

# STEERING COMMITTEE

## COASTAL RISKS AND HAZARDS COMMISSION

Friday, July 11, 2014

10:00AM-12:00PM

Rockingham Planning Commission –Conference Room

156 Water Street, Exeter, NH 03833

### MINUTES

**Attending:** Senator David Watters, Senator Nancy Stiles, Representative Fred Rice, Cliff Sinnott, Cory Riley, Dr. Paul Kirshen, Roger Stephenson, Ann Scholz, and Jennifer Gilbert.

**Others Attending:** Science and Technical Advisory Panel members - Mary Stampone, UNH (on phone) and Dr. Cameron Wake, UNH; Steve Couture, DES Coastal Program; and Julie LaBranche, Rockingham Planning Commission.

Commission Chair Cliff Sinnott began the meeting at 10:10 AM.

**1. Approval of Minutes from June 6, 2014 Meeting**

Cliff stated that the minutes are not ready and will be coming soon.

**2. Guidelines from AG's Office regarding CRHC subcommittees and establishing chairs/co-chairs**

Cliff stated that Item #5 on the Agenda would be the next item to discuss.

The enabling legislation for the Commission does not specify how sub-committees can be established. Cliff summarized an email from Vicki Quiram, DES, who received advice from the Attorney General's Office regarding establishing the Commission's workgroups.

- To establish each sub-committee, the full Commission membership needs to collect all names for each sub-committee and vote for these members for each sub-committee.
- The full Commission membership will need to decide which workgroup they want to participate in and then to self-nominate themselves.
- To establish the Chair of each sub-committee, the Chair of the Commission can take nominations, which would be voted by the full Commission membership or each sub-committee would vote on their own Chair.

Cory suggested that it needs to be clear to the full Commission membership about the need for each member to join a workgroup. She also stated that she received feedback that it would be beneficial to have those with certain professional experience to be a part of the appropriate workgroups. Cliff responded that he could write a separate memo to the full Commission membership detailing the establishment of the workgroup and self-nominating process. Julie stated there was a sign-up sheet at the last full Commission meeting (May 16, 2014) in which Commission members indicated their interest in a specific workgroup.

**3. Presentation/Discussion on Revised Draft Report from Science and Technical Advisory Panel**

Paul and Cameron, who were the coordinating lead authors of the Panel's "Sea-level Rise, Storm Surges, and Extreme Precipitation in Coastal New Hampshire: Analysis of Past and Projected Future Trends" draft Report (dated July 11, 2014), provided a summary of the responses that the Panel received from their external reviewers on the Report. Cameron stated the Panel's choice in external reviewers included three people that are internationally known for their expertise on this subject matter. He wished to thank them for their comments. He stated the reviewers felt that the Panel's report hit the mark but there is a need to address some things. Paul also stated that the comments were fairly minor and that there was a need for clarification of issues. He stated the most significant comment came from Kerry Emanuel (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) regarding storms.

There was a discussion about the storm surge data that was used for the FEMA preliminary NH coastal maps. Jennifer stated she can send Paul and Cameron a copy of FEMA's New England Coastal Mapping fact sheet and additional information about FEMA's methods for determining storm surge after the meeting today. Cameron noted that NOAA's and FEMA's storm surge data differs slightly. Cliff stated that Rockingham Planning Commission's vulnerability analysis is based on FEMA's preliminary NH coastal maps. Cory suggested that the Report's storm surge be consistent with FEMA's maps. Jennifer explained that the data on the preliminary maps could be what becomes effective next year if there are no changes to the preliminary maps during the maps' upcoming appeal period. Cory stated it would make it easier for communities to be consistent since they have to use FEMA's maps for regulation purposes.

Paul stated that they had not received Tom Wismuller's comments and asked for them by Monday. Cameron noted that Tom had some concerns regarding the Report. Representative Rice stated he can send the Panel some articles to consider. Cory expressed concern about including references into the Report simply because it is too late. Cliff responded that he would like the Panel to be objective by looking at all information. Senator Stiles asked that any articles to be considered in the Report be sent to the Panel today.

Cory stated one of the external reviewers of the Report, Robert Kopp (Rutgers University) refers to his study and asked why it wasn't included in the Report. Cameron responded that it was not included in the Report since the study had not been published at the time. Roger stated Kopp's study could be included in the Panel's next round in the future.

Senator Watters noted that the Report references "new infrastructure" and he felt that it should also include existing infrastructure as well.

Cliff asked what the distinction is between "manage" and "prepare." Roger suggested keeping the language as is and have the interpretation of the language be done at the local level. Cliff asked if more clarity is needed. Cameron stated "manage" is what we accept (low range) and as new information develops there is a need to plan higher. Julie suggested some of the planners of the Committee can work with the Panel and help make the language more broad.

Senator Watters asked if the Panel could review new information as it comes in. Cory responded that the Panel is not a standing committee. Cameron suggested the Panel could review new information every two years.

Cliff asked about the change to the rounding of the numbers. Cameron stated originally the numbers were rounded for simplicity. He stated that the Panel's Kevin Knuuti (US Army Corps of Engineers) felt strongly that the Report needs to be clear and transparent about where the numbers came from.

Paul also noted that the datum was changed from 2014 to 1992. The Panel decided to go back to the original source. Representative Rice suggested that the Report include this clarification. Paul stated that they will explain in the Report why using 1992 datum and not 2014 datum.

