

Draft

MINUTES OF
MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 29, 2009

ATTENDANCE

Members and Guests

Peter Souza, Chair
Jack McCoy
Steven Wawruck
Mike Wilkinson
Brandon Robertson
Peter Graczykowski
Robert Skinner
Joyce Stille
Emily Moon
Blythe Robinson
Jeff Bridges
John Shemo
Mary Ellen Kowalewski
Maureen Barton
Jennifer March-Wackers
Lyle Wray

Town

Windsor
Manchester
Windsor Locks
Tolland
Simsbury
Vernon
Canton
Bolton
Windsor
Avon
Wethersfield
MetroHartford Alliance
CRCOG
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CRCOG

Chairperson Peter Souza called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m.

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Joyce Stille made and Steven Wawruck seconded a motion to adopt the minutes of the June 16, 2009 meetings. The motion was adopted by unanimous voice vote.

2. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Stuart Grifel and John Warren presented their software tool G-TRACS, which is a program that can help municipalities track performance measures. Mr. Grifel and Mr. Warren made a similar presentation in July, and some CRCOG towns have been using G-TRACS as a pilot for tracking performance measures. Mr. Warren walked through an example of how the tool works, and then showed the committee how to use the program by entering some data into a pre-populated tab. The advantages of this tool are that it is easy to use, being set on an Excel platform, and the cost is considerably lower than the other performance measurement tools in the marketplace. Municipalities can develop their own performance measurements, and can use the data to develop charts and graphs. G-TRACS also has an uploading tool, so users can upload their data to use for analysis, trending, etc. Lyle Wray stated that CRCOG wants to adopt this tool. Blythe Robinson reported that Avon has been testing G-TRACS, and she feels the measures will be helpful. Avon is using data that they already gather, and hopes to expand to setting up new measures. She opted to

measure items that are required for the budget. Mike Wilkinson reported that in Tolland, they are recruiting willing department heads to begin implementing G-TRACS. A question was asked about using G-TRACS for regional benchmarking, which would require common measurements. Mr. Wray suggested that there is no point in trying to perfect the measurements before getting started, that adopting the tool simply creates a more efficient way to do something that you're already doing. Someone asked if the cost and operational factor are clear, but Mr. Wray said that it's not really a tool for performance budgeting yet, and that volume of service and budget drivers are a whole different conversation. There could be a benefit to using the program for collecting regionwide data, in which case the performance measures would have to be broad. Mr. Wray stated that towns that want to use the tool should start with goal setting and priorities from their Town Councils. Jen March-Wackers asked if members would be interested in looking at an opportunity for group pricing, which received a positive response. CRCOG could also develop a clearinghouse of measures which would be posted to our website. Ms. March-Wackers asked anyone interested in G-TRACS to contact her.

3. FUTURE TOPICS

Jen March-Wackers informed the committee of some upcoming topics and asked for input on topics they might be interested in seeing at future Municipal Services Committee meetings. The topic for October will be demographics, specifically, a presentation on Connecticut's aging population and how that will affect municipalities. Manchester Community College has approached her about talking to the committee members about municipal training needs. They can expand their current offerings and possibly offer discounts to municipalities. The Center for Advanced Technology offered to talk about assistance they can offer municipalities for IT systems assessment, by evaluating systems for efficiency and effectiveness. Another possible topic is the CRCOG Sustainability Initiative. Ms. March-Wackers asked if members would be interested in having a Service Sharing "Lessons Learned" session. Mr. Wray suggested it might be time to think about having another conference on Shared Services in a year or so, and to start looking now at local shared service successes. A suggestion was made to not limit it to local shared services – shared services are bundled into the Recovery Act and we should look nationally for what others are doing. CRCOG could write about the obstacles and issues faced by those pursuing shared service. Mr. Wray mentioned that some legislators don't think an incentive should be required for shared services, but they may not be aware of how much work goes into making even a small project successful. Mr. Wray also mentioned a Policy Board retreat which is coming up on January 20, 2010, where the subject of shared services will be addressed. CRCOG is looking at larger projects like shared dispatch, where CRCOG would have a contract that municipalities could buy into. Jack McCoy mentioned that Manchester was pursuing a grant for Broadband, and suggested that CRCOG may need an operating entity to go after that sort of project on behalf of its membership. Mr. Wray said it could be a Municipal Services Bureau that grows out of the current Solid Waste Authority initiative.

4. PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Regional Performance Incentive Grants

Ms. March-Wackers distributed updates on the Regional Performance Incentive Grant

projects.

Solid Waste Management

A new Regional Solid Waste Authority is planned, forms to join are out and about, and Ms. March-Wackers stated that she and Mr. Wray are happy to come out and talk to Councils that have questions about it. The new authority would like to get this started this calendar year, but they need the fee from participants to pay for professional services associated with setting up the authority as a legal entity. Ms. March-Wackers has reported that she's received nine checks and about twenty more who have expressed interest.

Ms. March-Wackers also reported about the creation of a Product Stewardship Council, which is aiming to make the producers of hazardous materials responsible for the disposal of those materials. This is related to e-Waste initiative at the DEP, which has not yet been implemented. Ms. March-Wackers informed the committee that there will be a hearing on October 26, 2009 on the subject of e-Waste, and it would be good for there to be a municipal presence there, since the state will require municipalities to collect e-Waste, but will not provide any funding for it, and will also forbid municipalities from charging for it. The regulations to enforce e-Waste are not yet in place. Municipalities have an opportunity to pull together information on how much it will cost. The DEP is taking written public comment until the hearing.

Purchasing

The Capitol Region Purchasing Council will hold its Annual Meeting on Friday, October 23, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the West Hartford Town Hall, Room 400, 50 South Main Street, West Hartford. Ms. March-Wackers also briefly reported on the EZIQC program, which is going well.

5. MUNICIPAL INFORMATION SHARING AND OTHER BUSINESS

Peter Graczykowski from Vernon asked if any members are moving from a deferred compensation to defined benefit plan. Several towns are doing this, mostly by grandfathering in those who were hired with a deferred compensation plan, and offering new hires a defined benefit, where both the town and the employee contribute. Ms. March-Wackers informed the committee that there are number of resources available for webinars, and CRCOG can sponsor those on a limited basis, either at no charge or for a small fee. The group was amenable to a \$10 fee for these webinars to stretch the budget dollars for hosting them. Chair Peter Souza said the next Municipal Services Committee meeting would be held on October 20, 2009.

5. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business, Chair Peter Souza adjourned the meeting at 1:24 p.m.