

1 **NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting**  
2 **September 25, 2024 at 6:30 PM**  
3 **Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and NRPC Office)**  
4 **Northwest Regional Planning Commission**  
5 **75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans, VT 05478**  
6

7 **Attendance**

8 Commissioners: *See attached*. A quorum was present to conduct business.

9 Staff: Catherine Dimitruk, Emily Klofft, Dean Pierce  
10

11 Chair Peter Zamore began the meeting at 6:30 PM.  
12

13 **Adjustments to the Agenda**

14 None.  
15

16 **Welcome, Introductions, Opening remarks**

17 The Chair welcomed everyone to the NRPC's September board meeting followed by introductions.  
18

19 **Opportunity for Public Comment**

20 None.  
21

22 **Speaker: Clayton Clark, Green Mountain Transit**

23 C. Clark stated that due to the end of COVID era funding, Green Mountain Transit (GMT) will need to reduce  
24 services to live within its financial means. The impacts to Franklin and Grand Isle County will be limited and  
25 may even lead to better service. GMT was given \$18 million in COVID relief funds but those funds will run  
26 out as of Q1 FY2026, requiring cuts in service to be made. The current proposed cuts are being considered,  
27 the GMT Board will make a final decision at the end of the public comment period.  
28

29 November-December 2024: Reductions of Saturday service in Chittenden County and the Jeffersonville  
30 commuter will be eliminated.  
31

32 February-March 2025: The Montpelier LINK service will be reduced, the St. Albans LINK service will be  
33 combined with the Milton Commuter. Therefore, the bus will stop in Milton on its way to Burlington. This  
34 will not add much time and also make connections between Milton and St. Albans easier. GMT is also looking  
35 at possible extensions of the future St. Albans LINK/Milton Commuter to connect with the Richford and  
36 Alburgh bus routes, although this may occur later.  
37

38 June 2025: The bulk of cuts are scheduled for June 2025, which will give the Vermont Legislature and  
39 additional year to decide whether to give additional funding to prevent these cuts in service. 3 urban routes  
40 in Chittenden County may be eliminated.  
41

42 C. Dimitruk asked C. Clark to discuss the rural services service provider study.  
43

44 C. Clark stated that very few agencies provide both urban and rural services as GMT does. The Federal Transit  
45 Administration funds these types of services differently. GMT is conducting a study to determine if it makes  
46 more sense to separate urban and rural services to two different agencies. Currently, GMT's study is looking  
47 at whether on-demand ridership services in Franklin County could be better served by Special Services

1 Transportation Agency (SSTA) or Rural Community Transit, while fixed route services would continue to be  
2 run by GMT. The study so far has found that this may increase cost effectiveness, as SSTA or Rural Community  
3 Transit drivers do not need to hold a Commercial Driving License (CDL). C. Clark stated that CIDER would  
4 continue to provide on-demand services in Grand Isle County and that there are no plans to change this.

5  
6 P. Zamore asked if GMT had considered reducing vehicle size in Chittenden County as a cost-saving measure.

7  
8 C. Clark stated they had; however the impact would be negligible because the larger buses have a longer  
9 lifespan, having only one bus type reduces repair costs and allows for all buses to be used interchangeably in  
10 case of repairs.

11  
12 S. Hadd asked when the decision would be made on changing special services to SSTA. She noted that the  
13 Town gives money to GMT each year for these services.

14  
15 C. Clark stated that it would be after July 1, but all money given by the towns to GMT for special services  
16 would be transferred to the new service provider.

17

### 18 **Minutes from the July Meeting**

19 E. Nance noted 4 grammatical errors that will be corrected, none were substantive.

20  
21 *E. Nance motioned to approve the July Board of Commissioners meeting minutes. S. Bousquet seconded.*  
22 *Motion carried with two abstentions.*

23

### 24 **Commissioner Reports**

25

26 Finance/Operations: K. Waite stated that the committee met and determined municipal assessment  
27 rates to be decided by the Board tonight. There was an error of \$30,000 in the meeting packet, the  
28 budget is balanced.

