Bennington County Regional Commission

 **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**August 27, 2021 - 8:30 AM**

**(Meeting Held via ZOOM)**

Present: Janet Hurley, Dan Monks, John LaVecchia, James Salerno, Nick Zaiac, Dimitri Garder,

 Jim Sullivan (Director), Bill Colvin (Assistant Director)

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM.

* Minutes: June 25, 2021

Motion to approve Minutes by LaVecchia, Second by Zaiac. Passed unanimously.

* Draft Guidelines for BCRC Review of Act 250 and Section 248 Applications

Sullivan briefly reviewed the guidelines he prepared based on BCRC past practices, additions to the process requested by the Executive Committee, and examples from other RPCs. It was noted that the advance notice makes it easier for the BCRC to conduct timely reviews under Section 248 (i.e., CPG hearings before the Public Utility Commission). Once adopted by the Executive Committee, Sullivan will combine these guidelines with other BCRC policies and create a single BCRC policy manual. Committee members will continue to review the guidelines prior to the October meeting and vote on adoption at that time.

* Updates on Planning and Community Development Programs

Sullivan provided a brief summary of recent planning program activities including workshops/conferences organized by the BCRC (forest ecology and economics, housing, electric vehicles), assistance to towns applying for VOREC (outdoor recreation) grants, coordinating with NeighborWorks of Western Vermont to place the BCRC’s new energy coordinator in their vacant Bennington office a couple of days per week to support home weatherization and alternative heating outreach efforts, and technical assistance to towns and villages concerning access to and use of ARPA funds. Colvin reviewed community and economic development highlights: workforce and education event planned for November, Everett (SVC) and Energizer reuse studies (including the community-wide housing needs assessment), Southern Vermont CUD progress (noting extra work required of Jonathan Cooper when the CUD chair resigned suddenly as a major grant proposal was being developed – will lead to broadband access for 1500 households in the area), business grant assistance, and an update on the Putnam redevelopment project.

* Executive Director Succession Planning

Bill Colvin left the meeting prior to the Committee taking up this agenda item.

Sullivan gave a brief overview of proposals received from Strong Outcomes and EOS Transition Partners – each offering somewhat different approaches to assisting the Executive Committee with the process for hiring a new executive director. The consensus was that the EOS Transition Partners proposal provided the best approach as it included some measure of organizational planning combined with an assessment of desired skills and experience for a new director, thus ensuring a good match with where the BCRC wants to go (as opposed to where it is now). EOS also has a two-step process that allows for effective vetting of any internal candidates. Committee members will get back to Sullivan with any additional thoughts on the proposals by the end of next week. Sullivan will then invite EOS Principal, Nancy Jackson, who would be doing most of the work, to a brief ZOOM meeting so that they can work out the details of a contract and set a start date.

* Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Sullivan

Director