

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of April 23, 2012

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Bruce Breton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Selectmen Ross McLeod, Phil LoChiatto, and Roger Hohenberger were present; as was Assistant Town Administrator Dana Call. Selectman Kathleen DiFruscia and Town Administrator David Sullivan were excused. Mr. Breton opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

GRIFFIN PARK: Mr. Breton requested that Mr. McMahon provide an update on the Griffin Park parking lot project. Mr. McMahon approached and addressed several issues including:

- The project as it is being done represents what was approved by the Board.
- Angled parking was studied during the project development and it was determined that 30% of the new spaces would be lost.
- The parking lot now consists of 235 spaces, including 12 handicapped spaces, where previously 123 spaces were available.
- It was hoped that the pavement could be completed that day, however, it was not due to the rain; Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Haas have been kept apprised of the activities throughout the project.
- The new signage has arrived and, per the plans, is larger than that installed by the contractor. There will be an "Entrance Only" sign by Johnson's Farm, as well as directional arrows, and "Exit Only" by Squire Armor.
- Per the Fire Chief's request, the center entrance has been widened to ensure adequate access; resulting in the loss of three intended spaces. This area will also be cross-hatched to the center aisle.
- Working with Mr. Barlow, adjustments were made to the size of the interior access gates as they would have allowed ATV's to circumvent them.
- The new traffic pattern ensures safety of the park users.
- The Highway Agent will be putting stone in at the drainage area and the post and beam fence has also been extended to keep ATVs out of the Park.

Mr. McLeod sought clarification that, should someone miss an open parking space while driving through, they will now have to go back out on to Range Road to circle around; and Mr. McMahon replied that was correct. Mr. McLeod expressed that he felt an internal rotation may be better. He then suggested that the cross hatching at the access area to the Park itself be extended across to the center of the lot for safety reasons and suggested some kind of barrier be installed near the soccer/t-ball area to prevent balls and/or children from going through. Mr. Breton noted that an invisible netting could be installed at the bottom of the fence and a discussion ensued. Mr. McMahon suggested that would be something that the Baseball League along with Soccer could purchase together.

Mr. LoChiatto expressed his agreement with Mr. McLeod regarding extension of the crosshatching at the southerly access by the T-ball area for increased safety; noting it would provide a clear crosswalk where people won't park and that will provide greater visibility. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the loss of an additional space to do so, the cost benefits of doing it now, whether it was necessary or not, and the overall flow of traffic.

Mr. McLeod then moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to amend the site plan layout to remove one parking spot in the interior as discussed to allow for alignment of the middle row of parking and for extension of the access crosshatching to the center aisle; as well as to include similar crosshatching at the center access.

Further discussion ensued regarding the gates and whether or not to stop the crosshatching sooner so it does not appear to block the parking spaces. Mr. LoChiatto noted he would also support the use of a portable measure, such as a barrel with pedestrian signage, as a visual indication for drivers to slow down.

Mr. McLeod amended his motion, and Mr. Hohenberger his second, to stop the crosshatching earlier as described by Mr. McMahon. After further, brief discussion, motion passed 4-0.

Discussion ensued as to when the project will be complete, and Mr. McMahon noted it will take two days once begun, however, starting depends upon the weather.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT: Mr. Mark Samsel of the Windham Rail Trail Alliance introduced Mr. Brian Wong who was proposing the ninth Eagle Scout project along the trail. Mr. Wong approached noting that his project as proposed is to restore the baggage cart as donated several years ago. He indicated he estimated the cost of the restoration to be \$1000, most of which will be donated, and that he would like to start in June with the project taking approximately six months to complete.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired where the wagon will be placed when completed, and Mr. Samsel indicated it will be placed somewhere at the Depot but that has yet to be determined. Mr. McLeod inquired whether Mr. Wong will be using waterproof materials, and Mr. Wong replied in the affirmative.

Mr. LoChiatto moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to approve Mr. Wong's proposed Eagle Scout Project for restoration of the baggage cart; place of which is to be determined at a future date by the Depot Advisory Committee and the Historic District Commission. Passed 4-0.