Cliff summarized the action items from the Committee's discussion about the Report. They included: add reference to existing infrastructure; revise storm surge section to address FEMA's maps; and Representative Rice will send his articles to the Panel today.

Cliff asked for a motion to recommend to the full Commission for adoption of the Panel's Report. Roger motioned and Senator Stiles seconded. All approved. Julie clarified the adoption of the Report with the changes as discussed today.

#### **4. Press release RE: Science Advisory Panel Report**

The Committee discussed whether to release a press release following the Commission's approval of the Science and Technical Advisory Panel's Report. Below is a summary of the discussion.

- Senator Watters suggested if the Report is approved to release it through a press release. Cory was concerned about the Report being released before the Commission's recommendation. Roger was concerned about a Commission member not being at the July 18, 2014 meeting hearing about the Report through a press release. Steve stated he was torn because the Report is an accomplishment of the Commission but that it may be more effective to tie the Report with a strategy such as in a place where sea level rise is happening.
- Cliff suggested informing the Commission that the Report is not intended to be a stand-alone report. He stated that the Report will be a public document after adoption by the Commission.
- Roger suggested the Commission needed one spokesperson and the helping the Commission members know and understand the Report is better than a press release. He offered to develop a question-and-answer document for the Commission about the Report. Cliff asked Roger to develop a strategy to deal with the public and will include this strategy as an agenda item at the July 18, 2014 Commission meeting.
- Ann stated that the Report was for the Commission. She asked what Paul and Cameron wanted to do with the Report. Paul stated there is an interest at UNH to publish the Report and get it out to the scientific and public policy communities. However, before then the Report needs some editing. Cameron stated that the costs to edit the Report could be absorbed if the Commission is in agreement. Representative Rice stated that the Report is internal information for the Commission and should not be released until the Commission's final recommendations. Cameron stated the Report is intellectual property of the Panel.
- Cliff suggested a press release when the November legislation report is released.
- Senator Stiles stated if there is a press release it should state that the Commission has adopted the Report and that it will be the basis for the Commission's recommendations. It will remain a draft Report until it is finalized.

#### **5. Final Review / discussion of Workgroup Charge and Process Guidelines**

Cory distributed a handout that included the "Questions /Decisions regarding Workgroup Charge" and a summary of the comments she received from Commission members regarding the rough draft of the workgroup charge, timeline, process, and outline distributed at the June 20, 2014 Commission meeting.

Cory went through the "Questions /Decisions regarding Workgroup Charge" document and below is a summary of that discussion.

- The issue of how to form the workgroups and select chairs was addressed earlier during this meeting.
- Most Commission members who responded suggested extending the timeline for draft reports until December.
- The proposed outline may serve us well for the report but could be duplicative efforts for the workgroups.
- Suggest a separate timeline and charges for the workgroups.
- Suggest providing the workgroups with references of other efforts and studies to start with.
- Suggestion on embedding planning staff in each workgroup
- Cory liked the suggestion from Jonathan Kipps about working backwards from the worst case possibility

Roger suggested the chair of the workgroups be a citizen and the co-chair be a person with professional experience with climate adaptation. Representative Rice stated the role of the chair is process oriented. He suggested each workgroup have a technical advisor, one with professional experience, and no co-chair. He also suggested that a workgroup have a sub-committee working at the same time (i.e. one working with the fire chiefs, one working with the Selectmen, etc.). Senator Stiles stated the Commission would need to authorize the workgroup to subdivide. Cliff stated that having the workgroups dividing into sub-committees is going beyond the effort of the workgroups. He stated the assumption is that the workgroups will bring back information to make sure we cover needed information.

Steve stated the state hazard mitigation plan is a good starting point.

Ann suggested using a similar process for the workgroups that the state agencies used when they presented to the Commission by answering a series of questions. Cliff stated that each working group may be given a different set of questions. Steve also suggested starting with a list of questions for each workgroup to answer then have them fill in a table of recommendations similar to the table completed by the Flood Commission.

Julie stated that PREP (Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership) is working on a summary that includes answers to several climate change questions. The regional planning commissions have already reached out to the communities to gather information for this summary. The matrix will be released soon.

The action items from the workgroup discussion included:

- Cory will rewrite the charge of the workgroups and revise the timeline with reports due in December.
- Cory will develop a set of questions for each working group.
- Cory will develop key terms for a glossary.
- Compile existing reference materials that the workgroups can use.
- Develop a matrix/table for workgroups to complete with their recommendations.

#### **6. CHRC Agenda for July 18th (location TBD) and September 19th (location TBD) Meetings**

Cliff stated he is still working a meeting location for the July 18, 2014 meeting. Senator Stiles stated she will be unable to attend this meeting.

The agenda for the July 18, 2014 meeting will include a discussion about the Panel's Report, a discussion about forming the workgroups, and Kirsten Howard (DES Coastal Program) will give an overview of other states' similar initiatives.

Cory asked how to address those Commission members that will not be present at the July 18, 2014 meeting to self-nominate themselves to a workgroup. Cliff suggested that he will ask in his email to the Commission that those who cannot attend the meeting to reply to him with their workgroup nomination.

#### **7. Other Business**

Steve asked to be added to the Steering Committee's email distribution list.

#### **8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.

Meeting notes prepared by:

Jennifer Gilbert, Commission Clerk