

MINUTES
NNECAPA Executive Committee Meeting
Vermont Law School- South Royalton, Vermont
Monday, February 8, 2010 – 10:30 a.m.

I. Introductions

Present were Ben Frost, Peg Elmer, Nate Miller, Rebecca Schaffner, Sandrine Thibault, Julie LaBranche, Sharon Murray, Polly McMurtry, and Tara Bamford.

II. Minutes from December 16th

Ben Frost moved to accept the Executive Committee minutes of December 16th as submitted. Sharon Murray seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

III. Treasurer's Report

Tara Bamford provided an overview of the year-to-date balance sheet and profit/loss reports. Tara noted that two people studying for the AICP exam have purchased the Chapter Presidents' Council Study Guide, and these two \$15 checks have not yet been deposited.

Tara Bamford reported that she has not yet received an invoice from the Maine Association of Planners (MAP) for the 2009 Annual Conference. Rebecca Schaffner advised that, to her knowledge, the MAP invoice had been sent. Rebecca will forward a copy of the invoice to Tara immediately.

Tara Bamford asked how NNECAPA accounts for annual meeting expenses, when they are finalized. Ben Frost advised that the New Hampshire Planners' Association (NHPA) adjusts the previous year's actuals. Tara advised that she will do the same.

Ben Frost moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Sharon Murray seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Peg Elmer advised that NNECAPA will need budget amendments to account for the upcoming website upgrades and the impact of APA's new administrative fees. Peg reported that the fee will be approximately \$4 per member. As NNECAPA has approximately 400 members, the APA administrative fees will cost NNECAPA approximately \$1,600.

Peg Elmer reported that, in response to both the changing economy and the APA administrative fee changes, she has drafted a Reserve Fund Policy for the Executive Committee's consideration. Peg provided an overview of the draft Reserve Fund Policy, and Executive Committee members provided comments on the draft, including:

- Reserve Fund Use Item #2a indicates that no more than 30% of the available reserve fund in any fiscal year. However, due to unforeseen expenses (APA administrative fees, etc), the chapter will likely use at least 30% of the reserve fund this fiscal year.
- If the chapter shall maintain a reserve fund equal to 50% of the current year's budget, why should those funds be tied to a specific bank account?

- Currently, the reserve funds are split between a Certificate of Deposit and the checking account. Some organizations, like the Vermont Planners' Association (VPA), have three accounts: an operating account, a reserve account, and a Certificate of Deposit.
- The Reserve Fund Policy should be based on a series of "guiding principles" rather than specific percentages.

Peg Elmer advised that she would amend the Reserve Fund Policy draft to include "guiding principles" rather than specific percentages. Peg will circulate a revised draft to the Executive Committee for review prior to the next meeting.

IV. Communications

Sandrine Thibault advised that the deadline for submitting articles for the next Yankee Planner is this Friday (February 12). Sandrine has already received a number of articles for this edition of the newsletter, and the newsletter will include information about the upcoming APA/AICP elections.

Sandrine Thibault reported that she recently received a complaint about a job posting on the NNECAPA website. Sandrine reminded the Executive Committee to ensure that the organization with the job opening approves of the job being listed on the website *before* it is listed. In the future, it may be beneficial to formalize a Job Posting Policy for the NNECAPA website.

Sandrine Thibault reported that a Request for Proposals for website improvements has been drafted, and asked that the Executive Committee review and provide comments on the document. Peg Elmer asked that comments be forwarded to Sandrine by the end of the week. Following discussion, Ben Frost moved that a Sub-committee of Sandrine Thibault, Julie Labranche, and Tara Bamford finalize and release the RFP. Sharon Murray seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Peg Elmer reported that she recently received a request from Mac Stocco to clarify the role of APA/AICP regional directors, and noted that this topic would make a good newsletter article. Peg Elmer volunteered to draft the newsletter article, which could be tied in nicely with information about the upcoming APA/AICP elections.

V. Professional Development Items

Peg Elmer reported that the Vermont Planners Association is developing a spring conference on planning law, to be hosted at the Vermont Law School on April 23rd. Peg Elmer advised that she has been involved in planning the conference and CM Credits for the event will be sponsored under NNECAPA's Certification Maintenance "umbrella." Ben Frost reported that the New Hampshire Planners Association will be holding their spring professional development workshop on April 22nd, which also includes a planning law update.

