

**MINUTES****Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley**

Beacon Falls Pizza Palace

125 South Main Street

Beacon Falls, CT 06403

12:00 Noon, Friday, May 10, 2013

COGCVN Members: Jerry Smith, First Selectman, Dominick Sorrentino, Alternate, Beacon Falls; Ed. St. John, First Selectman, Joseph Salvini, Alternate, Middlebury; Bob Mezzo, Mayor, Naugatuck; Joanne Pelton, Alternate, Oxford; Bob Chatfield, Mayor, Prospect; Ed Edelson, First Selectman, Southbury; Garrett Casey, Alternate, Waterbury; Ray Primini, Town Council Chairman, Watertown; Tom Dunn, Mayor, Wolcott.

Speakers and Guests: Randy Fiveash, CT Office of Tourism; John Monroe, National Park Service; John DiCarlo, Waterbury Regional Chamber; Rick Minnick, RPC Chairman; John Brantley, CTRides; Joan King, Southbury; Carl Stephani, Francis Pickering, Central CT Regional Planning Agency; Erik Shortell, Federal Highway Administration.

Staff: Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Samuel Gold, Assistant Director; Joe Perrelli, Senior Planner; Pat Gallagher, Regional Planner; Lauren Rizzo, Administrative Assistant.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Public Comment

Chairman Bob Mezzo called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. First Selectman Jerry Smith welcomed everyone to Beacon Falls.

For public comment, Carl Stephani, Executive Director of the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency said he had been authorized at a recent CCRPA meeting to approach COGCVN about a potential merger and consolidation of CCRPA's MPO with COGCVN's MPO. It is his understanding that at this point the MORE Commission is only considering consolidation of MPOs and may consider consolidation of RPOs in the future. CCRPA would also be interested in a possible RPO merger with COGCVN.

2. Administrative Items

- a. *Minutes of the April 12, 2013 Meeting* — On a motion by Jerry Smith, seconded by Ed Edelson, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the April 12, 2013 meeting.

- b. *Financial Report* — Peter Dorpalen reported that as of April 30, 2013, COGCVN was 83% through the fiscal year and had expended 75% of its operating budget. Including pass-through funds, 71% of the total budget has been expended. On a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Jerry Smith, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the financial report.

- c. *Appointment of an Auditor – Michaud Accavallo Woodbridge & Cusano* — Peter Dorpalen said Michaud Accavallo was COGCVN's auditor last year, and they have now

merged with Woodbridge & Cusano. The cost of the audit remains the same. He recommends that they be appointed again for this fiscal year. On a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Jerry Smith, it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Michaud Accavallo Woodbridge & Cusano as auditor for fiscal year 2012-13.

d. *Appointment of a Nominating Committee* — On a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Jerry Smith, it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Bob Chatfield, Tom Dunn, Jerry Smith, and Ed St. John to the nominating committee.

e. *Correspondence* — Peter Dorpalen summarized recent correspondence:

May 1, 2013 Letter from Executive Director Peter Dorpalen announcing his decision to retire as of August 31, 2013 after 41 years of service.

May 6, 2013 Letter from Waterbury Mayor Neil O’Leary stating that he has appointed Senior Advisor Garrett Casey as his alternate for the May 8, 2013 COGCNV meeting.

3. **Draft FY2013-14 COGCNV Budget – Discussion**

Peter Dorpalen reviewed the recommended FY2013-14 COGCNV budget as outlined in Memorandum 050213. The estimated budget will total \$846,259, a 0.2% increase from the present year’s budget. The complete budget, including pass-through funds, will total \$907,259, a decrease of -7.3% from last year’s budget . The basic recommended salary increase is 2.5%. The largest fringe benefit increase is for medical insurance. The retirement line item has declined with the recent change to COGCNV’s retirement plan. Action on the draft budget will be voted on in June.

In light of the current executive director’s upcoming retirement, Tom Dunn suggested a meeting of the Executive Committee to discuss the salary for the Executive Director. A meeting will be coordinated through the COGCNV office for this purpose.

4. **COGCNV Actions**

a. *Revised Transportation Planning Work Program (UPWP) Budget: FY2013-14* — Peter Dorpalen said COGCNV has a two year agreement for its regional transportation planning program with CTDOT. CTDOT has calculated available federal funds for the second year of the regional transportation plan program, which are less than their estimate from a year ago. The proposed budget reflects the lower amount. CTDOT will issue a supplemental agreement to reflect the reduced amount. On a motion by Ray Primini, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the revised Transportation Planning Work Program (UPWP) Budget: FY2013-14, as presented in Memorandum 050213.

On a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize COGCNV Chairman Robert Mezzo to execute the supplemental CTDOT agreement to reflect the revised budget.

