

## **NCC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Granite State Room  
at North Country Resource Center  
629 Main St B, Lancaster, NH 03584  
Tuesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
1:00-3:00PM**

### **MINUTES**

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#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Clayton Macdonald (Stratford)  
Carl Martland (Sugar Hill)  
Ray Gorman (colebook)  
Paul Robitaille (Gorham)  
Stanley Judge (Shelburne)  
Rosalind Page (Lisbon) Virtual  
Robin Irving (Lancaster)

Ricky Decillo (NHDES)  
Lucy St john (NHDOT)  
Chuck Henderson (Senator Shaheen's office)  
Bill Watson (NHDOT)  
Nick Altonaga (NCC)  
Phil Beaulieu (NHDOT District 1)

#### 2. Call to Meeting

Meeting called to order at 1:08PM.

No Quorum. No business can be voted on.

#### 3. Approve Meeting Minutes: April 21, 2022 \*\*

Meeting minutes will be added to the next meeting agenda due to lack of a quorum.

#### 4. Presentation by NHDES: Clean Diesel Grant Program

Ricky Decillo, NHDES was online to present the Clean Diesel Grant Program. A packet was emailed to members as well as printed for attending members.

Carl – What is the minimum project amount?

- There is no minimum project amount. Some restrictions based on unit/vehicle use level throughout the course of the year.

Carl – Will DES use all the money if there are enough eligible projects? Or will they require a minimum point score?

- Scores will be done relatively, not being weighed against arbitrary standard.
- Contact me with any draft proposals to get feedback before submitting.

Carl – Was this money rolled over from last year?

Yes, funds were carried over into this FY due to some supply chain issues lowering demand.

#### 5. Ten Year Plan Process Update

- a. Projects Received
- b. Criteria Weightings
- c. Next Steps

Nick presented the spreadsheet with a summary of TYP projects received during Solicitation.

Nick will forward along the 2020 criteria weightings for reference.

Robin Irving asked about the rail line Through NoUm.

#### 6. Regional Transportation Plan Update \*\*

Robin: Made some comments about the Groveton Covered bridge and it being ineligible for federal aid. Under the Bridge Formula Grant, it has a specific definition. Would DOT or NCC be able to assist with grant application and/or administration?

Lucy: In addition to any projects Not in the TYP, bring it to your attention and can be forwarded to NHDOT for review and support.

#### 7. Regular Updates

- a. NCC Projects

Robin: Status for Groveton?

Nick will check on the status of the data.

Robin: Lancaster might be interested in Culvert assessments.

Nick will follow up with Robin regarding that project.

- b. Scenic Byways

Carl provided an update to the NCSBC. Mike Bruno is the new chair, with myself as Secretary. The new website is a great resource. If you read the local papers, there should have been a press release for the Byways Enhancement awards. These are used for enhancing the parking and car pull-off areas. Includes beautification and minor facilities/use updates. Carl provided an example on Route 302 with new pull-off with small kiosk and parking area made through work with local property owner.

Application to National Byways grant was not forwarded. Provided details from the application and the reply letter.

Bill Watson: 4 applications were submitted. 3 were applied by communities. In all of our information and posted publicly. We identified the requirements and eligibility through the Federal processes. Strings are attached with federal funding. Solicitation stated we were submitting up to 5 applications. Decisions were made based on scoring. Enfield had local match identified with cash in hand, engineering in hand.

The North Country Council came in without match, specific locations, letters of support from specific. This is a nationally competitive program with \$22 million nationally. All 50 states + DC and PR were directed to submit the most competitive applications.

Carl: There were some times misstated. We had letters of support for the process, and had specific locations detailed with view sheds. Would like to see something in the future for a NH specific program to update byway areas and to be pursued in the next few years. Appreciate the time and effort NHDOT spend with NCC and supporting the byways council but would like to see actual support.

Bill: Would be happy to assist with a planning grant to identify locations to THEN apply for implementation funds.

Robin: Has money been allocated from InvestNH for planning grants? Has the information been released yet? It would be good to see the criteria. Could be good for planning, zoning, and transportation studies.

### c. BIL/IIJA Funding opportunities

Ray: Please send along any information you have about the different programs.

Bill: Senate Bill 401 will be signed: one time block grant aid payment to the communities. One time payment of \$30 million statewide (Almost double the regular Block Grant). Senate Bill 401

One time payment of proportional funds regarding bridges.

Through the update of the TYP we will be soliciting projects for the State Bridge Aid program. (First time in many years). Solicitation process will be slightly different. Will be looking at

different variables (physical criteria as well as use and traffic, red list status, etc.) Will be prioritizing 226 Red list bridges and inquiring as to if they want to join the state aid bridge program. Bridge Formula Grant is open for technical planning. (Due September 8<sup>th</sup>).

#### d. Communities

Paul (Gorham): Blast from the past. Have had a small group form itself investigating bringing passenger rail back from the St Lawrence & Atlantic railway through the region. MaineDOT has recently done a study along with rail companies from Portland up to Lewiston. One of the members attended that meeting and reported that MaineDOT was very excited about the project. Would like to know if there is any data for rail conditions, line details, and anything.

Clayton: was not directly involved but would think the Portland-Montreal line would be a great economic bonus. Could have tremendous potential, but would need enormous support through the local, state, and federal government. Not aware of what the legal hassles might be but see many arguments made against it.

Carl: Worked on rail for many years and see this as a pipe dream due to its difficulty. Lack of demand, lower speed, low volume. See buses as more possible.

Stan: Agree somewhat with Carl due to the difficulty of re-establishing rail. Have known of many groups over the years who have attempted it but with no successes. Les Otten at Sunday River wanted Rail to Bethel but it did not succeed long term. Very difficult to make it work. Suggest looking at the Berlin or Gorham library on past effort and information.

Robin: Suggest checking Bureau of Rail & Transit. The staff are very helpful and informative. Also St. Lawrence has been steadily upgrading rail line sections. In NoUm, were planning specifically for freight traffic.

Nick presented that there are funding sources coming down from the Federal government for planning for freight and passenger rail, both upgrading old rails, bringing back services, and improving services.

Clayton: A long-term view needs to be taken in regard to paying off. Also, a cultural issue with people wanting to use it.

MaineDOT- Portland to Lewiston is the first prong. And once that is established, move it the rest of the way.

#### 8. Other Business

#### 9. Meeting Schedule

Robin suggested doing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

Want to give HEB as much time as possible to prepare Engineering designs for projects.

Nick will send out a Doodle Poll for that third week in August to set a meeting.

10. Adjourn

**Clayton motioned to adjourn the meeting.**

**Ray Seconded**

**Motion Carried.**

Meeting Adjourned at 2:41PM.

**\*\*Indicates vote of the TAC is required**

***An in-person quorum (7) is needed in order to conduct any votes, so please plan to attend if you are willing and able. If this is not possible, please use the information on the following page to attend virtually. While attending in-person, please wear a face covering for the duration of the meeting and keep a safe distance between yourself and others. Thank you.***

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