29 Personnel – B. Buermann stated that the committee did not meet but noted that NRPC has a new  
30 employee starting in October.

31 Executive Committee – P. Zamore stated that based on the results of the Commissioner survey the  
32 meeting time had been moved to 6:30 PM. Other results indicated that the general preference is to  
33 increase the number of primarily virtual meetings (with in-person location staffed for public  
34 attendance) and that the amount of information in the Board packet is generally just right.

35 Project Review Committee – Committee did not meet.

36 Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)– H. Garrett stated that the Committee had met. The  
37 Town of Swanton had concerns regarding VT 78 where the truck had gone into the river, and  
38 wanted to know what the State was doing to repair the issue and whether guardrails would be  
39 installed. H. Garrett stated that after getting in touch with the State he was able to pass on that  
40 stone would be added for repairs, and that the State is considering installing guardrails next  
41 construction season. The committee reviewed its procedures.

42 Brownfields Committee – No additional update.

43 Regional Plan and Policy Committee – No update.

44 Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) – B. Murphy stated she attended the meeting, there  
45 were no regional projects.

46 Green Mountain Transit – No updates.

1 Healthy Roots Advisory Committee – M. Scholten stated that the committee was meeting in  
2 October and had been invited to CVOEO’s Board of Directors meeting.

3 Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation – Update in report.

4 Staff Announcements –None.

5  
6 **NRPC Regional Plan Amendment**

7 C. Dimitruk explained that the energy plan was coming back to the Board for approval due to removing an  
8 outdated appendix as requested by Department of Public Service.

9  
10 P. Zamore provided context regarding the energy plan. If approved, the policies of the plan will be provided  
11 substantial deference in the review of Section 248 energy projects.

12  
13 *H. Demars motioned to approve the Regional Plan. A. McCracken seconded.*

14  
15 Several Commissioners asked how the plan related to the state’s Clean Heat Standard. C. Dimitruk stated  
16 that the plan does not take a position on the Clean Heat Standard.

17  
18 *H. Garrett requested a role call vote. Vote by roll call, all members in attendance voted “aye”. The motion*  
19 *carried.*

20  
21 C. Dimitruk thanked the Energy Committee, Regional Plan Committee and staff for their work and noted  
22 that the plan would be submitted to the Department of Public Service.

23  
24 **Regional Approval of Montgomery Town Plan and Confirmation of Planning Process**

25 S. Hadd provided a committee update and congratulated Isle La Motte on their first town plan. The  
26 Committee is looking at restructuring due to a lack of members.

27  
28 S. Hadd stated that the Montgomery Town Plan was complete and addressed all categories, the committee  
29 recommends approval of the plan.

30  
31 *S. Hadd motioned to approve the Montgomery Town Plan. E. Nance seconded. The motion carried.*

32  
33 *B. Murphy motioned to confirm the Town of Montgomery’s planning process. N. Draper seconded. The*  
34 *motion carried.*

35  
36 **FY 26 Municipal Assessment Rate**

37 K. Waite stated that based on the committee’s policy of increasing municipal assessment rates as the lower  
38 of the two following: the employment cost index or 3%, the proposed increase for fiscal year 2026 is 3%.

39  
40 *H. Garrett motioned to approve a 3% increase in the municipal assessment rate for FY26. H. Demars*  
41 *seconded. The motion carried.*

42  
43  
44  
45 **Commissioner Announcements**

1 D. Pierce stated that there would be a public information session on the State's 3 acre stormwater rule on  
2 Monday and thanked Commissioner Rosenquist for bringing the idea to staff.

3

4 S. Hadd shared information on the St. Albans Town's project on Transportation-Oriented Development  
5 (TOD) planning, a community meeting was scheduled for Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup> of September.

6

7 C. Rosenquist recognized the passing of a longtime Georgia Selectboard member and important member of  
8 the community, Gilles Rainville.

9

10 H. Garrett noted that the Co-Op store is closing on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

11 **Adjourn**

12 *C. Rosenquist motioned to adjourn. Motion carried.*

13

14 *The meeting adjourned at 7:38 PM.*

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