

H V C E O

MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2002 AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL

Chairman Herbert Rosenthal of Newtown
Vice Chairman Martin Foncello of Brookfield; Secretary-Treasurer Natalie Ketcham of Redding

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Former HVCEO member (1977-1987) Jack Rosenthal of Newtown, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Natalie Serkin of Sherman, Reverend Rick Edwards of the Danbury United Methodist Church, United Way Director June Renzulli, Kim Andy of the CT Office of Workforce Competitiveness, Newtown Development Director Elizabeth Stocker, Maribeth Wojenski of Conn DOT, Richard Schreiner of HART, Holly Burbank of Metropool, Eric Hampton of DECD, Danbury Traffic Engineer Abdul Mohamed, James Bellano of HVEDP, Camille Acquanita, George Blake, Andrew Carrier 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 citizens during the meeting.

MINUTES FROM MEETINGS OF 6/21/2002 AND 8/22/2002

On a motion made by Marty Foncello and seconded by Art von Plachecki, the minutes of the meetings of 6/21/2002 and 8/22/2002 were unanimously approved with the exception of Natalie Ketcham abstaining from this vote.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 6/2002, 7/2002 AND 8/2002

On a motion made by Art von Plachecki and seconded by Bob Gambino, the financial statements for 6/2002, 7/2002 and 8/2002 were unanimously approved.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGER GEORGE BLAKE

Chairman Rosenthal introduced George Blake, the new GIS Manager, who started at HVCEO on 7/8/2002. The Chairman noted that he was selected from over forty applicants for the position. Also that he is a long time resident of Washington, CT, where he has his own GIS services company entitled Digital GeoTechnologies. George has been particularly active in GIS activities with the Housatonic Valley Association and the Town of Washington. Mr. Blake was welcomed with applause and then made some brief remarks.

UPDATED 2002 TRANSPORTATION - AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY STATEMENT

Staff then reviewed how HVCEO transportation projects are evaluated for air quality impact, and the significance of the federal conformity statement required annually. Staff indicated that Conn DOT requested that the statement adopted in June of 2002 be resubmitted, due to a technical flaw in Conn DOT's supporting documentation, since rectified by Conn DOT. Then on a motion made by Rudy Marconi and a second by Bob Gambino, the revised air quality conformity statement was unanimously endorsed.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING IN THE NEW BRIDGEPORT - STAMFORD URBANIZED AREA**

Jon Chew presented the memorandum, stating that it was required by U.S. DOT of all regional transportation planning agencies operating within the same federally defined urbanized area. While the central portions of the Region continue to be part of the Danbury Urbanized Area, the U.S. Census recently placed parts of Newtown, Redding and Ridgefield into the adjacent Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area, itself newly created from the formally separate Bridgeport and Stamford urbanized areas.

It was explained that machine processed density criteria and distance from a core city are used as mapping variables, placing parts of the Housatonic Valley Planning Region for the first time into the Bridgeport-Stamford Urbanized Area. Herb Rosenthal noted that this delineation also related to enforcement of federal Stormwater 2 runoff regulations. Then on a motion made by Bob Brown and seconded by Art von Plachecki, it was voted unanimously to approve HVCEO as a signatory to the interregional memorandum.

**UPCOMING ANNUAL CAMPAIGN BY UNITED
WAY OF NORTHERN FAIRFIELD COUNTY**

Remarks on this topic were made by United Way of Northern Fairfield County Director June Renzulli. Funding is provided for 68 programs that provide basic needs, child day care, health services, mental health and counseling, etc. in the community. She explained that grantees must document how lives were improved rather than just enumerating persons served.

More than 75,000 persons were assisted in some way in the seven communities served during 2001. New United Way initiatives are in middle class housing availability and school readiness. Feedback is welcome anytime, she said, and the United Way will be in touch concerning the set up of municipal employee contribution programs.

**ROLE OF CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS WITHIN
THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT**

Remarks on this topic were made by Kim Andy of the CT Employment and Training Commission, a subunit of the CT Office of Workforce Competitiveness. She explained that the 1998 federal Workforce Investment Act had reformed the nation's job training system and created a role for local chief elected officials. The entire Housatonic Valley Planning Region has been assigned to the Northwest Workforce Investment Area, its traditional orientation.

In addition, chief elected officials in each state subarea have been asked to sign an agreement between themselves calling for continuing review and input to programs offered in the Northwest Region. A discussion followed the presentation.

PRESENTATION OF SANDY HOOK, CT STREETScape PLAN

Newtown's Community Development Director Elizabeth Stocker made a presentation with graphics on this topic. She noted that the new Sandy Hook plan will be a candidate

for FHWA Enhancement Grant funding. The total cost is \$1,250,000, with \$620,000 to be requested from Enhancement funds. Copies of design guidelines were distributed to members.

ENHANCEMENT GRANT PRIORITY SETTING PROCESS

Andy Carrier of the staff addressed this topic. He noted that due to changes in Conn DOT submission dates, a due date for applications to reach HVCEO has been extended. HVCEO can then set funding priorities for applications at either its February or March meetings. He reviewed the agenda attachment documenting the last selection process in 1998.

