

**Rural Resilience Subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council**  
**September 23, 2022 Meeting – Minutes**

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**Date/Time:** August 23, 2022 12:00 PM  
**Location:** Zoom meeting [recorded and posted online](#)  
**Subcommittee Members Present:** Catherine Dimitruk, Erica Bornemann, Ann Lawless, Alice Peal, Mike Burke, Andrea Wright, Val Stori, Megan Roush, Jay Shafer, Miriam Serota-Winston  
**Staff Members Present:** Ben Rose, Bronwyn Cooke, Marian Wolz, Anne Margolis, David Grass, Jens Hilke  
**Minutes By:** Sue Plant

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**Greeting, Review and Approval of Agenda and [8/26/22 Minutes](#)**

Agenda revised to vote on adding Marian Wolz as a member. Minutes approved.

Motion to add Marian Wolz as a member of the subcommittee made by Alice Peal. Anne Lawless seconded, Approved, motion carried.

**Continued FY 24 Budget Priority Discussion**

Discussed increased funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate, resilience and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index. Ann Lawless brought up that some VT towns have small water/wastewater districts, not run by the municipality and we should include these small independent systems, about 100 statewide. Megan Roush also mentioned small mobile home parks and their access to funding. Alice Peal outlined the challenges towns are facing regarding clean water and its connection to climate change, and the need for technical assistance. Ben described the existing program of the Flood Resilient Community fund which has a connection to water quality and is funded by ARPA. Marian explained the one-time funds the Climate Council is targeting. Refined 3 priorities will be submitted to the subcommittee for review prior to the Climate Council meeting.

**Public Comment**

None

**Meeting Adjourned 12:59**

Chat:

Catherine Dimitruk: Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate, resilience and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index and to Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate, resilience and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index and to

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Jay Shafer: I would suggest striking out the phrase, "that score high on the climate vulnerability index" on the first proposed item. I think it's more equitable to be inclusive, and the climate vulnerability index can be interpreted in different ways.

Ben Rose (Vermont Emergency Mgmt.): Could capture Alice's point and clarify intent by amending third item to say "public AND private wastewater systems"

Bronwyn Cooke (ACCD): I support Jay's suggestion. It could be phrased to indicate the level and type of support will be informed by the MVI.

Ben Rose (Vermont Emergency Mgmt.): Not all of the technical support related to water treatment and septic systems flows through municipalities, it may flow directly from ANR.

Anne Margolis, Public Service Dept.: My suggestion on the first item would be to just add, "Increase AND PROVIDE LONG-TERM funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate and energy planning AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION....."

Marian Wolz (she/her): <https://vtruralwater.org/>

Jay Shafer: Agreed with Bronwyn - "informed by the risk assessment within the MVI", but not rely upon the MVI. There is no silver bullet metric, as the MVI will be an aggregated multi-hazard, multi-social-economic index.

Catherine Dimitruk, (revised/rewritten): 1. Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate, resilience and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index and to support natural resource planning. Increase and create a permanent state fund for design and implementation of local and regional climate adaptation and resilience projects. 2. Grant funding to address vulnerabilities that are informed by the MVI results. RRA recommends unspent ARPA funding be allocated to create a grant program that will allow towns to do so in FY 24. Under-resourced towns are going to need the additional technical assistance resources to address these shortfalls so prioritization should be on them. 3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities and private system managers/owners to assess the flood and erosion risks facing their public and private drinking water and wastewater systems and aging and vulnerable septic systems, identify potential mitigation improvements. Include mobile home communities and fire districts.

Catherine Dimitruk, (she/her): Increase funding to Regional Planning Commissions and local municipalities to support climate, resilience and energy planning and target funds to support towns with limited staff and marginalized populations that score high on the climate vulnerability index and to support natural resource planning.

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Jay Shafer: I forecast that the MVI will show a lot of vulnerability for most towns/counties and not have significant geographic variability. Normalizing spending by population/asset value seems to make some equitable sense.

Marian Wolz (she/her): The discussion of these as one time general funds was included in the budget overview memo shared with the Council on September 12th.

<https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/anr/climatecouncil/Shared%20Documents/220911%20Final%20climate%20budget%20for%20VCC.pdf>

second set of bullets on pg 2