried. (5-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina Morgan, Recording Secretary
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