



First Meeting
Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG)
October 23rd, 2014 12:30 pm
Ridgefield Town Hall, Large Conference Room
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

UNAPPROVED MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance:

Bethel First Selectman, Matthew Knickerbocker, Co-Chair
Wilton First Selectman, William Brennan, Co-Chair

Bridgewater First Selectman, Curtis Read
Brookfield First Selectman, William Tinsley
Danbury Mayor, Mark Boughton
Darien First Selectman, Jayme Stevenson
Greenwich First Selectman, Peter Tesei
New Canaan First Selectman, Robert Mallozzi
New Fairfield ... First Selectman, Susan Chapman
New Milford Mayor, Patricia Murphy
Newtown First Selectman, Patricia Llodra
Redding First Selectman, Julia Pemberton
Ridgefield First Selectman, Rudy Marconi
Stamford Mayor, David Martin
Weston First Selectman, Gayle Weinstein
Westport First Selectman, James Marpe

Executive Director of SWRPA, Floyd Lapp
Executive Director of HVCEO, David Hannon

State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, David LeVasseur

Agenda:

- 1) **Meeting Call to Order**
WCCOG Acting Co-Chairs Hon. William Brennan (Wilton) and Hon. Matthew Knickerbocker (Bethel)
- 2) **Public Participation**
Welcoming remarks from OPM Under Secretary David LeVasseur
Attachment: OPM letters certifying the establishment of WCCOG
- 3) **Action Items**
 - a. **Executive Director search process and proposed recommendation for discussion and action.**
 - b. **Discussion and potential decision of adoption of Bylaws**
 - c. **Authorized SWRPA office and legal mailing address for WCCOG business**
 - d. **Consideration of endorsement of OPM TOD Grant Application**
- 4) **WCCOG Budget**
Discussion of draft WCCOG budget for action at the next meeting
- 5) **Inter-Municipal Showcase**
 - a. **Aerial Photography and GIS Task Force**
 - b. **Discussion of Legislative Breakfast Briefing**
- 6) **Other Business**

- 7) **Next Meeting**
Thursday, November 20th, 2014 in Wilton: 12:00pm lunch. 12:30pm meeting.
 - 8) **Adjournment of WCCOG Meeting**
 - 9) **Convene SWRMPO and HVCEO-MPO Meetings at approximately 1:30pm**
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- 1) Meeting Call to Order
WCCOG Acting Co-Chairs Hon. William Brennan (Wilton) and Hon. Matthew Knickerbocker (Bethel)

The meeting was called to order by Hon. Brennan of Wilton at 12:32. Hon. Brennan welcomed the SWRPA and HVCEO parties to the first meeting of the WCCOG. He began the meeting by having each representative introduce himself or herself. He explained that because the meeting today is being held in the Town of Ridgefield, HVCEO participant, First Selectman Knickerbocker of Bethel will act as Chair.

- 2) Public Participation
Welcoming remarks from OPM Acting Under Secretary David LeVasseur
Attachment: OPM letters certifying the establishment of WCCOG

David LeVasseur of the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management opened the meeting by expressing his admiration for the great progress both SWRPA and HVCEO have made in the past year. He stated he is glad that the State has recognized and supported their merge to become WCCOG and is looking forward to working with this group in the future.

Hon. Knickerbocker opened the floor for public comment. Louis Schulman, Administrator of the Norwalk Transit District, representing Mayor Harry Rilling of Norwalk, commented that he understands Norwalk has yet to join the council and does not have a vote today.

- 3) Action Items
 - a. Executive Director search process and proposed recommendation for discussion and action.

Hon. Knickerbocker called on Hon. Rudy Marconi of Ridgefield and Hon. Gayle Weinstein of Weston to report on their search process for Executive Director of WCCOG. Hon. Weinstein explained there were over 40 candidates for the Executive Director position. The search was narrowed to two candidates and upon reviewing his expertise and management abilities, they are pleased to recommend Mr. Craig Leiner for the position. Mr. Leiner was chosen for his experience working with the New Hampshire RPA. For the past 15-20 years he has worked with Massport in Boston, functioning in various capacities, as well as many other community projects.

MOTION: A motion was set forth by Hon. Marconi to appoint Craig Leiner to the position of Executive Director. Hon. Weinstein seconded.

Hon. Murphy of New Milford inquired if there is a probation period. Hon. Weinstein explained there is a 90-day probation period for the position. Mr. Lapp stated that after the 90 days there is an evaluation interview, followed by a six month evaluation, then an annual evaluation. Hon. Weinstein stated that a positive outcome of the search was an opportunity to create an employment organizational chart. An ad has been placed for a Deputy Director as well.