WORKSHOP – TAX COLLECTOR: Mrs. Robertson met in a workshop session with Board; conducting a PowerPoint presentation as attached to be followed by a question and answer period.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired what information Mrs. Robertson required that MUNIS did not provide to her, and she cited missing addresses on a certain report as an example. Discussion ensued regarding issues such as bridging of new ownership information versus existing tax lien information.

Mr. LoChiatto sought further information regarding Crystal Reports, and Tax Assessor Rex Norman advised it is a software which queries all tables within the system and is able to generate reports containing whatever information you'd like via built-in templates. Discussion ensued regarding Mr. Norman's use of the product, which is built in to his Vision software, and that it is available for MUNIS as an additional module. Resident Ken Eyring approached noting that he has heard Crystal Reports is an excellent reporting program and urged the Board to consider purchasing it for greater efficiency.

The Board thanked Mrs. Robertson for her presentation.

WORKSHOP – TAX ASSESSOR: Mr. Norman met in workshop session with the Board; conducting a PowerPoint presentation as attached to be followed by a question and answer period.

Mr. Rick Okerman approached and inquired whether any thought had been given to placing all departments on one platform, and Mr. Breton noted the previous week's IT assessment presentation by Mr. Baetz. Mr. Hohenberger added that the Town has such a platform in the form of the MUNIS software, however, it is underutilized. Discussion ensued.

The Board thanked Mr. Norman for his presentation.

WORKSHOP – TOWN CLERK: Miss Merrill met in workshop session with the Board; conducting a PowerPoint presentation as attached to be followed by a question and answer period.

Discussion occurred revolving around the legislative items Miss Merrill noted were being monitored by the Town Clerks' Association, and Mr. Breton cautioned clarity that the Town Clerks' Association position on pending/proposed legislation does not represent that of the Town but the Clerks.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired what portion of the Town Clerk's revenue goes back to the Town as general revenue less her fees. Finance Director Dana Call noted that the bulk is general revenue, and a discussion ensued.

Mr. Hohenberger noted that periodically the changing of the Town Clerk position to salaried versus fee-based is raised, and inquired whether Miss Merrill would care to discuss this possibility. Miss Merrill indicated her willingness to discuss such a change at a future workshop.

The Board thanked Miss Merrill for her presentation.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE: Mr. Cliff Sinnott of the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) approached and indicated that the RPC was about to launch the Sustainable Communities Initiative, and that he was present to request the Board consider executing a letter of agreement to participate in the program. He indicated his request was based upon the Board's previous submission of a letter of support regarding the nine NH regional Planning Commissions' submission of a joint application for funding from the HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative in October of 2011. Mr. Sinnott then briefly outlined the activities to date regarding the application, and explained the intent of Initiative as attached.

Mr. Hohenberger noted the upcoming discussion regarding whether the Town wished to stay with the RPC or move to another Commission, and whether that would impact participation in the Initiative. Mr. Sinnott replied in the negative. Mr. Hohenberger then inquired whether the goal was to combine the nine planning commissions into one, and Mr. Sinnott again replied in the negative; noting that each will remain an individual entity. He added that the final, Regional Plan would not be a top-down plan and while some elements would be shared, its contents would be up to the existing planning commissions.

Mr. LoChiato sought clarification that of the 27 communities participating in the RPC, 18 had responded to the initial request for a grant support letter; and Mr. Sinnott replied in the affirmative. Mr. LoChiato then sought clarification that half of the 18 had exhibited a willingness to participate in the Initiative; and Mr. Sinnott replied in the affirmative, noting that the RPC had requested that the communities indicate within their support letter their willingness to enter the agreement. He added that Hampstead had been the only community to voice objection to the Initiative.

Mr. Addison Hartman, resident, approached to inquire what Hampstead's objections had been, and whether the Town would lose its autonomy by entering into the agreement. Mr. Sinnott indicated there would no loss of autonomy, explaining that the Regional plan would be advisory and non-restrictive. He reiterated that this would be a bottom-up plan summarizing the various towns needs in a regional document compiled by an advisory committee comprised of community members. Mr. Sinnott then indicated he believed that Hampstead's objections were philosophical in nature; relating to the use of HUD funds and payment of dues to the RPC.

