

**MINUTES OF THE
H V C E O
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2001
AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL**

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Bethel.....First Selectman Judy Novachek
Bridgewater.....Alternate Robert Brown
Brookfield.....First Selectman Martin Foncello
Danbury.....Absent
New Fairfield.....First Selectman Patty Gay, Chair
New Milford.....Mayor Arthur Peitler
Newtown.....First Selectman Herbert Rosenthal
Redding.....First Selectman Natalie Ketcham
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi, Alternate Peter Yanity
Sherman.....Alternate Donna Tuck

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Richard Amarossi of Brookfield, Kathryn Faraci of Conn DOT, James Bellano and Gena Maloney of the HVEDP, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Holly Burbank of Metropool, Richard Schreiner of HART, Camille Acquanita and Jonathan Chew of the HVCEO staff.

CALL TO ORDER AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chair Patty Gay at 12:35 P.M. No public comment was offered.

Jon Chew then stated that Bridgewater First Selectman William Stuart had requested that he clarify recent HVCEO activities and media reports on the beach access matter that arose at the 8/22/2001 special meeting. Mr. Chew stated that an HVCEO meeting that date was held to gain information and compare reactions to the recent CT Supreme Court ruling ending Greenwich's residents only policy at its municipal beaches.

There was no quorum present and there were no votes taken at that meeting. Rather, the consensus of the members present was that no municipality wished to counter the ruling of the court, and thus that non-residents attempting beach use would not be challenged.

However, he reported, several members felt that the News Times top of front page headline the next day, stating "Town Parks Open to All," was misleading to the public, implying full regional involvement, especially as there were no votes nor a quorum at this discussion meeting. Conversely, that the sub-headline just beneath it, "Officials Grapple with Court Ruling", was appropriate and accurate. This inaccuracy was then picked up and greatly compounded by other media, stating that HVCEO had taken a position, which was poor reporting.

MINUTES FROM MEETINGS OF 6/15/2001 8/22/2001

On a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Marty Foncello, the minutes

of the meetings of 6/15/2001 and 8/22/2001 were unanimously approved, with abstentions by Judy Novachek and Natalie Ketcham who did not attend the 8/22 meeting.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 6/2001, 7/2001 AND 8/2001

On a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Herb Rosenthal, the financial statements for 6/2001, 7/2001 and 8/2001 were unanimously approved. This was followed by brief discussion of the FERC legal services invoices recently forwarded from staff.

TIP AMENDMENT FOR HART DOWNTOWN TROLLEY VEHICLES

Rick Schreiner of HART explained the HART request. The Downtown Danbury trolley bus service, initiated in 1996, operates Thursday through Saturday from 10 AM to 10 PM using a replica trolley on a circulatory route in and around Downtown Danbury, he said. The service carries nearly 20,000 passengers last year.

The trolley, as a novelty vehicle, often participates in special events around the region. Such events have included the Newtown Labor Day Parade, New Fairfield Fourth of July Parade, First Night, NCAA basketball tournament, etc. But the trolley is now over four years old and in need of replacement.

A TIP amendment in the amount of \$175,000 (\$140,000 federal, \$35,000 local) to the FY2002 TIP was then proposed for HVCEO approval. One ADA accessible trolleys will replace the existing 1996 Cable Car Concepts Minitrolley, which will be retained as a spare. After brief discussion, on a motion made by Donna Tuck and a second by Judy Novachek, it was voted unanimously to approved the TIP addition.

APPOINTMENT TO VACANCY ON NORTHWEST CT EMS COUNCIL

There was a discussion of the two nominations made at the June meeting, Ronald Romano of Redding who was nominated by Natalie Ketcham, and Jerry Myers of Ridgefield who was nominated by Rudy Marconi.

Over the summer Natalie Ketcham and Rudy Marconi encouraged dialogue between the candidates, with the goal of one agreeing to serve as member and the other as alternate. It is now agreed by both towns that the recommendation is for Jerry Myers of Ridgefield to serve as Member with Ronald Romano of Redding as Alternate.

Then on a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and a second by Rudy Marconi, it was voted unanimously to notify the candidates and the Northwest EMS Council of the HVCEO appointments.

APPOINTMENT TO DEP'S HOUSATONIC RIVER DAMAGE RESTORATION PLAN ADVISORY GROUP

A memo in the agenda package from DEP Commissioner Arthur Rocque requesting this appointment was reviewed. A letter from member Arthur Peitler was then distributed, nominating David Hubbard, New Milford's Director of Community Planning and Economic Development, as the HVCEO delegate to the Housatonic River damage restoration plan advisory group.

Art Peitler pointed out in his letter that Mr. Hubbard had been following this issue closely for some years, had attended many meetings on the subject, and has worked to make sure the settlement money is properly utilized. Then on a motion made by

Martin Foncello and a second by Rudy Marconi, it was voted unanimously to notify DEP that David Hubbard of New Milford is the appointee from the HVCEO.

TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT AREA BOARD APPOINTMENTS

As discussed at previous meetings, new transportation plans will be prepared by substate districts known as Transportation Investment Areas (TIA's), composed of multiples of HVCEO and the other 14 planning regions. It was noted that there will be no new major funding for critical regional projects in the Housatonic Valley unless HVCEO participates with the TIA plans.

