

Draft

**MINUTES OF**  
**MUNICIPAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 16, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Members and Guests**

Peter Souza, Chair  
Joyce Stille  
Robert Skinner  
Bill Taylor  
Bonnie Therrien  
Julian Freund  
John Salomone  
Lisa Pellegrini  
Peter Graczykowski  
Jeff Bridges  
Steve Wawruck  
Jane Brautigan  
Bob Eichen  
Paul Fetherston  
Maureen Rait  
Maureen Barton  
Mary Ellen Kowalewski  
Jennifer March-Wackers

**Town**

Windsor  
Bolton  
Canton  
East Hartford  
Hebron  
Manchester  
Newington  
Somers  
Vernon  
Wethersfield  
Windsor Locks  
City of Boulder  
City of Boulder  
City of Boulder  
City of Boulder  
CRCOG  
CRCOG  
CRCOG

Chair Peter Souza called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

**1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Bonnie Therrien made and Joyce Stille seconded a motion to adopt the minutes from the October 19, 2010 meeting. The minutes were adopted by majority voice vote, with three abstentions (Lisa Pellegrini, Joyce Stille, John Salomone).

**2. PRIORITY BASED BUDGETING**

Paul Fetherston, via WebEx, introduced some staff from the City of Boulder to present different perspectives on their Priority Based Budgeting – Jane Brautigan, City Manager; Bob Eichen, CFO, and Maureen Rait, Executive Director of Public Works. They first talked about the way the City of Boulder is funded, which is through local sales & usage tax, through City run utility fees, and a piece of the budget called Other, which includes parking fines, fees, and a climate action tax. The state of Colorado is fiscally conservative, and there have been taxpayer revolts that result in ballot initiatives to limit the amount of money the government can collect. In addition, they have some dedicated funds, which means that a percentage of the taxes and fees collected are dedicated to fund a particular program, like Open Space or Parks & Recreation. The City of Boulder has addressed some of those challenges by using Blue

Ribbon Commissions. Phase I of the Blue Ribbon Commission looked at Revenues, Phase II looked at Expenditures. In addition, the City has implemented a Business Plan, which allows them to examine potential solutions within a larger framework. They categorized budget items as essential, desired or discretionary, clarified a mission, developed guiding principles and developed standards for services – either exceeding, meeting, or below acceptable. They decided that any cuts had to be strategic and targeted. They implemented Priority Based Budgeting, which is similar to Budgeting for Outcomes. Part of Priority Based Budgeting involves engaging the public and employees. They established citywide goals and scored all programs. Then they analyzed the lower quartile programs. This process highlighted opportunities to do things differently, and to reduce or eliminate the programs that were not a high priority. The City Council determined which outcomes they wanted, and the public participated in developing definitions that create that outcome. Consultants then developed those ideas. They learned a lot of lessons during the process. One good thing is that they were able to identify and engage up and coming employees, so it was a good tool for development. They determined that some valuable programs are not well known. They did find that some of the public participants were skewing the definitions. They also found that while the City Council was interested in the process at first, they were losing the Council when it came time to address actual cuts.

They offered some advice for anyone looking to pursue something like this. There is no user manual, so it's important to have senior leadership. The people involved need to be able to see the vision and be flexible. Some programs that have a high value are not necessarily a priority. They have made progress on reducing the structural deficit, but they still have one. They are thinking about privatizing some services. A committee member asked how they scored the programs, and they responded that they asked how strongly a program worked to support the desired outcome, and gave them a range of most to least. In addition, they factored in whether or not a particular program was legally mandated. Another committee member asked if this kind of program would work for a smaller community, and all the Boulder staff think it would be doable. They recommended putting together a budget team that goes beyond finance and includes people from across the organization. Mr. Souza shared that the Town of Windsor is doing an online budget simulator to show how cuts impact services, and they will probably have some similar workshops to discuss service priorities.

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

#### **e-Government Initiative**

Nine towns are now live with the Permitting Software, and Ms. March-Wackers reported that they are now recruiting more towns who would like to use the system. The software is being finalized and a new cohort is expected to go live within this fiscal year.

#### **Purchasing**

Ms. Barton reported that the Capitol Region Purchasing Council opened RFPs for eProcurement and will be reviewing the responses later today. In addition, the CRPC is currently soliciting requirements for Gasoline and Traffic Guidelines, and will be looking for requirements for Grass Seed and Fertilizer on December 15<sup>th</sup>. In addition,

the Purchasing website has been updated. CRPC staff has added pages for Purchasing Resources, which contains information on piggybacking language and contact information for other cooperative purchasing agencies, and eProcurement, which has tutorials for municipal use of the system. In addition the Current Bid/RFP page is now called Current Bid/RFP Opportunities, and the Archived Bid page is now called Active Bids, to more accurately reflect the information posted on each of these pages.

**Service Sharing**

Ms. March-Wackers reported that the Solid Waste committee is active and the RFQ committee has finalized the RFQ Scope of Work for consultant assistance. The RFQ is being draft and will likely be released in mid- to late December, with results in January, a decision by the end of February, and a contract in place by April. Ms. March-Wackers is also working on getting the Residential Electricity program off the ground.

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

Members asked if Ms. March-Wackers would be putting together a utility projection, which may be difficult to do, but she anticipates having something possibly by January. If anyone has any projections, they are encouraged to share with the committee. Mr. Souza reported that Windsor put out an RFQ for a Town Clerk Operating System, 3 other municipalities are participating and others can still join. If anyone is interested, they should talk to Emily Moon. Mr. Skinner asked if anyone is live streaming their council meetings. Windsor and Manchester both use a company called Granicus. Newington records meetings and posts them to the internet. GMIS has a grant for opening the Connecticut Education Network for Public Safety use, which might make it possible for municipalities to use it as well. With no other business, Chair Peter Souza adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.