Mr. Bill McNally, resident, approached indicating that he believed that this regional planning commission was directly or indirectly related to the United Nations; adding that initiative should be kept in Windham and not regional. He expressed concerns that several communities have joined ICLEI, and urged all to watch his cable presentation with Mr. Hal Shurtleff regarding "Agenda 21", which will be airing sometime during the week. Mr. Sinnott indicated that there is no connection to United Nations, and added that the Town has been a member of the Rockingham Planning Commission since 1973; long before Agenda 21. He noted that the United Nations has no authority to influence the activities of the RPC, and reiterated that this plan will not be regulatory at all.

Mrs. Eileen Mashimo, resident, approached seeking clarification of and expressing concerns regarding a number of the groups associated/partnered with the Initiative, such as the NH Livability Standards and the Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Sinnott fielded several questions from Mrs. Mashimo, who then expressed concerns that the Initiative is far more reaching than simple land planning and encouraged the Board to look closely at the framework. Discussion ensued.

Mrs. Carolyn Therrien sought clarification of the role of the partners, and Mr. Sinnott replied their role would be at the State level to review the local documents for common elements for inclusion in the State plan. Mrs. Therrien expressed concern that this looks to be social justice.

Mrs. Kristie St. Laurent, resident and member of the Planning Board, approached indicating that the Town currently has a master plan and it appears that part of the Initiative is to take a snapshot of where the Town is with its projects. She likened the final Regional plan to a local Master Plan on steroids, in that it allows communities to see the impacts to them of regional projects, such as the current major housing project in Londonderry. Mr. Sinnott concurred, noting that Master Plans are not just about land, but are about planning for the future. He stressed again that the Regional plan would not be regulatory in nature, and added that community plans would be looked at for things such as water resources, which don't respect Town boundaries. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Hohenberger inquired why some of the agencies/groups in question had initially been allowed to be benefactors to the Initiative, and Mr. Sinnott explained that the Department of Health and Human Services, for example, is connective via their Healthy Eating/Active living campaign which has to do with obesity and walkable communities. Discussion ensued.

Mr. LoChiato indicated that, on its face, he understood the need for regional planning. He expressed concerns, however, with the federal funding involved in the Initiative. He also echoed Mr. Hohenberger's concerns regarding the partnerships and what will ultimately filter down to the local level that they want. Mr. Sinnott reiterated that the Regional plan will not filter from the State down to the communities, but from the communities up to the region; adding that the "string" that is attached is that a Regional plan must result in order for the grant funds to be paid. Mr. Breton sought clarification that the funds in question totaled \$300K, and Mr. Sinnott replied in the affirmative. Mr. Breton then inquired whether the matching funds required were coming from the partners, and Mr. Sinnott replied in the affirmative; both monetarily and via in-kind services.

Mr. Ken Eyring, resident, approached and indicated that he had spoken to several local people who are familiar with these types of agreements, and urged the Board to plan a workshop with them in addition to Mr. Sinnott and representatives from the Town of Hampstead. He expressed concerns regarding turning control over to a group of unelected bureaucrats, and Mr. Sinnott reiterated that the review Board will consist of community representatives selected by the local Planning Boards and no one else.

A lengthy period of questions and answers then ensued between Mr. Eyring and Mr. Sinnott regarding the former's concerns with the agreement; before Mr. McLeod requested a point of order as he felt the discussion was drifting. Mr. McLeod noted that it was obvious Mr. Eyring had a multitude of questions and suggested that this matter be tabled to allow him to take them up with Mr. Sinnott directly. After an outburst from the audience and a brief discussion, Mr. McLeod moved to continue this matter to next week. There was no second. Further discussion ensued and Mr. Sinnott indicated he would be unavailable for the next two meetings, however, Mr. Greenwood could attend.

Mr. Breton requested that Mr. Eyring conclude his inquiries, and the latter raised several more concerns regarding Action Media being retained to market the Initiative, ICLEI, Agenda 21, and that any information the Town provides will go to both the State and Federal levels and thus may no longer be voluntary.

It was the consensus of the Board to table this matter to a future meeting; date to be determined.