- b. *Emergency Planning Memorandum of Understanding among RPOs in DEMHS Region 5* — Joe Perrelli said Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials is seeking to enter into a MOU with the four other RPOs for assistance in completing planning tasks required under its homeland security grant. The MOU lists the funding each RPO will receive. The proposed MOU contains funding levels for the services of COGCNV and the other RPOs, but these amounts are yet to be approved. The Regional Emergency Planning Team will meet on May 13 to vote on approval of the proposed budget, including these funding levels. On a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize Executive Director Peter Dorpalen to sign the Memorandum of Understanding Between Applicant Organization and Partners Regarding Functions and Responsibilities for DEMHS Region 5 Under the FFY 2012 Homeland Security REPT Grant Program.

- c. *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments* — Joe Perrelli summarized the May 2013 amendments to the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program, as listed in Memorandum 050313. On a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the May 2013 amendments to the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program listed in Memorandum 050313.

- d. *Transportation Alternatives Project Ranking: FY2013-2014* — Samuel Gold said CTDOT notified COGCNV that only the top ranked transportation enhancement bicycle and pedestrian project from the January 2012 rankings will be funded, and that the region will be receiving significantly less funding than had been previously estimated. In January 2012, COGCNV selected three projects for full or partial funding. Later in 2012, Congress approved a new transportation bill, MAP-21, changing the transportation enhancement program into the transportation alternatives program. The top priority project in the 2012 COGCNV ranking of transportation enhancement projects is a relatively small project for new bus shelters, bike racks, and trash cans, followed by a cantilevered section of the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway and the partial funding of the Farmington Canal Trail in Cheshire. With the current ranking, the region will not spend its full allocation under the transportation alternatives program because the highest ranked project is so small, and the remaining funds would be spent in another region in Connecticut. He recommends making the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway project the top ranked project.

MAP-21 will expire in September 2014. The next transportation bill or continuing resolutions may make additional funds available for bike and pedestrian projects. If new

money becomes available, staff recommends that the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway project be made whole, up to the requested total, and to fund the previously ranked improvements to the Waterbury Green and Farmington Canal Trail. On a motion by Ed St. John, seconded by Ed Edelson, it was unanimously

VOTED: To modify the January 2013 Transportation Enhancement Project Rankings to rank the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway as the first project priority, followed by the Waterbury Green bus shelter, bike rack, and trash can project as second priority, and Cheshire Farmington Canal as third priority. To prioritize federal bicycle and pedestrian transportation funds for FY15 and FY16 for fully funding the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway (up to a total of \$880,000) and then funding the region's second and third ranked priorities.

- e. *Regional Animal Shelter Study – Selection of Silver/Petrucci as Consultant* — Bob Chatfield, Chairman of the Regional Animal Shelter Feasibility Study Committee, reported that following recent consultant interviews, the committee recommends Silver/Petrucci as the study's consultant. On a motion by Ed St. John, seconded by Jerry Smith, it was unanimously

VOTED: To select Silver/Petrucci as the consultant for the Regional Animal Shelter Feasibility Study.

On a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Ed Edelson, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the COGCNV Chairman and/or Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Silver/Petrucci for the Regional Animal Shelter Feasibility Study.

5. **Tourism Marketing from the State Perspective**

Randy Fiveash, Director of the CT Office of Tourism, spoke about tourism's impact on Connecticut. \$11.5 billion in Connecticut economic activity is derived annually from travel and tourism activities, \$1.15 billion of state and local tax revenue is generated by travel and tourism, and 110,000 jobs (6.5% of Connecticut's labor force) are created by the tourism industry. He encouraged the chief elected officials to visit the website CTvisit.com to see what is listed for their towns and use the contact information there to provide any additional information about events in their communities. He also spoke about the Town Fan Favorite social media campaign and the CT summer vacation guide.

6. **Regional Planning Organization Legislation**

Continuing with the topic started during Public Comment, Bob Mezzo said there is activity on the state level on the reorganization of councils of government, regional planning agencies, and metropolitan planning organizations. He is a member of the MORE Commission which is attempting to increase efficiency on a statewide level from a regional perspective. There are some incentives in a proposed house bill on COG reorganization to seek mergers and partnerships. The COGCNV executive committee voted to recommend to COGCNV to start a conversation with Valley COG.

Peter Dorpalen referred to Memo 041513, which presents a number of RPO merger scenarios, including a merger between COGCNV and CCRPA and with Valley. He explained the roles of MPOs and RPOs. In the case of COGCNV, it acts as the MPO for the Central Naugatuck Valley region. A consolidated MPO might have several councils of government under it. CTDOT would like to increase MPO responsibilities to include management and funding of road projects and engineering reviews. This would eliminate the urban STP program, which would just be for state highways, and in return, a state bond program would provide equivalent projects under a local capital improvement program. It would also eliminate the bridge program.

Bob Chatfield said he feels too much consolidation could be detrimental to smaller municipalities. Local area towns center around Waterbury, the central core city and key to the region. He feels there is a strong possibility that smaller towns might find themselves not as well served by consolidation. He would like to form a committee to open dialogue with other planning agencies, and asked for clarification of the proposed legislation's timeline.

