

Draft

**MINUTES OF**  
**POLICY BOARD MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 18, 2009**

**Policy Board Attendance**

Melody Currey, Chair  
Robert Burbank  
Dick Hines  
Jon Colman  
Joyce Stille  
Dick Barlow  
Denise Menard  
Scott Kaupin  
Chip Beckett  
John Adams  
David Panagore  
Scott Shanley  
Lou Spadaccini  
John Salomone  
Mary Glassman  
John Pelkey  
Steve Werbner  
John Ward  
Ron Van Winkle  
Jeff Bridges  
Peter Souza

**Town/Organization**

East Hartford  
Andover  
Avon  
Bloomfield  
Bolton  
Canton  
East Windsor  
Enfield  
Glastonbury  
Granby  
Hartford  
Manchester  
Manchester  
Newington  
Simsbury  
South Windsor  
Tolland  
Vernon  
West Hartford  
Wethersfield  
Windsor

**Others Present**

Tom Gutman  
Stephen T. Cassano  
David Fink  
Oz Griebel  
John Shemo  
Kathie Lutz

AARP  
CRCOG Foundation  
HOME Connecticut  
MetroHartford Alliance  
MetroHartford Alliance  
Rome Smith Associates

**Staff**

Cheryl Assis  
Maureen Barton  
Sandy Fry  
Jen March-Wackers  
Tom Maziarz  
Lyle Wray

CRCOG  
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Chair Currey called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m., and kicked-off the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves, since there are newly elected officials present. Ms. Glassman asked if the Policy Board was going to honor Phil Schenck at the December meeting since he is about to retire.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

### **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Mr. Colman made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 21, 2009 meetings. Ms. Stille seconded. All voted in favor of the motion.

### **REPORTS**

#### **Chair and Executive Director**

Mr. Wray reported on the billing permitting project, the contracts are currently in process and will be signed. Mr. Wray also updated the Board on Senator Dodd's Livable Communities bill, and mentioned a PRI report about economic development in the state. Lastly, Mr. Wray reported on the recent bus rapid transit conference, and reminded members that there is a link to the monthly report on the CRCOG website.

#### **MetroHartford Alliance**

Mr. Griebel reported on the visit to Regional Leadership Exchange in St. Paul. As part of the meeting packet, members received summaries of the topics covered at the exchange. Members of the Policy Board who attended stated that it was a successful 48 hours, that they found it valuable to see that St. Paul has done some things that would have trouble getting off the table here. St. Paul quickly implemented a strategic plan. The attendees met and will ask the Policy Board for assistance on fleshing out regional delivery of services, and are asking for an endorsement of their efforts today. Mr. Shanley reported that St. Paul achieved this through a lot of hard work, but they accepted that all involved parties need to work together to thrive. Mr. Cassano added that he heard the word "quickly" and asked how the capitol region can get there. Mr. Griebel said that St. Paul engaged the political and the business community to work together, and created an alignment of private and public sector needs. Any working group will need to include members of the private sector. In St. Paul, the transportation development was driven by the business community.

Mr. Griebel then reported on Bonnie Therrien's work for the MHA. She met with the capitol region towns in September and October, and there are 6 meetings scheduled with small groups of the towns who responded to the survey. MHA will forward that schedule out to everyone.

Mr. Griebel then shared that the lease for MHA's current location is about to expire, and they are exploring the possibility of co-location, or the creation of a regional "civic" center.

Mr. Shemo reported on a development project that grew from the CEDS update three years ago, in which MHA had access to federal money and solicited projects from towns. Through this, Riverside Drive in East Hartford has been through reconstruction. The Regional Director will visit the area, and there is a potential for additional money.

#### **Municipal Services**

Mr. Souza reported that the Municipal Services Committee met yesterday and the main topic was on training for municipal employees, presented by the Center for Public Service Excellence

at Manchester Community College. The Center has been offering training for State employees for years and is now extending those classes to municipalities. In addition, the Capital Workforce Partners reported on two different grants for training, a memo detailing that information will be forthcoming.

### **Public Safety Council/Homeland Security**

Former DEMHS Commissioner Skip Thomas has agreed to serve as the next Chairman of the Public Safety Council, replacing Lee Erdmann. Public Safety is thrilled to have him on board with his law enforcement and State government background and our next meeting is scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup>. New DEMHS Commissioner Boynton will be speaking at tomorrow's CREPC meeting.

We have an opening for a Chief Elected Official on our Regional Emergency Planning Team/CREPC. If you are interested in this position or have questions about what it would entail, please contact Cheryl Assis.

Mr. Cassano gave a complete update in regard to the CREC Public Safety Academy serving students from grades 6 through 12.

### **Transportation Committee**

Mr. Colman stated that the report would include item #12 on the Policy Board agenda, since the major topic at the Transportation Committee meeting was ARRA funds. Mr. Maziarz briefly updated on the memo included in the packet on how to handle the additional ARRA funds that are left over from lower than expected bids on projects. The Transportation Committee approves and recommends the plan as stated in the memo, which is to allocate that leftover ARRA money to existing projects that are already in the STP Urban program. The second part of the recommendation is to start thinking about surplus money to address some projects that have been tabled, deferred or cancelled owing to the State DOT's financial problems. The Transportation Committee recommends using some of the surplus funds to address three projects in particular, in Manchester, West Hartford and Hartford. All these projects have started and are at least partially funded. Thanks were offered to Mr. Maziarz and the Transportation Committee for their creative thinking on this matter. Mr. Shanley stated that if all CROG members got for their dues were the services of the Transportation department, it would be well worth it. Mr. Colman made a motion to adopt the recommendations of the Transportation Committee, Ms. Stille seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Maziarz added that he had met with the new management team at DOT, and he is impressed. He sat down with their contracts people and they are developing a Master Municipal agreement that will only require a 2 page MOU, which will reduce the amount of time to move forward on projects to about two weeks.