The Chairman called for a five minute recess.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Mrs. Call presented her first quarter financial update to the Board, highlights of which included:

- Most line items approximately 25% expended, with certain items paid up front such as copier maintenance contract, Derry dispatch services, and half of the Town's workers and unemployment compensation insurance.
- Across several departments vehicle fuel is running within budget, as is heat given the fixed bid prices; health insurance shows an excess of percentage spent due to a significant portion of the annual premiums being paid from Health Expendable trust.
- Police overtime is 50% expended through the first quarter due to the unforeseen extended absences of several patrol officers; with some offsetting savings from the regular salary line.

- Highway winter maintenance is is 35% expended, however, the January to March costs represent the lowest expended for that period since 2004. Discussion ensued regarding the potential savings in this line item being allocated to the fund balance at year end.
- Solid Waste removal is under budget due to the timing of the first quarter payments.
- The Fire Equipment Grant, which is a 100% reimbursable grant, is not reflected in the budget/expenditure report as it will be officially accepted through a future public hearing. \$4,003 has been expended to date, with \$13K in bids awarded of the grant funds totaling up to \$35K
- Union legal fees - Mr. Breton inquired why union legal fees were at 45%, and Mrs. Call indicated it was primarily due to grievances.
- The 2012 FEMA reimbursement of \$45,662 will serve to directly benefit the 2011 fund balance as it was not included in the tax rate setting. These funds are related to the October 2011 storm, but the amount was not known until 2012.
- Motor vehicle revenues total \$654K to date, and average approximately \$220K per month. Mrs. Call explained that, of that, \$5-6,000 is paid out each month to the Town Clerk for her fees.
- Impact fees – Mr. Breton expressed concerns with the amount of funds in these accounts as it pertained to the low interest being earned. He requested Mrs. Call explore a high interest bearing account for these large amounts of funds in the special accounts, and a discussion ensued. Mrs. Call indicated that the highest rate available under current policy guidelines is 0.30% and the largest balances are already invested in this account.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: Mrs. Call noted that land issue had been postponed, and clarified that while it was the Delahunty property, the lot number provided by the State was incorrect.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

MINUTES: Tabled.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McLeod seconded to enter into nonpublic session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II e. Roll call vote all “yes”. The topic of discussion was legal, and the Board, Mrs. Call, Mr. Norman and Ms. Devlin were in attendance.

Mr. Norman updated the Board on a legal matter relative to a tax abatement appeal. It was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Norman proceed a discussed.

Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. LoChiatto seconded to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant.

Note: These minutes are in draft form and have not been submitted to the Board for approval.

Tax Office

Tax Collector
Ruth Robertson

Deputy Tax Collector
Rita Bergeron

Assistant Tax Collector
(Part-time – seasonal)



Tax Office



Report on Department Operations

- Staffing Matters
- New Deputy Tax Collector
- Cross-training per Union Contract



Report on Financial Issues

- Overview of Budget
- Upcoming expenditures/investment analysis
- Revenues collected



Revenues

<u>TAXES COMMITTED 2011</u>	<u>UNCOLLECTED 12/31/2011</u>		
Property Taxes	46,488,053.28	2,073,920.30	4%
Current Use	174,800.00	37,900.00	22%
Yield Tax	2,217.69	0.00	
Excavation Tax	675.66	0.00	

3-YEAR ANALYSIS OF TAX LIENS:

2011:

- 5,845 Tax bills
- Delinquent 2011 Tax Lien May 9, 2012
- Accounts as of 4/23/12 – 173 / 3%

2010:

- 5,812 Tax bills
- Accounts liened – 126 / 2%

2009:

- 5,728 Tax bills
- Accounts liened – 152 / 3%



Revenues

3-YEAR ANALYSIS OF DEEDING:

2012 LEVY OF 2009:

- 34 Notices
- No deeds taken
- 2 Forbearance agreements
- 30 Day extensions
- 1 Account pending

2011 LEVY OF 2008

- 42 Notices
- 6 Deeds taken
- 6 Forbearance agreements

2010 LEVY OF 2007

- 30 Notices
- No deeds taken
- 4 Forbearance agreements



Revenues

FORECLOSURES:

- 2011: 41
- 2012: January to present - 19

BANKRUPTCIES:

