



**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



**CHRISTOPHER D. CLEMENT, SR.**  
**COMMISSIONER**

**JEFF BRILLHART, P.E.**  
**ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER**

**Minutes of State of New Hampshire**  
**Scenic & Cultural Byways Council**  
**November 6, 2013; 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**NHDOT Materials & Research Bldg., Room 205**

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**ATTENDANCE:** Brenda Clemons, NH Good Roads Association (representing highway construction industry); Donna Keeley, Public Service Company of NH (representing utilities); Jayne O'Connor, White Mountain Attractions Association (representing Outdoor Advertising Assoc. of NH); Mary Kate Ryan, Division of Historic Resources; Michael Tardiff, Central NH Regional Planning Commission (representing regional planning); William Watson, Planning and Community Assistance (representing NH Dept of Transportation); Kenneth Allen, White Mountain National Forest (representing forests and lands); Leslie Boswak, Town of Deerfield (representing municipalities); Chris Northrop, NH Office of Energy & Planning; Rep. Suzanne Smith (Speaker of the House); Catherine Goff, Division of Travel & Tourism Development (representing NH Dept of Resources & Economic Development)

**ABSENT:** Mary Boswell, Enfield Shaker Museum (representing municipalities); Sen. Jeanie Forrester, NH Senate

**GUESTS:** Cynthia Copeland, Kyle Pimental, and Adam Hlasny, Strafford Regional Planning Commission; Jean Methot, Chester, NH; Scott Bogle, Rockingham Planning Commission; David Preece, Southern NH Planning Commission; Elizabeth Robidoux; George Sioras; Victoria Parmele

**NHDOT STAFF:** William Rose, Interim NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Coordinator; Sherry Blanchard, Scribe

**FHWA STAFF:** Jamie Sikora

*William Rose called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.*

After guests and members present introduced themselves, William moved up an agenda item to discuss and set annual council meeting dates.

**A motion was made to meet the second Thursday of May and November of each year.**

William explained that the May meeting would be the Annual Meeting, with November held as a reserve date. May 8, 2014 and November 13, 2014 at 1:00 PM was **seconded and unanimously accepted.**

William then proposed moving up the agenda item regarding Byway designation nominations so the guests/presenters would not need to sit through lengthy discussions of the first two agenda items. Mary Kate Ryan questioned if the Byways Rules of Procedure needed to be adopted before they could act on the nominations. Byways Rules of Procedure were adopted in 2010, however, the former State Coordinator never clarified which of the five versions was adopted. William stated that because the enabling Legislation establishes criteria, those are grounds to review the Byway nominations. Mike Tardiff agreed with William's proposal.

William stated that these nominations were submitted in 2012. He went on to say that his review of the three nominations (Robert Frost/Old Stagecoach, Mills, and Upper Lamprey) showed that they generally all meet what is required under statute. However, under Article 3 of Designation, it states, "Under no circumstances shall local scenic and cultural byway be designated without a public hearing conducted by the municipalities in the area." This requirement could not be identified that it had been met for any of the three proposed byways.

William recommended that the Council accept the applications today with the intention of reviewing them for approval at the May meeting to give the applicants time to meet this requirement.

**Bill Watson made a motion to accept the nominations, take a few minutes to hear from the applicants while they're here, and then give them the opportunity to go back, have the public hearings, and come to our May 4, 2014, meeting for formal adoption if they've gone through the public hearing process and can show public support.** Mary Kate Ryan seconded the motion. After some discussion, the motion was **unanimously accepted.**

The applicants and those in support were then given the opportunity to speak:

- Robert Frost/Old Stagecoach Scenic Byway, PowerPoint presentation by Scott Bogle. Ken Allen asked if Scott had a feel for what percentage of the intrinsic character items are available to the public. Scott did not have a number but guessed a large majority of the historic buildings are privately owned. In terms of public buildings that are on the register are Stephens Hall, the Meeting House in Hampstead, and the Atkinson Academy. So the majority of the National Register-listed properties are open to the public, but many of the other 50-plus historic resources are not. One of the things that came out of the public meeting was developing central signage or marketing program for uniform signage along the byway on those private properties to the extent the owners were willing to do that, as well as interpretive materials that provided history on that property. Chris Northrop asked if this was continuation of an existing byway. Scott replied that several years ago, Atkinson got Route 121 designated as the Atkinson Scenic Byway (now part of Old Stagecoach Byway). Scott recommended that #13 on the map provided should show the southern NH rail trail portion.
- Upper Lamprey Scenic Byway, presented by Adam Hlasny. Victoria Parmele spoke in support of Route 4's wonderful resources but has traffic issues. The safety assessment conducted here will be invaluable. There will be lots of potential for economic development as a spin-off of this. Ken Allen asked if one of the main intrinsic characters locked in on is state parks. Adam replied, yes, state parks are a big draw. Ken asked if the parks

are all on board with this. Adam responded they haven't had them at any meetings but would definitely do that and get them involved.

