

MINUTES
Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley
COGCNV Conference Room
49 Leavenworth Street, Suite 303
Waterbury, CT 06702
12:00 Noon, Friday, February 14, 2014

COG Members: Chris Bielik, First Selectman, Beacon Falls; Leonard Assard, First Selectman, Bethlehem; Jerry Sitko, Alternate, Cheshire; Ed St. John (by phone), First Selectman, Middlebury; Bob Mezzo, Mayor, Naugatuck; Joanne Pelton (by phone), Alternate, Oxford; Tom Galvin, Alternate, Prospect; Ed Edelson, First Selectman, Southbury; Ed Mone, First Selectman, Thomaston; Kevin DelGobbo, Alternate, Waterbury; Roy Cavanaugh, Alternate, Watertown; Darlene Tynan, Alternate, Wolcott.

Speakers and Guests: Attorney Steve Mednick; Amy Desaulniers, Wolcott.

Staff: Samuel Gold, Executive Director; Joe Perrelli, Senior Planner; Pat Gallagher, Regional Planner; Aaron Budris, Regional Planner/GIS Specialist; Glenda Prentiss, GIS Coordinator; Lauren Rizzo, Administrative Assistant.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Public Comment

Chairman Ed Edelson called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. There was no public comment.

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of the January 10, 2014 Meeting
- b. Financial Report
- c. Authorization for Temporary Staffing
- d. Correspondence
- e. Letter of Support for Thomaston CDBG Application for Grove Manor

On a motion by Kevin DelGobbo, seconded by Chris Bielik, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Consent Agenda.

3. Executive Committee Nomination

Chairman Edelson said the Executive Committee had recently met and recommended Leonard Assard of Bethlehem to fill the vacancy created when committee member Tom Dunn assumed the position of Secretary. There were no other nominations from the floor, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To appoint Leonard Assard as a member of the COGCNV Executive Committee.

4. New COG Formation

- a. *Municipal COG Ordinance* – Attorney Steve Mednick gave his legal opinion with regard to the decision of the Central Naugatuck Valley and Valley Planning Regions to form a single planning region to be known as the Naugatuck Valley Planning Region. Attorney Mednick noted that there is a severe time constraint under the statute – by the first day of January 2015, the new organization must be operational. He did not believe there was any procedure for a waiver. In that context, the eligible municipalities in the Naugatuck Valley Region should initiate the

ordinance process, without delay, in order to avoid any rush in the summer, or worse yet, the autumn. Attorney Mednick noted that there are numerous operational, business and programmatic decisions and issues that need to be tackled in a short period of time. It is his view this mitigates in favor of immediately moving forward to create the Naugatuck Valley COG.

In summary, Attorney Mednick's preliminary conclusions were:

- Pursuant to C.G.S. §16a-4a(4), the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management has re-designated the Central Naugatuck Valley and Valley Planning Regions into "...one new planning region to be known as the Naugatuck Valley Planning Region."
- COGCNV is a regional council of elected officials in the Central Naugatuck Valley, pursuant to C.G.S. §4-124c – 4-124h.
- The Valley Council of Governments is a regional council of governments in the Valley Planning Region, pursuant to C.G.S. §4-124i to 4-12p.
- There is no council of governments representing the municipalities of the Naugatuck Valley Planning Region.
- Since a merged Planning Region has been voluntarily agreed to and designated by the OPM Secretary, a regional council of governments for the Naugatuck Valley Planning Region should be established in accordance with the provisions of the general statutes, without delay.
- Accordingly, the members of COGCNV should take immediate steps to proceed to create a regional council of governments by adopting C.G.S. §4-124i to 4-12p, in accordance with the provisions of C.G.S. §4-124j, with a transitional period to end on 31 December 2014 at 11:59:59 p.m. The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments should commence operations on 1 January 2015.
- In the interim period, prior to achieving the 60% threshold precedent to certification of a council of governments, the eligible members of the Naugatuck Valley Planning Region should continue to engage in the ongoing negotiations.

As a recommended approach, Attorney Mednick's opinion was that simultaneously with the ordinance process, both COGCNV and Valley COG should continue to move forward with negotiations on the substantive issues necessary to the operation of the successor COG:

- Financial and budget issues (including but not limited to, budget projections based upon the current COGCNV and Valley COG models used).
- Programmatic priorities and decisions (i.e., which programs shall be assumed by the Naugatuck Valley COG and which need to be retained by unincorporated "transitional entities" operating in the interest of the predecessor COG).
- Governance decisions, such as bylaw adoption, election process and officer selection.
- Operational decisions, including the merging of different office cultures and proposed staffing arrangements (i.e., employee manuals and personnel rules, compensation adjustments, including salary and benefits, human resources alignment and retention and dismissal).
- Hiring of executive director and other key personnel.
- Adoption of an "implementation plan," including strategic alignment of mission, vision, objectives and value proposition.

Attorney Mednick strongly suggested that the eligible municipal members not wait until attaining the 60% threshold since the time necessary to address the issues is swiftly passing by. He then answered questions about the municipal ordinance that will be required and other issues concerning the process.