- 2011-2012 January to present - 16

Committee Involvements

- Munis user group – attended meeting in Derry, NH
- NH Tax Collector’s Association – attended Spring workshop

Strategic Plan Report

- Review results 2010 – 2012
- Discussion on proposed plan

Strategic Plan 2012 – 2014 Results

<u>Customer Consideration</u>	<u>Employee Consideration</u>	<u>Process and Control</u>
Provide Alternative Payment Options:	Expand Staff Knowledge of Tax Laws and Operational Procedures	Expand Software Functionality
Offer Customers Option to Make Prepayments or Partial Payment Plans - 2010 (COMPLETED)	Attend NHTCA Annual Conference (NOT COMPLETED IN 2011 OR 2012 DUE TO STAFFING SHORTAGES)	Expand Use of MUNIS "Knowledge Database" (COMPLETED)
Expand Mortgage /Bank Use of File Payments - 2011 (COMPLETED)	Attend at least one (1) NHTCA Seminar (NOT COMPLETED IN 2011 OR 2012 DUE TO STAFFING SHORTAGES)	Acquire "Crystal Report" and have Training -2012 (\$10,000) - (PLACED ON HOLD - PENDING "INVESTMENT ANALYSIS" BY MUNIS)
Research the Feasibility of Providing "On line Banking" Capabilities for Individual Customers - 2012 (RESEARCH COMPLETED - LOCKBOX FOR INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMERS WAS FOUND NOT TO BE FEASIBLE)	Maintain Connectivity with NHTCA Members - (COMPLETED)	
Expand Information Provided on Website	Provide MUNIS Training	
Work with IT to List "Report of Paid & Unpaid Taxes Report" - 2011 (DEFERRED UNTIL 2013)	Web Ex Training - 2011 (\$150) - (NOT COMPLETED - SELF TAUGHT TRAINING WAS DONE)	
Develop Interface with Mortgage Companies to Reduce Repetitive Calls - 2010 (COMPLETED)	Expand Use of MUNIS Training Base as Learning Tool - (COMPLETED)	

Strategic Plan 2012 – 2014 Results

<u>Customer Consideration</u>	<u>Employee Consideration</u>	<u>Process and Control</u>
Expand Information Provided on Website	Expand Staff Knowledge of Tax Laws and Operational Procedures	Expand Software Functionality
Provide announcements and information to Customers that they have Option to Make Prepayments or Partial Payment Plans - 2012	Attend NHTCA Annual Conference - Annual MUNIS - 2012	Complete "Investment Analysis" with MUNIS - 2012
Work with IT to List "Report of Paid & Unpaid Taxes Report" - 2013	Attend at least one (1) NHTCA Seminar - Annual	Assist Administration as needed in transition to ASP based MUNIS - 2012
Improve Customer Response Process and Timeliness	Train New Deputy Tax Collector	
Improve timeliness in staff's response to customer calls and request for information. Filling of Deputy position will facilitate this goal - 2012	Ensure new deputy is fully trained in all aspects of MUNIS system - 2012	
	General MUNIS Training	
	Provide both Collector and Deputy appropriate training based on results of "Investment Analysis" - 2012	
	Sharing of Staff Resources	
	Coordinate with other Administrative departments in the sharing of administrative staff across departmental jurisdictions as allowed by Union Contract - 2012	

The End

Assessor

Board of Selectmen Workshop
April 23, 2012

Assessing Office

Introduction of Department

- Assessor – Rex Norman
- Administrative Assistant – Jennifer Zins

Assessing Function - Operations

Overview

- Responsible for Identifying, listing, and valuing all Taxable Property in the municipality.
- Property Information Center - Public Relations
- Defending / Explaining Valuation Process
- Processing Abatements, Credits & Exemptions
- Preparing annual report to DRA (MS-1) with total Net Valuation to determine Tax Rate.

