

Bennington County Regional Commission

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 14, 2018
8:30 AM
Chauncey's Restaurant – Arlington, VT

1. Review of FY 2018 Year-End Forecast

Sullivan reviewed the year-end financial projections prepared by Stacey Eggsware. A surplus of just under \$60,000 is projected for the year. Some of the surplus is apparently due to an "overcharge" of indirect rate that we will compensate for by having a lower indirect rate in FY 2019. Sullivan indicated that he will be closely tracking grant spending rates during the coming months and will review the budget with the executive committee in December. The committee concurred with the director's recommendation to pay staff a year-end bonus of \$1,000 for each full-time employee (\$600 for the one 0.6 FTE).

2. Executive Director Performance Review

The executive committee reviewed the director's performance self-assessment for the year, based on last year's goals, and discussed goals for the upcoming year. The committee discussed compensation adjustment options and agreed (motion by Monks, second by LaVecchia, and passed unanimously) to approve an adjustment to the proposed FY 2019 budget to include a 3.0 percent salary increase for the director – and to include the same year-end bonus for the director as for the rest of the full-time staff.

3. FY 2019 Budget Proposal

The proposed FY 2019 budget was reviewed. Total revenue and spending is comparable to the current year, although there are some significant changes which were outlined by Sullivan. Particularly notable were adjustments associated with transition of the Drug Free Community program out of the BCRC, new funding for a BCRC staff person to direct the Lightning Jar program, and continued growth in the economic development area. After further discussion by the committee, Monks moved and LaVecchia seconded approval of the budget as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

4. FY 2019 Work Program

The BCRC's proposed FY 2019 work program was reviewed. It was noted that most items are continue from the previous year and many reflect contractual requirements. New and/or expanded initiatives related to water quality, the Lightning Jar, transportation projects, the Putnam Block Redevelopment, and municipal energy planning were discussed. Motion (Monks). Second (dePeyster): Approve the FY 2019 work program as presented. Passed unanimously.

5. Alternative RDC (BCIC) Organization Assessment/BCRC Integration

The committee discussed various ideas for further integrating the RDC (BCIC) work with the BCRC. The BCIC is actively considering alternatives to their current structure; at the very least, the organization will be changing its name and clarifying its mission, but one alternative that is gaining some traction on their board is to essentially dissolve the organization and formally merge the RDC function with the BCRC. Such a change isn't a huge leap at this point since we provide all staff support for the BCIC, but it would require some changes in our bylaws (one idea for how this might look was illustrated in a conceptual organizational chart the director had drafted to facilitate discussion). Any such scenario would involve establishment of a special economic development committee within the BCRC that would provide direct oversight of the state RDC grant and would have significant representation on the commission as interest group representatives elected from the committee and potentially some designated representation on the executive committee of the BCRC. The executive committee was generally amenable to the merger idea, while noting that many logistics would need to be resolved. Sullivan will coordinate with the BCIC board and arrange a joint meeting later in the year to further discussions.

6. Lightning Jar – BCRC Role

Sullivan provided an overview of this new initiative: The Lightning Jar is a co-working space and entrepreneurial support program that has received support from the Vermont Community Foundation, VSECU (where it is physically located), and small state grants. The operation is overseen by a board of local business people. The "LJ" secured enough funding to hire a full-time director, went through a hiring process, and selected a current BCRC employee, Michelle Marrocco. Because the LJ board doesn't want to take on the administrative work associated with having an employee, they are entering into an agreement with the BCRC to provide that staff support (i.e., Michelle remaining a BCRC employee, but now in the role as LJ director). We have an agreement with the LJ stating that they will fully reimburse us for staff costs and providing for joint supervision and coordination. The arrangement is similar to our current agreement with the BCIC. Board members agreed that the work is consistent with the BCRC's mission and that the agreement includes favorable terms to protect the BCRC.

7. Other Business and Adjourn

The energy planning (Melone) lawsuit was discussed briefly – no action by the court, but the BCRC's attorney responded to a new filing by the plaintiffs.

Sullivan will reach out to Cinda Morse, Shaftsbury commissioner, and invite her to an executive committee meeting as a potential member.

LaVecchia recognized BCRC employee, Catherine Bryars, noting the excellent work she has been doing for several towns where he recently had been involved with planning projects and administration (Dorset, Peru, and Landgrove). Sullivan agreed that Catherine is a tremendous asset to the organization and that he is working with her to take on increasingly important responsibilities – hopefully, becoming director of planning programs within three years.