- Mills Scenic Byway, presented by Cynthia Copeland and Kyle Pimental. Victoria Parmele spoke in support as she works in Dover and is hopeful that the City of Dover will reconsider getting involved. Ken Allen commented it was a very solid concept and felt it would grow into a pretty fabulous project.

The Council thanked the presenters for their patience in giving the proposals.

The meeting then moved onto nomination and election of officers for 2014. Because the first meeting of 2014 has now been set for May, it seemed prudent to wait until that time to elect officers.

Discussion then turned to adoption of the Rules of Procedure. William suggested that the Council review these, along with the fact that there is not a stand-alone National Scenic Byway Program. Ken Allen suggested a meeting prior to May to spend on discussion of just this item because of its complexity. **The Council agreed to meet on April 10, 2014, at 1:00 PM.**

**The Biennial Report to the NH Legislature was addressed and approved by the Council.** Council members were very impressed with the 22-page report. William Watson commented that the Byways Program has been around since 1991 and there hasn't been a single Biennial Report submitted to the Governor and NH Legislature. This will now bring NHDOT as the agency responsible for administering the program into compliance. Ken Allen spoke of William's top notch organizational skills in pulling together this meeting and producing the document. Mary Kate Ryan drew attention to the De-Designation section and that it lays it out more clearly than the Rules and Procedures do at the moment and will be helpful in making that section more clear.

William explained that one of the issues is that quite a few of the scenic byways have no existing advisory council meetings or a corridor management plan. He has contacted some that are out there but has not yet heard back. There are several byways that **don't** show up on the list that are in good position--the Currier & Ives and General John Stark Scenic Byways are examples of that. This report also doesn't address the issue of the Nationally Designated Byways. The 1995 rule-making gives the responsibility of ensuring that the byways are compliant with their own management plans to the states. We need to follow-up on that.

William then went through each part of the report. He also pointed out that the new transportation authorization bill at the federal level, replacing the previous SAFTEA-LU with Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21). The biggest change from SAFTEA-LU to MAPS-21 is that the Scenic Byways Program goes away and the new program that has been created, which previously had been Transportation Enhancement, Safe Routes to School, and Scenic Byways, all as stand-alone programs, is now what's known as Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). That program has significantly-reduced funding compared to the prior allocations of the former programs combined and also doesn't maintain the same number of eligible categories. It is not clear in the legislation if we can still do corridor management types of activities that were occurring under the old Scenic Byways Program. William asked Jamie

Sikora if they would be eligible, but Jamie said they would not. William noted that the three nominations came forward through the efforts primarily of Mike Tardiff's own CNHRPC and some of the other regional planning commissions utilizing the funds they get for planning purposes through the Department that help those communities establish corridor byways. This shows there are still resources out there that can help make the byways successful.

William asked for comments or issues concerning the Report. Chris Northrop said there are links that don't work; i.e. page 9 The Moose Path Trail; page 13 Canterbury Village Byway, Shakers.org; page 14 Independence Byway.

William went on to say that now with no funds remaining in the Scenic Byways Program, what direction should we go in? We have no money but we still have the ability to designate. He feels the designation itself is a great brand to provide someone for marketing purposes; i.e. we are managing this as an asset. By requiring the folks who make a minimum level of effort, we're assuring there's some strength and quality control to the brand, "NH Scenic Byway". But if there some lower standard that still gets us to that same place where we can say, yes, this is what's happening and make sure we're managing this as an asset, he's certainly open to that.

Ken Allen commented that in order to keep the quality of the brand, lowering the requirements would be a mistake. He would certainly want to keep it at the level proposed. Jayne O'Connor felt that having a byway without having signage with informational significance for people who enjoy it would not make any sense—it's just a designation. Some minimum expectations of the byways should be looked at so they're not just designated. They actually have representation on the byway so that users can understand them. She'd like to work towards expectations like minimum signage and that the byway is shown on the map.

Ken asked about the Scenic Byways Website project that had been funded. Bill Watson replied that the former Scenic Byway Coordinator was not able to get it moving forward. There were a few IT hurdles as far as websites and the money was returned to Federal Highways. Bill has been working on getting DRED and DOT together for promotion of the byways as it becomes less of a transportation-funded solution and more of a marketing and tourist-outreach-type effort. Jayne O'Connor passed out maps showing the National Scenic Byways White Mountains and White Mountain Trails as examples for other byways. Ken commented that having a unified website would go a long way to provide that type of opportunity. Members felt that although the money is not there, the value is still there. William asked if developing a website is what the Council would like added to the recommendations. All agreed.

Mary Kate Ryan made a motion to accept the content of the Biennial Report pending potential editorial changes. Chris Northrop seconded and the motion carried.

*The Council adjourned at 11:34 AM.*