NH Property Tax Assessment Law

• **TITLE V - TAXATION**

• **CHAPTER 75 - APPRAISAL OF TAXABLE PROPERTY**

- *Market value means the property's full and true value as the same would be appraised in payment of a just debt due from a solvent debtor.*

NH DRA – Equalization Report

- The Department of Revenue has calculated Windham's 2011 assessment ratio at 99%.
- Statistics included 167 valid sales
- Sale price range from \$130,000 to \$1,551,767
- Average Sale Price = \$381,500
- Coefficient of Dispersion = 7.9
- Price Related Differential = 1.01
 - Bank or "Short Sales" were not included

Windham 10-Year Assessment History

- Tax Year 2011 – Net Valuation \$2,025,025,370
 - Total Budget - \$46,700,000* (rounded)
 - Tax Rate \$23.08 / \$1,000
- *(Town, School & County Budget)
- Tax Year 2001 – Net Valuation \$1,148,592,640
 - Total Budget - \$19,800,000 (rounded)
 - Tax Rate \$17.45 / \$1,000

Taxable Property Statistics - 2011

- Number of Commercial properties – 131
- Number of vacant commercial land parcels - 31
- Number of Households – 5,190
- Range of Home Values: \$136,000 - \$2,500,000
- Median Home Assessed Value - \$352,000
- Residential Value = 92% of Tax Base
- Projected Net Value Growth 2012 = \$20M
 - Budget Impact = Less than \$500,000 added tax revenue (applied to Town, School & County budget)

Windham Assessing Office

Report on Department Operations
To Date - Fiscal Year 2012

- Completed Inspections on 193 new construction building permits, listed changes and added \$20M value.
- Accepted & approved 14 new applications for a Tax Exemption and added 25 qualified for the Veteran Credit. Reviewed 27 existing applications for continuing into 2012.
- Received 47 property tax abatement applications, inspected and currently preparing all for a Board of Selectmen decision.
- Prepared Narrative appraisal on "The Village Green Plaza" for Superior Court Case, scheduled 4/27/12.

Windham Assessing Office

Report on Department Operations

- Successfully created .pdf images of all 6,000+ Property Record Cards and attached them to our Town GIS On-line Web Site.

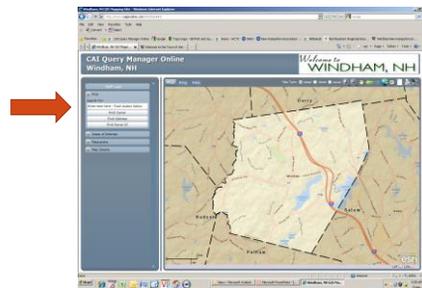
WindhamNewHampshire.com



Public Information on the Web



ON-Line GIS



Windham Assessing Office

Report on Financial Issues

Fiscal Year 2012

- Total budget – \$196,000
- Year-to-date – \$48,641.82 (24.8% through 4/9/12)
 - Budget item unfunded - \$800.00 for special batch file programming to allow Assessor to update static .pdf files on Town Web GIS when necessary.

Windham Assessing Office

Report on Committee Involvements

- Internal Department Committees -
 - Records Retention Committee
 - Technical Review Committee
- External Committees/Activities –
 - New Hampshire Association of Assessing Officers
 - Past President, currently serving on Board of Directors
 - State Representative to the IAAO

Windham Assessing Office

Strategic Plan Report 2010-2012 Results

- *Produce Cable Show "Town Talk" – postponed*
- *Publish Web information on Revaluation Process 2010 – Completed*
- *Promote public education & transparency – Completed via Web usage*
- *Create Web links to fileable forms, etc. - Completed*

Windham Assessing Office

Strategic Plan Report 2010-2012 Results

- *Public Utility Appraisal - Completed*
 - FairPoint appraised \$2,540,000
 - Comcast appraised \$2,390,500
- *Billed \$113,795.94 in 2011 on "New" Net Valuation*

Windham Assessing Office

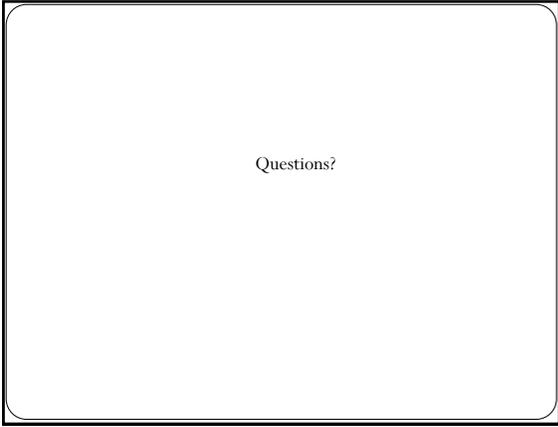
Strategic Plan Report 2012-2014 Proposed

