

**Healthy Roots Collaborative Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**September 21, 2023 - 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION- 75 Fairfield St., St. Albans, VT 05478**

**Zoom link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87640341868?pwd=VCtZOHdrMmFySUpDVVkw08yUWdhUT09>

Meeting ID: 876 4034 1868

Passcode: 932011

One tap mobile

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**Attendance:** Lauren Weston, Emily Alger, Tim Smith, Cassie Fraser, Jess Graff, Bethany Remmers, Peter Jenkins, Marietta Scholten, Marissa Simeonoff, Christine Porcaro

**Goals:**

- Understanding and feedback on HRC FY'24 budget
- Update on current and future of Sheldon storage site

Times	Agenda Item	Action
1:00 to 1:20	<b>Org Intros</b>	
All attendees shared their name and organization that they are associated with since there were two new attendees to the HRC Advisory Committee: Marietta Scholten, who is the new NRPC rep and Marissa Simeonoff the new HRC intern helping with gleaning and food access.		
1:20 to 2:00	<b>HRC FY'24 Budget</b>	
C. Porcaro gave an update on the HRC FY '24 budget. She went over some of the grant opportunities that were not awarded including funding from the VT Foodbank, Swift Prepared Foods, Farm Commons and Clif Bar Foundation. There is currently \$160,951 in funding secured with 7 pending grant applications. B. Remmers highlighted the change to the 10% de minimis from the NRPC indirect rate. B. Remmers added that they are continuing to work with HRC staff to see what the appropriate percentage should be in order to cover overhead costs. E. Alger acknowledged the positive impact this change will have on funding outreach and also thanked NRPC for making the effort to make this change in HRC budgeting. L. Weston asked if the revenue listed in the budget included funding that has rolled over from the previous FY. C. Porcaro shared that the budget did include funding that was extending from the last fiscal year to the current, giving both VHCB and DBIC funding as an example. T. Smith asked if HRC was able to make a connection with Swift Prepared Foods. C. Porcaro responded that they were able to make contact with Swift Prepared Foods but that they no longer had the same capacity to donate funding to HRC programming.		

C. Porcaro went on to explain the biggest changes in expenses which are related to the new Sheldon storage space. This will include utilities (propane, electric and wifi) and will be split with CVOEO.

E. Alger emphasized that there are still 7 outstanding grant applications and that we can expect that HRC will not be awarded all of them. She encouraged Advisory Members to keep a look out for other funding opportunities to support HRC programming. B. Remmers added that a big change from previous years is the foundation funding that was provided by an EDA Disaster Relief Grant. She shared that it is perhaps time to look for that next opportunity to provide HRC with that type of foundation funding.

2:00 to 2:30

**Sheldon Storage Update**

C. Porcaro shared the various funding sources that are being used to renovate the Sheldon storage facility. She shared that funding is being provided by VT Community Healthy Equity Partnerships, Chittenden County Solid Waste District, CVOEO and an anonymous funder. HRC has currently fundraised enough money to cover the renovation budget. C. Porcaro then shared the timeline for the renovation. She shared that spray foam insulation had been put in the week before, electrical installation is slated for the week of September 25<sup>th</sup> and heat pump installation Oct 2 and 3. She then shared photos of the most recent update for the space. E. Alger asked about the spray foam because of a recent article that shared information about the destruction of building materials because of moisture getting through the roof and getting caught between the foam insulation. C. Porcaro shared that the roof on the building is a new metal roof, so that shouldn't be an issue but that staff can check in with the general contractor.

J. Graff asked if HRC has had a conversation with CVOEO on the growth of partnership programming in the region. Christine shared that they have started surface level discussions of new program ideas and how both CVOEO and HRC can collaborate.

L. Weston asked about the back part of the casino building space and was wondering what it is going to be used for. C. Fraser shared that it was originally going to be demoed and that it was decided to keep it standing with the purpose of use still TBD.

2:30 to 2:45

**South Hero Land Trust presentation & discussion**

E. Alger shared the 5 main programming areas of SHLT: Land Conservation, Farm Viability, Environmental Education and Trail Building. She explained how in each of these areas SHLT works in partnership with other orgs in the region. SHLT has 3 staff members, including their newest hire Jenna O'Donnell previously of Hunger Free.

T. Smith asked about the funding structure of SHLT. E. Alger shared that they have multiple funding sources including around 600 SHLT members, funding from foundations, grants and an endowment.

L. Weston asked about staff involved in summer camp programming. E. Alger shared that 1 staff member and 1 AmeriCorps member runs the summer camp programming. L. Weston added that if SHLT wanted to go in on buying trees together that could be a collaborative opportunity.

T. Smith asked about the perception and reality of the location of SHLT's work. E. Alger shared that 85% of the work they do is in South Hero but there are plenty of programming areas where that limitation does not make sense, one example of that being in farm viability.

P. Jenkins asked about the population in the islands in terms of full-time and part-time residents. C. Fraser also wondered whether the make-up of that population is reflected in SHLT membership. E. Alger shared that there is a split of both full-time and part-time residents.

L. Weston asked what SHLT membership gets you, who is on the SHLT board and are there similar types of regional orgs in other parts of the state. E. Alger shared that their board is composed of South Hero residents, they are not a fundraising board and they work to have them representative of the South Hero population. E. Alger added that the closest in terms of org. equivalent would be Stowe Land Trust. She also shared that 90% of SHLT work is programmatic work and 10% land conservation. SHLT plays a pivotal role because land values are so high in South Hero. SHLT acts as a fundraiser which can cover the gap to cover land conservation in South Hero.

T. Smith asked about Emerald ash borer and other things devastating forests in the Islands. E. Alger responded sharing about the destruction that will be brought by the Emerald Ash borer but also the current destruction caused by deer in the Islands. L. Weston asked what the solution was. E. Alger shared that they are working on "pre-forestation". SHLT is going into the understory and planting and installing deer excluder fencing. They are working with the country forester and planting trees at the northern end of their range (cedar, pine, buttonbush).

2:45 to 3:00

**Partner Org Updates & Discussion**

L. Weston asked for feedback on FC NRCD's new mission statement. T. Smith shared that he was looking for education to be a part of the statement. E. Alger added that perhaps "educate" is more the "how" and not the "what". C. Fraser asked who would fall under the definition of "land stewards". P. Jenkins asked if they work outside of Franklin County. L. Weston shared that they do work outside of Franklin County. P. Jenkins then said that perhaps they could take away the second Franklin County to make the statement a bit shorter.

L. Weston also shared that FC NRCD is in pre-legal proceedings for copyright infringement for an image they used on their website. She encouraged other orgs and businesses to be conscious of content being used on their website. C. Porcaro also added that orgs and businesses should be aware of making their websites ADA compliant.

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