



**North River Collaborative Board of Directors**  
**Friday, September 24, 2021 9:00 AM Via Zoom**  
**Minutes**

*In response to Governor Baker's declaration of a public health emergency and the related Emergency Executive Order dated March 12, 2020, the North River Collaborative Board of Directors shall be meeting remotely until further notice. The **Meeting ID #89134667460** provided through **ZOOM** and a **Passcode of qqkn3w** will be used for this purpose.*

**Present:** Stephen Donovan, Clarice Doliber, Jeff Szymaniak, Alan Cron, Christine Godino, Tom Raab, Matt Ferron, Marc Wright, Mark Bodwell, Peter Schafer, Liz Legault, Derek Swenson

**Absent:** Julie Hamilton

**I. Call to Order:** Vice-Chairman Peter Schafer called the meeting to order at 9:03

**II. Approval of Minutes-June 4, 2021-**

**Motion:** -Matt Ferron made a motion to approve the minutes of June 4, 2021. Christine Godino seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes. Tom Raab abstained. Derek Swenson had not joined the meeting yet.

**III. Approval of Warrants**

**Motion:** Matt Ferron made a motion to approve the warrants. Christine Godino seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes. Tom Raab abstained. Derek Swenson had not joined the meeting yet.

**IV. Discussion/Action Items**

**A. CPR Final Report-Enc. A-** Steve reviewed the Coordinated Program Review final report and advised the Board that there were no findings.

**B. Budget Update Enc. B –**

- Marc Wright advised the Board that at the close of FY21 there was a surplus of \$328,741 of which \$200,000 was applied to the North River School mortgage and the remaining balance was placed into capital reserves. The final number will be confirmed by the auditors.
- Audit-Marc offered that all the preparation for the upcoming audit has been completed and all information requested by the auditors has been sent to them. The auditors will be at the Almshouse all next week.
- Enrollment- Marc advised that enrollment was not at the projected number, but he expects enrollment to increase during October.

**C. NRC Policies and Procedure Handbook Changes-Enc. C-** Steve reviewed the changes to the handbook. The changes are:

- The addition of Juneteenth as a holiday for employees.
- Additional language added to clarify and make more specific the language regarding the annual perfect attendance bonus.
- Change to the vacation carry over from 5 to 10 days. Must be used prior to Labor Day of the fiscal year that the days were carried into.

**Motion:** Peter Schafer made a motion to approve the various NRC Policies and Procedures Handbook changes. Matt Ferron seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes, Derek Swenson-yes. Tom Raab abstained.

#### **D. OPEB Trust-Enc. D**

- 1. Adoption of Mass General Law Chapter 32, Section 9E as pertaining to HRT for the Collaborative.** – In order to follow the Massachusetts General Law that covers retirees’ health insurance, NRC must adopt M.G.L.c.32 § 9E.

**Motion:** Matt Ferron proposed that the North River Collaborative adopt M.G.L. c. 32 § 9E in order that the Collaborative contribute at least 50% plus a subsidiary or additional rate of the premium for health insurance for employees retired from the service of the Collaborative and their eligible dependents.” “Only those dependents specifically enumerated by the NRC Board of Directors as of September 24, 2021, are eligible to receive health insurance benefits. Liz Legault seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes, Derek Swenson-yes. Tom Raab abstained.

- 2. Approval of Health Insurance Retirees Trust Policy** – To coincide with the establishment to the HRT OPEB Trust Fund, the health insurance for retirees’ policy had to be changed to comply with the Massachusetts General Law and case law. The new policy states that “Eligible employees are those who are enrolled in a NRC health insurance plan at the effective date of their retirement, and who are eligible for and receiving a retirement allowance in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 32B”

**Motion:** Matt Ferrone made a motion to adopt the new Health Insurance for Retirees Policy. Alan Cron seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes, Derek Swenson-yes. Tom Raab abstained.

- E. Independence Academy Update-Enc. E-** Steve reviewed the program changes to Independence Academy for the new school year. He also informed the Board that Ryan Morgan had applied for a grant for a continuum of services and has been told he was successful and will be receiving \$475,000 sometime later in the fall.
- F. Construction Project Update-Enc. F** -Steve updated the Board on the proposed construction project:
  - The schematic plan from RDA will be ready next month with a final vetting to the Board in November.
  - Liz advised Steve to look at the budget and told the rest of the Board that they should go look at Reeds Collaborative’s new building. She said not to belabor it when NRC could utilize what Reeds has already done at a fraction of the cost.
  - Chris Godino voiced concern that there hasn’t been enough communication with the Building Committee.

#### **G. Acceptance of Staff Resignations, Hires, Terminations, and Changes in Contract-Enc.**

**Motion:** Peter Schaffer made a motion to accept the staff resignations, hires, terminations, and changes in contract. Liz Legault seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes, Derek Swenson-yes. Tom Raab abstained.

#### **H. FY22 Executive Director Goals-Enc.H-** Steve reviewed his goals for the year.

- Matt Ferron suggested that one of his goals should be increasing the scale and capacity of Transportation through a 2,3,&4 year plan. Matt went on to say that he would really like NRC Transportation to be the only option for special education district transportation.

**Motion:** Matt Ferron made a motion to accept the Executive Director Goals for FY22. Peter Schafer seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes, Derek Swenson-yes. Tom Raab abstained.

I. FY22 Action Plan-Enc.I - Steve reviewed the FY22 Action Plan.

J. Other Matters of Interest to Board Members:

- Matt Ferron and the Board welcomed new Stoughton Superintendent Thomas Raab and offered their support to Tom and said the Board is looking forward to working with him. Supt. Raab will start his new position as Superintendent of Stoughton Public Schools on October 1, 2021.

V. **Informational**

A. Professional Development Offerings-J

B. Executive Director Quarterly Report for June-Enc. K

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** Peter Schafer mad a motion to adjourn. Matt Ferron seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by roll call vote with one abstention: Jeff Szymaniak-yes, Alan Cron-yes, Matt Ferron- Yes, Christine Godino-yes, Mark Bodwell-yes, Peters Schafer-yes, Liz Legault-yes, Derek Swenson-yes. Tom Raab abstained.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:52 AM**

Respectfully submitted by:

Alan Cron  
NRC Board Secretary/Clerk