- *Improve communication with School District/Boards and finance committees to provide town perspective and data.*
- *Produce Cable Show "Town Talk" with timely topics.*
- *Identify and train part-time data collector to aid in property inspections – to improve "quartering" program.*

Windham Assessing Office

Strategic Plan Report 2012-2014 Proposed

- *Establish an efficient link with Community Development to obtain vital construction activity electronically, and improve communication.*
- *Research and purchase mobile computer (tablet) with "Cloud" based Vision Appraisal software, to eliminate multiple steps in data entry.*



**NH Regional Planning Program: ‘A Granite State Future ‘
(NH Sustainable Communities Initiative)**

The 9 regional planning commissions in New Hampshire submitted a joint application under the HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative last October for funding to update our individual regional plans and also to coordinate that planning effort with various state agencies and partners. This second attempt to receive this program funding was successful. A notice of the award was made last December. Since then various agreement and programmatic aspects has been put into place. The actual work on the individual regional plans will get under way this Fall.

NRPC filed the application on behalf of all nine regions. The application included letters of support that had been solicited from communities statewide - including 18 responses from our region. About half of those indicated a willingness of those towns to sign a letter of agreement committing to participate and advise in the development of the regional plan. There is no financial commitment or contribution requested other than the Town's existing participation in the Commission.

The scope of work under the NH Regional Planning Program is summarized in the following outline which

SCOPE OF WORK

- A. Develop a Regional Sustainable Development Plan (RSDP) consisting of at least these elements:
- Vision Statement
 - A Comprehensive Needs Assessment
 - Goals and Priorities
 - Housing Plan
 - Regional Transportation
 - Water Infrastructure Plan
 - Environmental Plan
 - Economic Development Plan
 - Comprehensive Climate Change Impacts Assessments/Adaptation Plan.
 - Implementation Plan
 - Scenario Planning element: in the development of the plan, some form of scenario planning will be utilized. Metrics and Performance monitoring to track progress on the plan implementation after development.
- B. Participate in development of common (shared statewide) elements, templates and an overall framework for the Regional Sustainable Development Plans (RSDPs). This will include elements for outreach and communication, community engagement, data collection and assessment, scenario planning methodology and establishing performance measures and metrics.

- C. Participation in the development of a Statewide Sustainable Development Plan Framework based on the common elements of the RSDPs.
- D. Participate in Statewide and Regional Plan Organizational meeting:
- GSF Executive Committee Meetings – likely to be held monthly initially, then quarterly as RSDP development gets underway to monitor administrative aspects of work.
 - Statewide Policy Committee Meetings – quarterly meetings of all partnership agencies included in the SCI consortium
 - Regional Advisory Committees – stakeholder committees formed in each region to guide the development of the RSDP

TIMEFRAME: 36 months, approximately March 2012 – February 2015.

PAYMENT/FUNDING: Total contract amount anticipated at up to \$300,000 for cost reimbursement of staff time, supplies, equipment and consultant assistance. Expenditures of the funds are expected to occur over the three years of the contract. Up to \$37,500 of local dues (about 8.5% of the total) is committed to this project through its duration.

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT: We ask communities in the region to commit to participating in the project through a regional Advisory committee process (though their existing RPC membership and commissioner appointees or otherwise), by providing advice through professional staff, particularly in specific topical area as may be appropriate to each community (e.g. economic development, water resources, transportation, etc.) and by assisting in gathering public input of on policies, recommendations and project priorities that may be considered in the planning process.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS: Communities in the region will benefit in a number of tangible ways:

- Having access to data, maps studies and other information developed for the regional plan. Wherever possible, this information will be designed to be referenced or used directly to augment the content of local master plans;
- Serve an overall policy reference for consistent planning practice in the region.
- By being included as a community within a regional plan developed under the Sustainable Communities Initiative, Towns will be eligible to receive preferred status for a variety federal grants from HUD, Department of Transportation, EPA, Homeland Security and others.