Peg Elmer reported that she recently received a request from the New Jersey Chapter to assist in sponsoring the Region I Happy Hour at the upcoming APA conference in New Orleans. Ben Frost noted that, at the Minneapolis APA Conference, the cost of sponsorship was proportional to the number of members attending the conference. Ben Frost advised that the Region I Happy Hour will likely be well attended, as APA will not be holding a free opening reception at this year's conference. Ben Frost moved to sponsor the Region I Happy Hour proportionately to the

number of NNECAPA members attending the conference. Polly McMurtry seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Tara Bamford reported that the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) has requested that NNECAPA sponsor a portion of the Vermont Statewide Housing Conference this fall. Peg Elmer noted that, two years ago, NNECAPA provided \$200 to assist with this conference. Ben Frost noted that conference sponsorships should come out of NNECAPA's Professional Development budget. Tara Bamford concurred. Tara Bamford moved to contribute \$200 to the Vermont Statewide Housing Conference, contingent on VHFA acquiring CM credits for the sessions. Ben Frost seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. 2010 Conference Update

Julie Labranche provided a series of updates related to the planning of the 2010 NNECAPA Annual Conference. Julie reported that NHPA's preferred dates for the conference are 9/30-10/1; however, this date conflicts with a planning law conference in Rhode Island. Following discussion, Executive Committee members reached consensus on the dates of 10/7-10/8, which roll into the Columbus Day Weekend. Peg Elmer noted that having the conference roll into Columbus Day Weekend worked very well for the recent conference in Woodstock, Vermont.

Julie Labranche reported that she has received pricing and a menu from the conference center, and asked what an acceptable per person rate is for budgeting purposes. Rebecca Schaffner advised that food cost approximately \$125 per person for the Belfast conference.

Julie Labranche noted that she has developed some of the conference tracks and started soliciting speakers for the conference. Former NH Senate Majority Leader, Bert Cohen, has been suggested as a potential keynote speaker. Julie advised that she would send Mr. Cohen's biography to the Executive Committee for consideration. Peg Elmer advised that conference panelists should be balanced from each of the three states.

Julie Labranche reported that the Massachusetts Chapter will help with outreach for the conference. Julie discussed the specifics of the proposed conference center agreement, noting that charge room attrition fees will not be charged. A block of rooms will be reserved, and whatever rooms are not used, are simply not used. Julie asked about the formal process for signing the conference center agreement. Peg Elmer advised that the New Hampshire Planners Association has formal oversight and NNECAPA's role is advisory.

VII. Legislative Initiatives Update

Sharon Murray provided a series of updates related to current Federal legislative initiatives. Sharon reported that APA has posted its legislative priorities. Mac Stocco has requested that a Sub-Committee comprised of the three state legislative liaisons meet to review the priorities and provide recommendations to the three states.

Sharon Murray asked if a new NH legislative liaison has been appointed. Ben Frost reported that NHPA has an interested volunteer, but the association would like to wait until its bylaws are updated in the spring before making a formal appointment.

Sharon Murray, following up on a previous Executive Committee discussion, asked if the Chapter should write a letter to legislators in the three states expressing support for the

proposed Livable Communities Act. Following discussion, Executive Committee members agreed. Sharon will draft a letter and circulate it to the Executive Committee for review.

VIII. Grant Updates

Peg Elmer reported that 2010 CPC grants are being solicited. Funding decisions will be made at the APA Conference in New Orleans and applications are due in March. Peg Elmer asked the Executive Committee for ideas to center an application around. Tara Bamford asked if website improvements would qualify for CPC grant funding. Peg Elmer advised that there is precedent for website improvements receiving CPC grant funding. Polly McMurtry asked if having an active CPC grant prohibits the Chapter from getting another grant. Peg Elmer advised that she would look into this question and report back to the Executive Committee.

Peg Elmer discussed a project that she has been interested in for some time: developing a webinar on Sustainable Agriculture. Peg explained that Vermont Law School students would be integral in developing the webinar, and asked if Executive Committee members felt that applying for CPC grant funding for the project would constitute a conflict of interest. Following discussion, the Executive Committee agreed that moving forward with a CPC grant application for the project would not be a conflict of interest. Polly McMurtry moved to authorize Peg Elmer to proceed in drafting and submitting a CPC grant application to develop a Sustainable Agriculture webinar. Julie Labranche seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Following up on a previous discussion, Polly McMurtry announced that the three state directors have agreed to administer a NNECAPA planning grant round targeted toward the three state associations in fall 2010. Grant applications would be solicited over the summer to award prior to the Annual Conference.

IX. Other Business

Peg Elmer advised that the upcoming Executive Committee retreat will have three key goals: 1) Updating the NNECAPA Strategic Plan; 2) Adopting the Event Funding Policy; and 3) Adopting the Reserve Fund Policy.

Ben Frost moved to adjourn the meeting. Peg Elmer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

*Prepared by Nathan Miller
NNECAPA Secretary*