On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Tom Galvin, it was unanimously

VOTED: To endorse the COG formation process as a council and encourage all towns to move forward as quickly as possible.

- b. *COG Formation Committee and Subcommittees* – Samuel Gold said a meeting had taken place with Valley COG to start a discussion on making decisions necessary for the new COG. It was agreed at that meeting that a structure in the form of a committee, consisting of the chairs and vice chairs of both Valley COG and COGCNV, with subcommittees under it, would be the best way to move forward on a number of issues that will need to be addressed as part of the new COG. The committee will oversee the process of forming the Naugatuck Valley COG. The chairmen and vice chairmen will represent the municipalities of the two councils on the COG Formation Committee. The council chairmen will appoint council members to serve on the subcommittees charged with making recommendations on various topics. The subcommittees that were discussed were: finance, human resources, policy, office operations, and executive director search. Council members will be able to serve on more than one subcommittee. Council staff will provide support to the committee and subcommittees. The decision making process will be consensus driven. Any disagreements on the subcommittee level will rise to the committee for resolution. All committee recommendations will be brought to a vote of the new Naugatuck Valley COG board for adoption.

On a motion by Jerry Sitko, seconded by Ed Mone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the COGCNV Chairman and Vice Chairman to represent the municipalities of the Central Naugatuck Valley Region on the Naugatuck Valley COG Formation Committee. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will report on the progress of the COG Formation Committee to the COGCNV at its monthly board meetings; and to authorize the COGCNV Chairman, as a member of the Naugatuck Valley COG Formation Committee, to appoint COGCNV members to serve on the Naugatuck Valley COG Formation Subcommittees.

5. **Regional Animal Shelter Feasibility Study**

Pat Gallagher said the final Regional Animal Control Facility Feasibility Study was completed by Silver/Petrucci. Nothing has changed from the presentation in December, except for the inclusion of a second set of plans for a larger building, which will allow additional municipalities to join if they express interest in the project. The first design shows a regional animal shelter that meets the needs of the eight municipalities participating in the study. The building would be 8,000 square feet, house up to 44 dogs, and cost approximately \$2.84 million to construct. The larger facility would take advantage of economies of scale and lower per-municipality operating costs, and would be 13,000 square feet, house up to 80 dogs, and cost approximately \$4.02 million to construct. Final designs can be adjusted depending on the number of participating municipalities. COGCNV staff will reach out to additional municipalities to see if they are interested in participating in the project. In addition, COGCNV will work with participating towns

to apply for state funding through the Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP). The next RPIP grant deadline is December 31, 2014. Kevin DelGobbo said Waterbury may be interested in participating.

On a motion by Len Assard, seconded by Bob Mezzo, with Roy Cavanaugh opposing, it was

VOTED: To approve the Regional Animal Control Facility Feasibility Study.

6. **Central Naugatuck Valley Economic Profile: 2013**

Pat Gallagher presented major findings from the recently completed Central Naugatuck Valley Economic Profile: 2013. The report provides an in-depth look at the regional economic trends such as employment, job concentration, wages, worker age, and employment projections up to 2020. Twenty sectors of the region's economy were examined. The report, which covers a period from 2002 to 2011, uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Connecticut Department of Labor, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The full report can be downloaded from the COGCNV website.

On a motion by Jerry Sitko, seconded by Chris Bielik, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Central Naugatuck Valley Economic Profile: 2013.

7. **Transportation Planning**

- a. *I-84, Exit 17 Improvements* – Joe Perrelli said there was nothing new to report on this topic as a meeting with CTDOT was unable to be scheduled. He will report back once the meeting occurs.
- b. *Functional Classification Review* – Joe Perrelli said CTDOT is looking at the functional classification of roads. This is a federal designation of the function of all the roads in a region, i.e., arterial, expressway, local, collector. Mr. Perrelli should be contacted by March 21 if anyone is aware of any road that needs to be upgraded. Arterial and collector roads are eligible for federal and state funding if they meet certain criteria. Roy Cavanaugh provided additional details.

8. **Regional Planning**

Joe Perrelli said that in September COGCNV had voted to send a letter to Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty stating opposition to bigger trucks on Connecticut's highways. The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, the group behind the initiative, is having a meeting with Congresswoman Esty on 2/18. Mr. Perrelli will be attending the meeting on behalf of COGCNV. Len Assard said that on the opposite side of that, agricultural communities are experiencing difficulty and increased costs in having their milk picked up, as the surrounding states all have higher weight limits.

9. **Other**

- a. *Emergency Planning* – Joe Perrelli said Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) applications had been received from several towns, with requests for items such as cones and radios. Funding will come from a special grant.

The DEMHS Region 5 REPT will meet on February 19. All CEOs are encouraged to attend. Proxy letters are available. Mr. Perrelli provided a chart of items being procured.

10. **Adjournment**

At 1:05 p.m., on a motion by Tom Galvin, seconded by Roy Cavanaugh, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by
Lauren Rizzo
Administrative Assistant
for
Tom Dunn
Secretary

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