Current HVCEO appointments to the I-84 TIA are Danbury Planning Director Dennis Elpern as member and Jon Chew of staff as alternate. Current HVCEO appointments to the Coastal TIA are David Hannon as member and Jon Chew as alternate. But as Dave Hannon has resigned from HVCEO and the TIA a vacancy has been created.

Jon Chew proposed that he move up from alternate to member on the Coastal TIA, and that George Walker, a Brookfield resident and Berkshire Corporate Park manager, be appointed as the Coastal TIA Alternate.

He noted that Mr. Walker had been elected by the public to serve as its Coastal Alternate, with Cheryl Reedy as Member, and that he, Mrs. Reedy and Mr. Walker all felt that the arrangement would work well. Then on a motion made by Judy Novachek and a second by Herb Rosenthal, it was voted unanimously to revise the appointments as recommended.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR OFFICERS FOR CALENDAR 2002

There was discussion of this item. Then on a motion made by Donna Tuck and seconded by Marty Foncello, it was voted unanimously to create a nominating Committee consisting of Judy Novachek, Natalie Ketcham and Herb Rosenthal. It was agreed that the Committee meeting would be held just before the November 16 meeting, and that the 10/19 meeting would be cancelled.

UPDATE ON HVEDP ACTIVITIES

HVEDP Director James Bellano then provided an update on HVEDP activities. As for the proposed office move to WCSU, a modified proposal is awaiting resubmission to WCSU. The business outreach process has been active. The proposed date for next year's Housatonic Classic bike race is May 19. A regional business expo is being planned for 2002. HVEDP intern Gena Maloney of U Conn was introduced.

UPGRADING SAFETY AND CAPACITY ON I-84

In review of this issue, J. Chew pointed out that in October of 2000 Conn DOT completed a \$750,000 study of I-84 deficiencies in Danbury, Bethel and Newtown. Such a blueprint is the required first step towards upgrading this vital roadway. The total cost by phase was as follows:

\$ 10,875,000 for I-84 PHASE 1: HIGHEST PRIORITY INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS.
\$ 10,840,000 for I-84 PHASE 2: REMAINING INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS.
\$ 83,180,000 for I-84 PHASE 3: MAJOR CAPACITY ADDITIONS AT INTERCHANGES.
\$163,190,000 for I-84 PHASE 4: ADDITION OF THRU LANES TO THE MAIN LINE.
\$ 268,085,000

The logical first legislative step, vigorous support for the Phase 1 package above by the legislative delegation, was rapid. In February of 2001 a joint letter to legislative leaders and Conn DOT urged attention to and priority for Phase 1 I-84 needs. There

were 16 separate signatories, our entire legislative delegation.

Then in June of 2001 Conn DOT funded Project 34-H051 at \$500,000, for a consultant to complete the design the small projects in I-84 Phase 1.

The next event was when Congressman James Maloney of Danbury announced on 7/10/2001 that federal funding of \$2.3 million has been secured from a House Transportation Appropriations bill for funding for all of the specific Danbury Exit 6 improvements in Phase 1.

However, U.S. Senate action is also needed. Assuming such, federal funds can only cover 80% of costs, so a state matching commitment of 20%, or \$460,000, is still be to obtained for Exit 6.

It was suggested that at the 12/7 legislative breakfast, legislators be asked to continue to work to direct federal and state funds towards the I-84 improvement needs from the recent study.

UPCOMING FEDERAL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM GRANTS

A staff memo dated 7/18/2001 was reviewed on this topic. Under this program, downtown and village areas can be beautified, historic bridges can be rehabilitated, etc. There are competitive grant cycles for this program every few years, with the fourth grant cycle expected to start this winter.

As there is a long lead time to create a project plan, and concepts alone are not fundable, municipalities must start to think about this program soon. Projects that may be formulated include streetscape enhancement for Downtown Bethel, South Main Street in Danbury, additional streetscape in New Fairfield, possibly the Boardman Bridge in New Milford, streetscape for Georgetown Main Street in Redding, and streetscape for Sandy Hook Center in Newtown.

WWW.HVCEO.ORG WEB USAGE AND LINKAGE

Jon Chew made a presentation on the HVCEO web site, now attracting over one hundred users per day. A link to the site by the Savings Bank of Danbury was displayed, informing customers of the many resources about the area available at the HVCEO site.

GIS ZONING UPDATE FOR REGION

Jon Chew presented the results of the zoning map GIS update. The display of this data for several section of the Region was shown, including with topography underlying industrial zoning along Boardman Road in New Milford, the Candlewood Lake watershed boundary in relationship to New Fairfield and Danbury zoning, the Route 6 corridor in Bethel and Newtown, and the Georgetown-Branchville Areas of Ridgefield and Redding.

RESPONSE TO TRAGEDY DUE TO TERRORIST ATTACKS

Members compared their local activities in setting up vigils and healing events, and in helping residents cope with the tragedy. Many are taking steps to involve members of the local Muslim community.

OLD BUSINESS, NEW BUSINESS

The schedule for next year's sexual harassment prevention training was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 P.M.