

Draft

**MINUTES OF**  
**MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**JANUARY 26, 2009**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Members and Guests**

Peter Souza, Chair  
Jack McCoy  
Jeff Bridges  
Bill Smith  
Steve Wawruck  
Bill Taylor  
Peter Graczykowski  
Emily Moon  
Barbara Gilbert  
Bonnie Therrien  
Paul Nonnenmacher  
Maureen Barton  
Mary Ellen Kowalewski  
Jennifer March-Wackers  
Jocelyn Mathiasen  
Lyle Wray

**Town**

Windsor  
Manchester  
Wethersfield  
Granby  
Windsor Locks  
East Hartford  
Vernon  
Windsor  
Rocky Hill  
Simsbury  
CRRA  
CRCOG  
CRCOG  
CRCOG  
CRCOG  
CRCOG

Chair Peter Souza called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

**1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Bill Smith made a motion to adopt the minutes of the December 15, 2009 meetings, and Steven Wawruck seconded. The motion was adopted by voice vote, with two abstentions (Barbara Gilbert and Bonnie Therrien).

**2. CRCOG STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Lyle Wray asked the members of the committee to think about what issues should be addressed at the CRCOG Strategic Planning retreat, which will be held on February 24, 2010 at CCAT. The event will be facilitated by Philip Schenck, and Tom Condon will be giving a presentation about regionalization. Mr. Wray specifically asked committee members to think about what would success look like in five years, and what does CRCOG need to be able to do for you. Resources are tight right now, but this presents a huge opportunity for regional responses, both the smaller agreements between 2-3 towns or sub-regional areas like Farmington Valley, with big regional responses like permitting, property tax assessment, back-office stuff. As an example, Mr. Wray mentioned the Franklin COG in Massachusetts, which built programs to provide human resources, finance and IT, and members were able to buy in to the level of service they needed. There is time for members to offer their input, and a survey has been distributed to collect some ideas. CRCOG and municipalities are

facing serious revenue problems, and Dodd's retirement leaves Connecticut in a precarious position, since he was the driving force behind the transportation funds CROCOG and all of Connecticut receive.

Jack McCoy mentioned on possible revenue issue – AT&T has been the administrator of poles in Connecticut – if anyone wanted to put something on a pole, they had to go through AT&T. They are no longer doing this, and it provides an opportunity for a single point owner. Might this be something CROCOG or CCM would like to pursue? Significant revenue could be raised by whomever is the pole administrator. CCM has declared they will file intervenor's status, and three towns have also filed. There is a statute granting municipalities access to the poles. There is some downside risk. Mr. Wawruck asked about the status of the Connecticut Education Network. There are a few legal issues with using the CEN for municipal purposes, but the main barriers are institutional. If the CEN was opened up for municipal use, it could be a source of revenue for the State. Mr. Wray suggested that in order for it to happen, a Governor would have to say, "do it". Mr. McCoy also mentioned a possible way to redirect IT costs with a city to city network. If towns were interconnected, they would be able to migrate away from Microsoft, which is expensive, and use open source software. This would allow on IT department to manage the IT needs of multiple towns.

Bonnie Therrien suggested looking for opportunities to share services with the State. In addition, Ms. Therrien asked if Municipal Services Committee members should lead the drive in State elections by creating the important issues, and getting the candidates to address the issues that are important to municipalities. Ms. March-Wackers suggested asking CCM to drive this, since they are statewide. Mr. Souza suggested that CROCOG act as a service bureau, where CROCOG provides services and municipalities pay us to cover the cost of the program.

### **3. PROJECT STATUS REPORTS**

#### **Solid Waste Management**

Jennifer March-Wackers reported on the Solid Waste Legislative Briefing, which was held on Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at the Legislative Office Building. The briefing was televised by CT-N and can be found on their website under archives. CROCOG is still working on a draft model ordinance. Ms. March-Wackers estimates the final version will be available in mid-February if all comments are in to her by this Wednesday.

#### **Purchasing**

Natural gas will have an "open enrollment" for adds, drops and new members coming up soon, with a deadline at the end of February. Ms. March-Wackers also reported that town-by-town bid savings calculations will be coming soon. Maureen Barton reported that the CRPC is currently soliciting requirements for Fuel Oil and Recycling Bins, and will be opening Grass Seed & Fertilizer and Portable Toilets on January 27, 2010.

#### **Law Enforcement Training Center**

Barbara Gilbert reported on some changes to the training center. The committee working on it has opted to use a simunitions program for firearms training, and the building will have movable walls for various types of training. It will also allow for K-9

tactical training. Rocky Hill has received authorization and the Council is firmly behind it, but there is vocal opposition from some residents. Ms. Gilbert asked if someone could forward her an article she was told appeared in the Courant about the grant being frozen until all questions are answered. Ms. Gilbert stated that this is a good project and could work in other towns. The most vocal opponent of the project has filed an ethics complaint against Ms. Gilbert.

### **Training**

Ms. March-Wackers shared information about training for effective budget presentation presented by the GFOA, and asked anyone interested in participating to let her know, since CROG can host the training.

### **Regional Permitting**

Jocelyn Mathiasen responded to a question about a grant from the EPA, which we did not get. Ms. Mathiasen said there is money left over from this project, which would be used to add towns or expand the permitting system. There is still an opportunity for joining towns to get a subsidy. Ms. Mathiasen also stated she could assist if any individual towns were interested in applying for a grant.

Ms. March-Wackers stated she will submit the quarterly report for all OPM grant projects this Friday.

## **4. MUNICIPAL INFORMATION SHARING AND OTHER BUSINESS**

There are opportunities for anyone interested in participating in a blue ribbon commission on the region's MORE commission, as well as several sub-committees, which will be starting this week. On February 17, 2010, Windsor will be hosting a webinar at the Town Hall. Mr. Souza will distribute information about that. Ms. Kowalewski distributed bookmark sized reminders about Census 2010, which is coming up, so municipalities can have the information out in their Town Halls. One member asked if there were Public Service Announcements about Census 2010 available for airing on community channels, and Ms. Gilbert also reminded members that there are jobs available for the Census, if anyone comes into the Town Hall looking for work.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Peter Souza adjourned the meeting at 1:02 p.m.