Mayor Mezzo said there are two separate processes. The governor can designate MPOs with the approval of municipalities representing at least 75% of the population of the proposed metropolitan planning area. The MORE Commission, on which he sits, recommends reducing the number of MPOs to five. For COGCNV, the issue would be where the dividing line would fall on the western side of the state. He does not feel any action will be taken until the fall, as the federal MPO designation process requires towns to approve it. The COG piece is part of substitute HB 6629, which speaks of incentives for COGs to merge and local control to say which COG a municipality is a part of. This is separate from the MPO process. CTDOT would like to have the MPOs include regions that have multiple COGs with the same boundaries. A COG would not be split between two MPOs. As far as COG incentives, the bigger the organization the greater the per capita funding from the state.

Peter Dorpalen said the MORE Commission concluded that there was need for more discussion on the MPO and RPO boundary issue. Dorpalen noted that OPM is charged with completing a review of the existing regional planning organizations, which, under existing legislation, the agency must conclude by January 1, 2014. Under substitute HB 6629, OPM's study will have an October 31 deadline, which does not give the agency much time. Mayor Mezzo noted that the House bill states that if two or more COGs merge voluntarily, they will be exempt from forced consolidation without consent. Dorpalen said it appears the MORE Commission was looking at a Central Naugatuck Valley and Housatonic Valley area as a combined region MPO. There is also talk of creating just a rural region by combining Litchfield Hills and Northwestern Connecticut, and creating something similar on the east side of the state. The MPO process designation seems to be clouding the process. He agreed that setting up a committee would make sense. He stated that Valley COG is hoping to join the Greater Bridgeport Regional Council, but may be open to other opportunities, including joining with COGCNV.

On a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To form a committee of elected officials with representatives of a small, medium and large municipality in the COGCNV (most likely Prospect, Naugatuck, and Waterbury) to meet with other COGs to discuss consolidation opportunities and report back by the September COGCNV meeting.

7. Naugatuck River Greenway Update

John Monroe of the National Park Service spoke about the Naugatuck River Greenway and recent activities supporting the 44 mile, 11 town, regional project. To help it develop incrementally, he urged those in attendance to keep the greenway in mind and include it in different economic development and tourism opportunities. He also showed a trailhead plaque which will be located in Derby. He would like to obtain funding for 10 additional plaques to be presented to each community as they finish a substantial portion of the greenway.

8. Regional Business

Ed St. John said Middlebury has a greenway, although it is not part of the Naugatuck River Greenway. With possible future changes to the I-84 interstate system, he believes it might be an opportunity to connect the Middlebury greenway with the Naugatuck River Greenway.

9. Other

- a. *COGCNV Website* — Samuel Gold presented the most current version of an update to the COGCNV logo.
- b. *5310 Mini-Bus Grant Program* — Samuel Gold said that the new federal transportation act changes the mini-bus program. Information will be given to the towns as soon as the program is up and running, most likely in the fall.
- c. *April Hazardous Waste Event Results* — Pat Gallagher reported that the HHW event held on April 27 was the largest ever, with 556 vehicles disposing of 7,320 gallons or pounds of hazardous waste. The event was the first with MXI, the new vendor. A new waste counting and billing system streamlined the collection and improved customer service. The cost of this event was approximately 13% higher than events under the previous vendor. The new vendor was selected by the HHW committee and COGCNV due to their record of service and commitment to the statewide PaintCare program, set to begin on July 1. The PaintCare program will provide free recycling of architectural paints, diverting material from the municipal waste stream and reducing costs for local governments. The program will be funded through a small recycling fee added to all architectural paint sold in the state. Non-hazardous latex paint is also eligible under the program. The new vendor was selected as one of two statewide PaintCare transporters, which provides the ability to collect and dispose of paint products at future HHW events at no cost to the towns. PaintCare is also partnering with municipal transfer stations and select paint retailers to establish a network of drop-off locations. Because of the high volume of paint received at HHW events, program costs are expected to drop beginning in July.

- d. *Emergency Planning* — Joe Perrelli reminded everyone about the 2013 Statewide Severe Weather Exercise scheduled for June 20. There will be an alternate weekend exercise date on June 22. Municipalities are encouraged to open their EOCs for the event. Expect weekly updates from DEMHS leading up to the exercise date. Details will also be available on the DEMHS website.

The DEMHS Region 5 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) will meet on May 13 to vote on DEMHS Region 5's FY12 spending plan. The region has seen a significant reduction in funding, so the proposed budget focuses on sustaining current efforts rather than taking on new projects.

- e. *Local Road Accident Reduction Program* — Joe Perrelli said proposed projects for this program are due by June 6. The program provides construction costs for safety improvements to local roads.
- f. *School Security Committee Update* — Tom Dunn said there was nothing new to report as they are waiting to hear from the state. Bob Mezzo said the state police are doing low-cost or no-cost school security audits. Ed Edelson said assessments of other municipal buildings may also be done.

10. **Adjournment**

At 1:20 p.m., on a motion by Ed Edelson, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by

Lauren Rizzo
Administrative Assistant
for
Ed Mone
Secretary