

**MINUTES OF THE
H V C E O
MEETING OF APRIL 19, 2002
AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL**

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Bethel.....First Selectman Judy Novachek
Bridgewater.....Alternate Robert Brown
Brookfield.....First Selectman Martin Foncello
Danbury.....Mayor Mark Boughton
New Fairfield.....First Selectman Peggy Katkocin
New Milford.....Mayor Robert Gambino
Newtown.....First Selectman Herbert Rosenthal, Chair
Redding.....Absent
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi, Alternate Peter Yanity
Sherman.....First Selectman Arthur von Plachecki

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Kathryn Faraci and Thomas Lavery of Conn DOT, Fred Benedict of Southbury, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Jack Deering of Bethel, Jack Kozuchowski of the Danbury Health Department, Patrick Callahan, Harold Mayer and Larry Marsicano of the Candlewood Lake Authority, John Eustice of Sparta Cycling, Gina Meloni and Jim Bellano of HVEDP, Camille Acquanita and Jonathan Chew of the HVCEO staff.

CALL TO ORDER AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chair Herbert Rosenthal at 12:35 P.M. Public comment was offered by Fred Benedikt, Harold Mayer and Patrick Callahan.

MINUTES FROM MEETINGS OF 2/15/2002 and 3/15/2002

On a motion made by Martin Foncello and seconded by Judy Novachek, the minutes of the meetings of 2/15/2002 and 3/15/2002 were unanimously approved, with the exception of the discussion of Interested Party Status for Schaghticoke Tribal Recognition on page two of the 2/15/2002 minutes, where Ridgefield should have been listed as part of the Housatonic Coalition rather than Redding.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2/2002 AND 3/2002

On a motion made by Mark Boughton and seconded by Judy Novachek, the financial statements for 2/2002 and 3/2002 were unanimously approved.

ANNUAL RESOLUTIONS AND APPROVALS

The following items were presented by staff: 1. Transportation Plan Recertification, 2. Transportation Planning Program Recertification, 3. FY2003 Grant Authorization with Conn DOT, 4. FY2003 Grant Authorization with HART, 5. Grant Reauthorization for Regional Signal Coordination Study, 6. FY2003 Transportation Work Program, and 7. FY2003 Grant Authorization with OPM. On a motion made by Marty Foncello and a second by Judy Novachek, the above items were unanimously approved.

LOCAL ROAD ACCIDENT

REDUCTION PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

A memo from staff concerning applications received was reviewed. The recommendation for the top three applications to be submitted to Conn DOT, in priority order based upon potential accident reduction, are as follows 1) in Danbury on White Street at WCSU between 5th and 8th

Avenues, on New Milford's Littlefield Road, and then on New Milford's Erickson Road. Then on a motion made by Mark Boughton and a second by Robert Gambino, the proposed priorities were unanimously endorsed for submission to Conn DOT.

AMENDMENTS TO THE 2001

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Members reviewed the proposed changes to the 2001 TIP. The most significant change is the addition of \$800,000 to begin preliminary engineering of safety improvements in Brookfield on the busy commercial segment of Route 202 from White Turkey Road north to Route 133. A public informational meeting was held on this project 4/16/2002.

Another change is the inclusion of \$24,000 for handicapped access on Danbury's Still River Greenway. Then on a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Marty Foncello, the proposed changes were unanimously endorsed for submission to Conn DOT.

NEW 2003-2005 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Staff explained that the proposed TIP identifies \$110,000,000 of upcoming transportation improvements for the Region. The heart of the process is for the Region to express its concurrence or disapproval of these projects. A legal notice had been placed to notify the public of this process.

There was discussion of various projects. It was agreed that on the advice of Tom Lavery of Conn DOT, the proposed construction funds of \$10,875,000 for I-84 exit improvements would be removed from the draft and reinserted another month, as this project had not yet had its air quality review and thus could not yet legally be included on the TIP.

Then on a motion made by Bob Gambino and seconded by Marty Foncello, the proposed 2003 TIP and its accompanying resolution were unanimously endorsed, as modified above, for submission to Conn DOT.

FINAL PLANS FOR THE 5/19/2002 HOUSATONIC VALLEY CLASSIC BIKE RACE

Race promoted John Eustice of Sparta Cycling gave an update on the planned 5/19/2002 event. The race is now considered one of the top six in the USA, he said. Lance Armstrong's team is attending this year, a good sign. Also, the women's race is considered the most important in the US this year. Look for the women's race on NBC 30 at 1:30 PM the Sunday after the race, he said.

Continuing, that the talk in the bicycle world is that, due to the scenery, hills, attractive water bodies of the area, etc. the Housatonic Classic is considered to be the only true European style race in this country at present. All proceeds from the Saturday casual ride are to benefit the Red Cross. A discussion followed these remarks.