### **INTERCITY REGIONAL VISIT**

Ms. Glassman asked for an endorsement from the Policy Board to engage with the MetroHartford Alliance to come up with a list of regional priorities. Chair Currey asked if Ms. Glassman was asking for the creation of a sub-committee, but Ms. Glassman said while that is a goal, she is only asking for an endorsement to engage the business community, most likely meeting in December, using the models that the Twin Cities used. Ms. Glassman made a motion to endorse the concept, Mr. Colman seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Souza suggested putting together any of the priorities coming out of this together with the strategic plans that will come out of the upcoming February retreat.

### **UPDATE ON HOME CONNECTICUT PROGRAM**

Mr. Fink distributed a handout about the progress of the HOMEConnecticut program. Participation levels have been high, and they were asked to stop working on it by OPM in April. There is strong support for the program in the legislature and the Governor's office, so their funding was left in place. OPM has asked them to look for new resources. Mr. Fink reported that they are working on a proactive look at housing in municipalities, and hope to craft a usable tool for creating housing for workers that municipalities need. Mr. Fink also reported that DECD/DEP got together and are working on a plan to develop housing in 500 year flood plains. They are not expecting state money, but with Senator Dodd's Livable Communities bill, there is an opportunity for funding. Mr. Cassano added that there is a meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup> with cabinet officials, which will start a push towards regional efforts.

### **COMPLETE STREETS**

Ms. Fry introduced Tom Gutman from the AARP, who distributed a report on the way older Americans use transportation. AARP worked with the legislature to put the report together. They looked at the complete street environment, visibility, nighttime visibility, sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. Mr. Gutman urged everyone to read through the report, which contains a lot of information and beneficial guidelines. Mr. Gutman reported that Governor Rell recently signed PA 09-154 which requires 1% of road funding be earmarked to facilitate bike/pedestrian use. Mr. Salomone asked if there was an electronic version of the report. Mr. Gutman said he would find out, and Ms. Fry said she would send out a link.

### **CCAT BRIEFING ON ENERGY OPPORTUNITY**

No one from CCAT was present, so this item was tabled.

### **CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

- Resolution for Route 6 Corridor Study

Mr. Colman made a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Ms. Stille seconded. All voted in favor of the motion.

### **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING STEPS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH THE CENTRAL CONNECTICUT SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY**

Mr. Wray reported that forty-five towns have submitted interest forms and \$500.00 towards the creation of the Central Connecticut Solid Waste Authority (CCSWA). Mr. Wray stated that they still have to go back to the legislative body for approval, and Bob DeCrescenzo is working on the legal side. Mr. Hines asked if the Bristol Authority is still interested, as that would bring fourteen additional towns on board. Mr. Wray said some towns may be watching to see what happens next before they express interest. There are two phases; the first is the creation of the Authority by the interested towns. It only takes two towns to create the Authority. Once that happens, other towns can join in. In addition, some towns are waiting until after the recent election winners are in office before they proceed. Once the Authority is created, the Authority will move forward with the additional steps. Mr. Wray suggested that it would be helpful to distribute a timeline once action is taken on this item. In addition, a table of tons and when current contracts expire would also be useful. Mr. Colman made a motion to adopt the resolution. Ms. Stille seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Wray mentioned that this will be an action item on the December Policy Board agenda, so he requested people let him know if there are conflicting meetings. Ms. Stille stated that COST has a January 20 meeting which may conflict, so the January meeting date may need to be changed.

**STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Mr. Wray reported that he and Mr. Maziarz will testify on Thursday about the busline. There is good progress on this project right now. There are some TIGER grants available on the federal side for commuter rail. There will probably be no Transportation Reauthorization until next November, which accounts for about 50% of CRCOG's funding. CCM has released a statement about how municipalities increased their employees while the federal government had shrunk. Members will be getting surveys about this topic. Mr. Wray further reported that even if the economy starts to recover in 2010 as predicted, there will likely be a 5 year drought. Mr. Bridges asked if this could be an opportunity to seek local revenue sources. Mr. Beckett added that there are unfunded mandates and binding arbitration contributing to the financial problems municipalities are facing. Mr. Wray stated that there is a long list of inefficiencies that need to be dealt with, and that this is a conversation worth having. In addition, municipalities may want to start communicating about the legislature's contribution to budget issues. Many suggestions were made about areas to pursue for budget – mandate relief, regional sales tax, prevailing wage changes, web based government services, savvier use of resources. MDC wages are going up 10%, and MDC municipalities are not represented when these decisions are made.

Ms. Lutz reported about OFA lapses, which will reach over a billion in the next two years. Ms. Lutz suggested municipalities be extremely proactive when delivering messages, and should start developing that before the session starts.

Board members asked if CRCOG or CCM can put together a list of mandates and other inefficiencies over the next two months. Mr. Werbner recommended that municipalities focus on issues that can be resolved. CRCOG can get together with CCM and COST to look at those items. The big ticket items would really take work to resolve. Ms. March-Wackers stated that the Municipal Services Committee will be looking at Service Sharing lessons learned, which may offer some guidance. Stakeholders need to put pressure on, and municipalities need to be lobbyists for their needs. The focus of the legislative committee will be on the budget.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no other business, Ms. Stille made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Adams seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.