

MEETING OF THE SRPC EDD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Friday, May 15, 2026 9:00 – 10:30 AM

Hybrid Meeting (Conference Rm 1A, SRPC Office & via Zoom)

1) Introductions

At 8:10AM, Chair Paul Rasmussen called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

Commissioners present: Paul Rasmussen, Durham; Mark Richardson, Somersworth; Matt Towne, Barrington; Kate Buzard, Middleton; Mike Bobinsky, Somersworth; Sarah Wrightsman, Newmarket; Curtis Register, Durham; Lee Howlett, Milton; Rick Healy, Rochester; Don Manter, Northwood; Curtis Register, Durham; Matt Towne, Barrington; Steve Brown, Dover; Lindsey Williams, Dover; Lee Howlett, Milton; Katrin Kasper, Lee

Staff: Colin Lentz, Mike Polizzotti, Jen Czysz,

Attendees on Zoom: Ernie Creveling, Barrington; Kean McDermott, Dover

Staff attending remotely: Natalie Gemma, Lisa Murphy

2) Commissioner Roundtable

M. Town shared that Barrington hosted an Energy Day featuring 3 houses that use solar power, one being his house.

C. Register shared that the work on the Mill Pond Dam will commence either June 1 or June 15 depending on the fish migration. It is a national historical site, and they will be conducting many environmental studies during the process.

S. Wrightsman shared that the Office of Planning and Development at BEA held their Spring Planning and Zoning Conference over the weekend. There were very few people in attendance because it was a Saturday virtual conference on Teams all day. All of the videos are now like up on their YouTube page.

P. Rasmussen shared that Durham Waste Management Committee has spent the past 5–7 years promoting composting through education, data collection, and community outreach. They are now looking to expand their efforts by partnering with other communities to build regional interest. They are seeking connections with groups interested in learning more and getting involved. He asked anyone interested to contact him.

M. Bobinsky shared that the City of Somersworth will transition to cart-based trash and recycling collection next year while keeping the pay-as-you-throw system to preserve revenue and encourage recycling. Officials say the change will improve efficiency and



worker safety but will require planning for crowded neighborhoods and downtown areas. Public education and outreach will happen throughout the year. Concerns were also raised about Waste Management's landfill potentially closing within 7–9 years.

M. Richardson spoke on the challenges and costs of the transportation side of trash removal.

M. Bobinsky shared that Somersworth Plaza is gaining new businesses, including an expanded Nostro martial arts gym, a physical therapy group, and possibly a restaurant and grocery store. Renovations and landscaping improvements are also underway.

K. Pimental shared that HUD is launching Opportunity Zones 2.0, allowing municipalities to seek new federally designated investment areas. Somersworth and Farmington may gain additional eligible census tracts, with the governor expected to nominate qualifying areas in July. Officials said the program is intended to encourage business investment and retention through capital gains tax incentives, and communities are being encouraged to explore participation and share experiences from the first round of Opportunity Zones.

L. Williams shared that Dover is advancing several major development projects, including a mixed-use project on Littleworth Road with housing and transportation planning, and the redevelopment of the former Liberty Mutual property. The city is also expanding public access at its waterfront redevelopment site by adding kayak rentals alongside new apartments, restaurants, and park space. Officials emphasized balancing higher-end development with community access to green space and the waterfront.

S. Brown shared that also in Dover, they are kicking off in Dover a resilience plan process and community engagement starts today. More updates to come.

3) Action Items

a. Minutes of April 17, 2026

M. Bobinsky moved to accept the April 17, 2026 meeting minutes. With a second by S. Wrightsman and a unanimous vote in favor, the motion passed.

4) Discussion Items

a) CEDS Final Draft Presentation and start of Public Comment Period

M. Polizzotti and Natalie Gemma shared an overview of the completely updated five-year Draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the SRPC region. The plan covers all 15 municipalities and includes new themes, priorities, and a regional vision. It brings together economic development partners from southeastern New Hampshire and southern Maine to support collaboration and regional projects.

The CEDS includes:

- An overview of regional economic conditions
- A SOAR analysis of strengths, opportunities, and goals
- A strategic vision and action plan

- A list of priority projects
- An evaluation framework and economic resilience discussion

Public feedback from regional events and a large survey helped shape the new five-year CEDS, along with updated regional data snapshots. The plan includes a formal vision statement focused on making the Strafford region a resilient, thriving place where residents can afford to live and businesses can grow.

The CEDS is organized around four main themes:

- Housing
- Business innovation and entrepreneurship
- Workforce, education, and childcare
- Community eligibility and capacity

Cross-cutting “lenses” throughout the plan include regional collaboration, resilience, quality of life, community identity, and age-friendliness for both older adults and younger families.

Public comments on the draft CEDS can be submitted by email to Mike or Natalie, with comments being collected in one place. The public comment period closes June 7, after which staff will compile and respond to all feedback. The final draft, including a public comment log and responses, will be distributed on June 12.

b) Executive Committee Slate of Officers

J. Czysz stated that each year at the June Annual Business Meeting we elect Commissioners to serve on the executive committee. There are 3 officers (chair, vice chair, and secretary/treasurer), 4 regular members, and 2 alternate members. Anyone interested in serving on the executive committee, or continuing to do so, was asked to reach out to Jen or Megan.

J. Czysz reported that the next Commissioner meeting is scheduled for June 19, which is a holiday, but the meeting will go on as planned.

c) Grant Opportunities

J. Czysz stated there are several open grant opportunities for municipalities.

Recreational Trails, due May 29

Coastal Resilience Grants, due June 5

Piscataqua Region Environmental Planning Assessment Grants, due June 16

Project Builder Program, due July 1

Source Water Protection Grants (land protection), due May 28

Kean McDermott said the Seacoast Area Bicycle Riders group is willing to provide letters of support for grants involving bike or pedestrian projects, including trails and walking or

biking improvements. Communities and applicants are encouraged to reach out if support would help strengthen their applications.

5) Other Business

J. Czysz introduced Lisa Wise, a new regional planner on the Environment Team.

P. Rasmussen shared that the Durham Planning Board reviewed a student-led sustainability project on nature-friendly lighting that helps residents and businesses choose lighting that balances safety with environmental impacts. Materials and a user guide will be shared publicly.

K. Pimental shared that the SRPC annual meeting will be held on June 25 at Oaks Golf Club in Somersworth, celebrating 55 years of regional planning. The event will feature the commissioners of NH DOT, DES, and BEA discussing the state's future direction and how regional planning can help municipalities meet broader goals. Organizers are also preparing exhibits highlighting major regional changes and projects over the past five decades.

Kean McDermott promoted Bike to Work Day and invited people to a "Bike From Work" event at the Dover Transportation Center at 4 p.m. He also announced a June 3 bike and e-bike safety event for elementary students in Milton.

6) Citizens Forum

There were no citizen comments.

7) Adjourn

M. Bobinsky moved to adjourn. With a Second by D. Manter. All members voted in favor. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Taylor-Fetter