REPORT ON HOUSATONIC HIGH TECH EXPO

Jim Bellano reported on this joint Danbury Chamber-HVEDP event, held on 2/27/2002 and having an attendance of over 300 people. The total cost to HVEDP was \$16,200. A review was also provided of the visitation to businesses program that is in progress.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION WITH DANBURY'S NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL TERRORISM (NBC) RESPONSE PLAN

A PowerPoint presentation was then made on the topic of the Danbury NBC Plan by Jack Kozuchowski of the Danbury Health Department. He distributed a copy of the Danbury NBC Plan, adopted by the Danbury Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) on 3/19/2002. A check list for initiating a local preparedness plan was also distributed, entitled "Nuclear Response Capabilities- LEPC Self Evaluation."

Mr. Kozuchowski explained that under national legislation, an LEPC was created by each municipality in 1987. Their focus has always been upon preparation for emergency reaction to accidental releases of harmful materials. However, the federal guidance grew to include purposeful releases in recent years, with obvious special urgency after 9/11.

While there are federal and state teams well trained in this emergency response specialty, there will always be a time gap between the terror event and when help can arrive from outside the Greater Danbury-New Milford Area. It is this period that local LEPC's, either through individual efforts or in a cooperative manner, must be the first responders. Needs include having the correct equipment to measure small pox and anthrax, chain of authority if two or more municipalities are hit, coordinated "reverse 911" capabilities, etc.

There was discussion of Mr. Kozuchowski's remarks. It was agreed that terrorism events here would almost certainly have very major intermunicipal impacts. How can the specialized equipment and training in Danbury, which will always have the most sophisticated response due to its greater size and resources, be shared?

It was agreed that a goal to explore would be the possibility of regional funding for expanding Danbury's capability, such that suburban needs for terrorism response are also addressed. The key question is who will plan and administer such a regional mutual aid system.

After further discussion, it was agreed that a first step would be for each municipality outside of Danbury to complete and mail back to HVCEO the twelve page "Nuclear Response Capabilities-LEPC Self Evaluation" as offered by Danbury. The responses could be the base for a regional meeting of HVCEO members with their LEPC coordinators in attendance, this to be followed by a review of coordination options and their cost.

It was agreed that this item will remain on the HVCEO agenda. Mr. Kozuchowski was then thanked for his presentation on this serious issue.

**2001 ECONOMIC EVALUATION OF CANDLEWOOD LAKE,
2002 ACTION PLAN FOR LAKE PRESERVATION, PROJECT CLEAR**

Remarks were then made by Larry Marsicano of the Candlewood Lake Authority regarding these three CLA efforts. The reports and the activities of the CLA were then discussed by members. Bob Gambino praised the proactive stand of the Authority on basinwide water quality issues.

**FEDERAL OPEN SPACE FUNDING FOR
CL&P PROPERTIES NEAR CANDLEWOOD LAKE**

J. Chew reported that Congressman Maloney had called before the meeting on this issue. He will submit legislation to attempt to obtain funding for preservation as open space of CL&P lands that are outside of the FERC regulatory boundary, but closely tied to the aesthetic enjoyment of Candlewood Lake.

An endorsement of this strategy from HVCEO would help his chances, he said, and which will also establish a federal interest in these properties as Lake relicensing proceeds through the FERC review process.

There was discussion of this request. Then on a motion made by Peggy Katkocin and a second by Bob Gambino, it was voted unanimously to endorse the Congressman's effort to secure federal funding for purchase as open space CL&P properties near the Lake, these properties as enumerated in the HVCEO relicensing testimony to FERC.

UPDATE ON ANTI-CASINO ACTIVITIES

An agenda attachment entitled "Overview of HVCEO Anti-Casino Activities" was reviewed. It was then reported that "Interested Party" status had been granted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to

each member of the Housatonic Coalition which includes six members, Bethel, Danbury, New Fairfield, Newtown, Ridgefield and HVCEO.

Brookfield First Selectman Marty Foncello then stated that Brookfield wished to join the coalition. That he was away on military reserve delayed this action, he said. The other members welcomed the inclusion of Brookfield.

Danbury Mayor Boughton reported that he had met with the Putnam County Town Supervisors Association and that they were unanimous in their opposition to a casino in Danbury, with this expected to lead to Interested Party status by Putnam County. Also, that he had met with municipal chief executives in Upper Westchester County where Danbury's anti-casino policy was similarly well received.

The recommendation of the Casino Traffic Impact Study Technical Committee was then presented by staff. Of the three proposals received, that of BF&J of NY, NY is recommended, the same firm that undertook a casino traffic impact study for the South Western Regional Planning Agency in 2001. Funding for the study is to be provided by the following cooperative sponsors:

- \$12,000 from the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
- \$6,000 from the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
- \$5,000 from the Housatonic Valley Tourism Commission
- \$5,000 from the Housatonic Valley Economic Development Partnership

After discussion, and then on a motion made by Marty Foncello and seconded by Mark Boughton, the consultant selection and study funding allocation were unanimously approved.

MEMBERS FORUM: Members then held an informal discussion on a variety of municipal management issues.

OLD BUSINESS, NEW BUSINESS.

It was reported that staff had organized a municipal planning administrators luncheon for 5/10/2002. Also, that the annual sexual harassment prevention training class was scheduled for 5/15/2002.

ADJOURNMENT

Then on a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 P.M.