Hon. Martin from Stamford inquired as to what the salary of the position will be. Hon. Weinstein stated \$135,000.00. Hon. Martin also asked for a copy of Mr. Leiner's resume. Hon. Weinstein will supply the resume to WCCOG. Hon. Martin suggested a copy of the resume to be supplied at the meeting when discussing the recommendation for the Deputy Director position.

Hon. Brennan explained that before the WCCOG votes on this matter, some present parties that have not passed the WCCOG ordinance are not be eligible to vote. This includes, Sherman, Danbury and Norwalk.

MOTION: Motion passes. 14-0-1. Hon. Patricia Llodra of Newtown abstains.

b. Discussion and potential decision of adoption of Bylaws

Hon. Knickerbocker explained there will be two motions to this agenda item as there was an amendment that was left from the original Bylaw draft, that being the Signing Authority amendment.

MOTION: Hon. Stevenson moved to adopt the submitted Bylaws as presented. Hon. Weinstein seconds.

Hon. Knickerbocker explained that the new Bylaws were reviewed extensively by the organization and applauds the attorney reviews, efforts, and compromises of all parties involved. The WCCOG takes a moment to review and read over the presented Bylaws.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. 15-0-0.

Hon. Knickerbocker presented the Signing Authority amendment under Section 11-F.

MOTION: Hon. Murphy moved to adopt the submitted amendment as written. Hon. Mallozzi seconded.

Hon. Llodra of Newtown has no problem with the Executive Director applying for grants on behalf of the Council, however she and Hon. Boughton inquired if there should be a fiscal impact statement required for every grant proposal outlining the effects of a positive or negative grant outcome and its effect on each of the communities' responsibilities. Hon. Stevenson of Darien and Hon. Weinstein of Weston concur with Hon. Llodra. Hon. Llodra stated this idea may not need to be included in the Bylaws but should be included as regular protocol for the Executive Director.

Hon. Brennan agreed that the proposed language does not outline the best procedure, however it is made clear that the approval of the Council is required before a grant is applied for and before its acceptance. Hon. Brennan stated that the design of authority is clearly written in the submitted amendment. The council agreed that should a grant application be of interest, it would be placed on the WCCOG agenda to be reviewed along with the fiscal impact of the grant, followed by a second agenda item at a later date concerning the acceptance of the grant.

Hon. Llodra would like a document created for the Executive Director to submit when presenting grant applications to the Council called the "Fiscal Impact" stating the respective fiscal impact of the grant, even clearly stating if there is none and that the document be signed off by the Executive Director.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. 15-0-0.

Hon. Knickerbocker stated that before leaving the topic of Bylaws, they should establish a Nominating Committee for next year's Council positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Hon. Brennan stated the Bylaws require five representatives. Hon. Murphy from New Milford, Hon. Llodra of Newtown, Hon. Chapman of New Fairfield, Hon. Tesei of Greenwich, and Hon. Mallozzi of New Canaan volunteered to serve on the Committee.

c. Authorized SWRPA office and legal mailing address for WCCOG business

MOTION: Hon. Marconi made a motion to accept the SWRPA office as the official mailing address for the WCCOG. Hon. Brennan seconded.

The official mailing address of the WCCOG will be 888 Washington Blvd., Stamford, CT 06901 and this is temporary until the WCCOG finds an official office location.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. 15-0-0.

d. Consideration of endorsement of OPM TOD Grant Application

Hon. Knickerbocker explained this grant is for the Town of Bethel to prepare a TOD plan for the area surrounding the Bethel train station toward a downtown area transit system. They went through the initial stages of planning six years ago. They have identified property near the train station about a quarter of a mile from the downtown area. He stated that because of the orientation near the train station and commercial areas, this project is an ideal model for small town TOD initiatives. He explains this agenda item is to endorse the application process for the grant.

MOTION: Hon. Brennan made a motion to endorse the OPM TOD grant application. Hon. Pemberton seconded.

Hon. Llodra inquired as to the amount of the grant. Hon. Knickerbocker explained the total planning costs will be \$150,000.00; property owner and developers contribution is \$50,000.00; contribution from the Town of Bethel is \$50,000.00; and the contribution from the State of Connecticut will be \$50,000.00. Hon. Murphy explained approving this grant application would be a great example in small town transits plans. Hon. Knickerbocker specified there would be no financial support from WCCOG but is extending the application for regional approval.