Mr. Carrier then distributed draft point scoring criteria for the selection process for review, revision and approval at the next meeting. He will be available to attend municipal strategy and information sessions concerning development of applications.

REVIEW OF ANTI-CASINO ACTIVITIES.

The agenda attachments were reviewed, including a) home page for the Council's new "STOP the Casino" web site, accessed from hvceo.org, b) letter from Chairman Rosenthal to Joel Cogen of CCM requesting assistance with communications on statewide anti-casino activities, memorandum from Town of Lewisboro, NY opposing casino development, and d) proposed letter to legislative delegation urging review of Connecticut's gaming laws as a method to stop casinos.

Reverend Rick Edwards of the United Methodist Church of Danbury distributed a flyer announcing an anti-casino meeting scheduled for Danbury in the evening of September 30. The grassroots organization formed is known as CAGE, Coalition Against Gambling Expansion. A general discussion of anti-casino activities followed.

It was agreed that Danbury Corporation Counsel Rick Gottschalk and HVCEO Director Jon Chew will be asked to jointly recommend a revised funding formula and renewal of the agreement for services to be provided by legal firm of Perkins Coie to the Housatonic Coalition. It was agreed that the seven members of the Coalition are Bethel, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, Newtown, Ridgefield and HVCEO.

Chairman Herb Rosenthal announced that Joel Cogen of CCM had agreed to organize a statewide forum for municipal leaders to share strategies for fighting casinos.

Jon Chew was requested to write to Lewisboro, NY to obtain a clarification of their position opposing development on the Carbide/Dow site in Danbury.

After additional discussion Chairman Rosenthal was authorized to write to Governor Rowland to suggest a review of Connecticut's gaming laws as a method to stop additional casinos. Copies of the letter are then to be distributed to state legislators. Copies are also to be distributed to social service agency heads in the region, with a request that they write similar letters to their elected state officials.

STAFF REPORT BY HVEDP DIRECTOR JIM BELLANO

HVEDP Director James Bellano then provided an update on HVEDP activities. First a video presentation of recent TV news stories on the River Trail was shown, then upcoming HVEDP activities were reviewed.

STAFF REPORT BY HVCEO DEPUTY DIRECTOR ANDY CARRIER

BIOTERRORISM PREVENTION PLANNING: Health directors were polled and most are in favor of pooling state grant funds to each for the preparation of municipal plans by one consultant at one time. In this way economies of scale are achieved and each

municipal plan can have regional components and coordination. After discussion it was agreed that Andy should continue with this approach.

NEWTOWN QUEEN STREET PEDESTRIAN STUDY: It was reported that digital maps of the study area are being obtained from Newtown for the study consultant VHB.

RIDGEFIELD ROUTE 35 TRAFFIC STUDY: Negotiations with the highest ranked consultant, Fitzgerald Halliday and Associates, as to study costs are continuing.

STAFF REPORT BY HVCEO DIRECTOR JON CHEW

HYDRO RELICENSING TESTIMONY TO THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION (FERC): It was reported that another phase of the FERC proceeding on the license renewal of the Housatonic Hydro project (Zoar, Lillinonah, Candlewood, Bulls Bridge) transpired, in that FERC had issued its "Notice of application ready for environmental analysis & soliciting comments, recommendations, terms & conditions, & prescriptions."

This phase of the project provides all intervening parties (including HVCEO and several municipalities) the opportunity to propose terms and conditions of the federal license that will be given to the owner of the Lake, Northeast Generating Company. However, as the initial HVCEO comments included such terms and conditions, these were simply resubmitted at this time. The most recent HVCEO filing is available with others at the FERC website www.ferc.gov/ferris.htm, selecting General Search, and filling in the Docket Number with P-2576.

Examples of important HVCEO conditions proposed for the license to NGC include more benefits to the public for allowing private use of public water, such as funding of FERC boundary extensions and conservation easements on adjacent CL&P lands. Also, increasing Lake Authority funding for new responsibilities, with the NGC share at 50% of local budget contributions, define quality of proposed shoreland management planning, place high quality digital maps in the public domain, etc.

ORGANIZATION ON WEB OF RAIL DATA BASE

FOR CONN DOT BRANCH LINE STUDY INITIATION: Staff reviewed a new web section on the hvceo.org site, organizing all rail planning resources into one condensed and updated location. He also reviewed the administrative status of the upcoming \$1 million Conn DOT Danbury Branch improvement study.

ADDITIONAL CENSUS POSTINGS TO WEB SITE: Samples of additional postings were reviewed, including changes in residents income compared to the state 1969-1999, and institutionalized residents by detailed subcategory.

MEMBERS FORUM

- Art von Plachecki reviewed his recent experience with the municipal bond market.
- Eric Hampton of DECD noted the administrative progress of state STEAP grants to Newtown and Redding.
- Lynn Waller noted that an aggregator for energy purchases for citizens was still needed.

ADJOURNMENT

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