



NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD

10 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-3201

NATURAL RESOURCES BOARD MEETING **TUESDAY, September 8, 2020** **11:00 am**

Board Members by Phone/ Microsoft Teams:

Diane B. Snelling, Chair, Brad Aldrich, Member, & Andrew Collier, Member

ABSENT

Don Turner, Member & Steve Larrabee, Member

Staff by Microsoft Teams:

Gregory Boulbol, General Counsel; Kimberley Lashua, Business Director; Evan Meenan, Associate General Counsel; Aaron Brondyke, State Coordinator
Katie Emerson, Legal Technician; Katharine Servidio, Enforcement Officer

11:05 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

The Vermont Natural Resources Board convened at 11:05 a.m. via Microsoft Teams, Chair Diane B. Snelling presiding.

Chair Snelling welcomed new board member, Andrew Collier and gave a brief overview of the NRB organizational structure and our move to be more paperless and more transparent with the aid of new database.

11:05 a.m. Opportunity for public to comment and agenda and non-agenda items.

Chair Snelling asked for any public comment on agenda or non-agenda items. There were no members of the public present.

11:05 a.m. Review and action on Minutes of July 14, 2020 and July 28, 2020

It was decided that the Board would wait to approve the minutes of July 14, 2020 July 28, 2020 until we have three people who were present at those meetings available.

11:10 a.m. NRB office and budget updates

Business Director Kimberley Lashua reported that longtime coordinator, Bill Burke retired on 7/18/20, and Kim Lutchko's position has been reclassified as a coordinator and that transition is going well.



Since we are left with an open position, Chair Snelling strongly recommends a full-time position for records management and supervising the digitization of records. This is a many years long process and we need someone dedicated to that process. This position could also handle public records requests, currently this is handled by the records officer.

Ms. Lashua remarked the process to move towards recruitment.

The NRB has received \$80,113 of COVID relief aid to digitize files related to emergency response. This will be accomplished by hiring a temporary staff person and working with an outside vendor. The project must be finished by the end of December.

The NRB has also received one-time funding to finish the IT project. This is the database to replace our current multiple databases, allow applicants to submit applications electronically and a new public facing database.

Budget:

The NRB submitted a draft budget with the requested 5% reduction and was then asked by Finance & Management to make a 2.5% reduction. Chair Snelling gave testimony to Senate Natural Resources. We have made reductions in all operating expenses. We don't expect any reduction in services.

Diane – will have to take a vote on Vice Chair at next Board meeting, duties are not onerous, act in event the chair must recuse herself.

11:20 a.m. Discussion regarding Act 250 legislative initiatives

Mr. Greg Boulbol and Mr. Evan Meenan presented the legislative update. The Senate Natural Resources committee has been taking testimony this week on a heavily condensed bill to focus on two areas of Act250 reform: forest blocks and Trails. The bill contemplates developing a new regime for regulating trails.

Mr. Boulbol reminded the Board that this bill is a very small portion of the changes that were proposed at the beginning of the legislative study several years ago or even the more modest proposal passed out of the house.

The Chair's recommendation was to look at the Act 47 report and focus on the most important aspects when revisiting when the session opens in January.

11:33 a.m. Discussion of appeals, enforcement, and attorney-client memoranda

Mr. Boulbol did not have any notable updates. He reviewed that the court is slowly opening up after being on hold due to COVID.

Mr. Meenan had two updates of dates that may be of interest.

On 9/17/20 the Supreme Court will hear arguments regarding the heavily litigated Diverging Diamond interchange project. On 10/7/2020 the Supreme Court will hear arguments for Founders Hall, St. Michaels College, received a permit to demolish historic Founders Hall. The Board will not participate in either oral argument, but was involved in the States brief in the Diverging Diamond matter.

11:39 a.m. Adjourn

At 11:39 a.m., Andrew Collier made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Brad Aldrich, and unanimously approved by the Board.