MOTION: The motion carried unanimously. 15-0-0.

4) WCCOG Budget

Discussion of draft WCCOG budget for action at the next meeting

Hon. Weinstein explained they won't know a definitive budget until they see what the organization develops into. She explained the Merger Committee has been looking into efficient financial definition moving into the future. For example, she stated they are currently looking for a central office as soon as possible to cut back on paying both the HVCEO and SWRPA expenses. Hon. Weinstein stated the Committee has been looking very closely at their staffing situations and are finding merging expertise within SWRPA and HVCEO and are strengthening their resources.

Hon. Brennan discussed the funds gained in the SWRPA/HVCEO merge, where grants earned by either party were not lost, but are now available to both organizations and can be used to contribute to larger community projects.

5) Inter-Municipal Showcase

a. Aerial Photography and GIS Task Force

Alex Karman and Carl Zimmerman made a short presentation on the GIS Services Project. The presentation outlined an Aerial Photography resource to each municipality's emergency responders and town agencies. The GIS Project data provided will include imagery (aerial and oblique views), topographical mapping, and planimetric maps which provide details such as location of fire hydrants and road measurements. Mr. Zimmerman explained surveyors, Town Planners, and Town Engineers can also use the data. This SWRPA project will be expanded by WCCOG to include HVCEO municipalities.

Hon. Marconi asked how quickly the data can be seen, especially in emergency situations where gas, electricity or water systems need to be identified. Mr. Zimmerman explained that most of the data is gathered by images (underground elements cannot be seen); however, underground data can be noted and incorporated into the maps. . Mr. Zimmerman explained GIS data will be available over the Internet.

Hon. Read of Bridgewater suggested different levels of access to the data. Hon. Llodra recommended each of the municipalities decide their own levels of access within their community.

b. Discussion of Legislative Breakfast Briefing

Hon. Knickerbocker explained that both SWRPA and HVCEO conduct annual Legislative Breakfast Briefings with Connecticut State Legislators. He is opening the discussion for either maintaining the two separate breakfasts or an idea to combine them. Hon. Stevenson explained the more pressing idea would be to prepare for a coordinated Legislative agenda.

Hon. Brennan discussed his experience with SWRPA's structure when approaching an agenda for the Annual Legislative Breakfast. In the past they chose a few key influential topics of interest, a few minutes each, then allowed the Legislators a few moments for comment. Hon. Boughton of Danbury suggested creating a subcommittee to organize the agenda for the Legislative Breakfast. Hon. Weinstein seconds this idea.

Hon. Brennan agreed that a subcommittee is a good idea but suggested they organize themselves to arrange a single meeting for WCCOG for 2015. HVCEO will continue with their scheduled 2014 Legislative Breakfast. Hon. Boughton would still like WCCOG members to be involved with the scheduled 2014 meeting. The subcommittee will include Hon. Boughton of Danbury, Hon. Weinstein of Wilton and Hon. Pemberton of Redding.

6) Other Business

Mayor Martin of Stamford held a brief discussion of Ebola in the State of Connecticut. He spoke of the City of Stamford's planning experience, but is open to the ideas and experiences of the WCCOG members. He stated that in most other states the lead on the crisis is taking place on a county level, not a town/city level. He inquired as to how WCCOG will react if a possible case of Ebola or a quarantine situation occurs. Hon. Martin would like to begin a plan as to how WCCOG as a regional organization can respond.

Hon. Boughton explained the training provided to the local health resources is provided by the U.S. and CT Departments of Health. Hon. Stevenson voiced her concern after sitting in on meeting with the CT Department of Health, is the response time when inquiring about basic plans or procedure. Hon. Stevenson states that in the instance of an Ebola quarantined case; WCCOG should consider their municipalities as well as surrounding emergency response resources and preparedness.

Hon. Knickerbocker comments that staff of the WCCOG will be working on organizing Ebola planning procedures, implementation and clarity with the CT Department of Health.

7) Next Meeting

Thursday, November 20th, 2014 in Wilton: 12:00pm lunch. 12:30pm meeting.

8) Adjournment of WCCOG Meeting

MOTION: Hon. Murphy makes a motion to adjourn. Hon. Marconi seconds. The motion carries unanimously. 15-0-0.

9) Convene SWRMPO and HVCEO-MPO Meetings at approximately 1:30pm

Following the WCCOG meeting, SWRMPO and HVCEO-MPO meetings convened.