

HVCEO

DRAFT MINUTES OF 4/16/2004 MEETING HELD AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL

Chairman Natalie Ketcham of Redding
Vice Chairman Rudy Marconi of Ridgefield, Secretary-Treasurer Peggy Katkocin of New Fairfield

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE

Bethel.....Alice Hutchinson
Bridgewater.....Alternate Robert Brown
Brookfield.....First Selectman Jerry Murphy
Danbury.....Alternate Planning Director Dennis Elpern
New Fairfield.....Alternate Selectman Jim McKeon
New Milford.....Mayor Patricia Murphy
Newtown.....First Selectman Herbert Rosenthal
Redding.....First Selectman Natalie Ketcham, Chairman
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi
Sherman.....First Selectman Andrea O'Connor

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Donna Ramey of the Savings Bank of Danbury and the United Way Housing Opportunities Team, Danbury Mayoral Aide Michael McLachlan, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Viviana Espinoza and Richard Schreiner of HART, Carolann Belforti of JobLinks, John Lyons of Metropool. Also, George Walker, Jeff Silverman, Greg Bollard and Scott Conant from the Lake Lillinonah based group Friends of the Lake, and Harold Mayer of the Candlewood Lake Authority.

Continuing, New Milford LEPC Coordinator Lee Hendrix, Kim Harrison and Maggie Shaw of the Town of Newtown, Robert Tomlinson of the Red Cross, John Vaz of the CT Department of Homeland Security, Kathryn Faraci of Conn DOT, James Bellano of HVEDP, John Eustice of Sparta Cycling, various citizens, and David Hannon and Jonathan Chew of the HVCEO staff.

CALL TO ORDER/ PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Natalie Ketcham 12:35 P.M.

HOMELAND SECURITY EQUIPMENT FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS GRANT PROGRAM

Public comment was offered from John Vaz of the CT Department of Homeland Security. Upcoming responder protection equipment grants will total to a base of \$20,000 per municipality, plus \$3.45 per capita. His Department can either order the equipment, or pass thru the funds directly to the town for the ordering. Either way, standardization of specifications is mandated, he said.

Mr. Vaz recommended that all towns sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with his Department allowing state purchase of the equipment, thus avoiding administration by each municipality. While he favors regionalism, the state goal is to get each municipality fully prepared, and if the process is regionalized then the equipment might not be where it is supposed to be when needed, he said.

There was considerable discussion of this topic. It was decided to hold a special meeting to further discuss the equipment purchase and MOU option on Friday, May 21. Mr. Vaz and his staff along with local emergency managers will be invited.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF 2/20/2004

On a motion made by Andrea O'Connor and seconded by Herb Rosenthal, the minutes of the meeting of 2/20/2004 were unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2/2004 AND 3/2004

On a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Andrea O'Connor, the draft financial statements for 2/2004 and 3/2004 were unanimously approved.

WELCOME TO NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR DAVID HANNON

New Deputy Director David Hannon was introduced by Chairman Ketcham. He began working for HVCEO on 3/1/2004 and replaced Andy Carrier who resigned January 2. It was noted that Mr. Hannon is a former employee, having served the Council with distinction from 1989 to 2002.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

HVEDP Director Jim Bellano gave his report, discussing the Housatonic Valley Classic Bicycle Race set for May 23. Event organizer John Eustice also spoke to this issue, thanking the HVCEO members for their recent \$24,400 in financial support.

PARTNERSHIP WITH UNITED WAY ON HOUSING WEB PAGE

Jon Chew of staff and Donna Ramey of the United Way Housing Opportunities Team made remarks on this topic. While the HVCEO web site was developed to present HVCEO issues, there has not yet been a collaboration with another agency on a regional topic.

Ms. Ramey noted that as the United Way's Housing Opportunities Team is a group of housing oriented volunteers working to address housing issues in the Region, and there is a need to build awareness of resources and opportunities, the proposal is to center the information at the HVCEO web site, as it already serves as a major regional information point. HVCEO staff would manage the technical aspects and United Way volunteers would provide the information.

There was discussion of the proposal. Then on a motion made by Herb Rosenthal and a second by Andrea O'Connor, it was voted unanimously to approve the cooperative web site venture to assist affordable housing efforts.

GRANT RELATED RESOLUTIONS AND APPROVALS

Jon Chew spoke to these items. Included were the: 1)Transportation Unified Planning Work Program, 2) Transportation Planning Program Recertification, 3) Grant Agreement with Conn DOT, 4) Grant Agreement with HART, 5) Resolution to extend the Conn DOT contract for the Route 35 Traffic Study, 6) Transportation Plan - Air Quality Conformity Statement, 7) CT OPM Grant-in-Aid Authorization, 8) SWRPA-HVCEO Transportation Programming Agreement, and 9) Agreement with the CT DPH for Assistance with Bioterrorism Response Planning.

Then on a motion made by Herb Rosenthal and seconded by Alice Hutchinson, the above items were unanimously approved.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

David Hannon reviewed the TIP amendments requested by Conn DOT and attached to the agenda. Then on a motion made by Dennis Elpern and seconded by Andrea O'Connor, the TIP items were unanimously approved.

LOCAL ROAD ACCIDENT PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Dave Hannon reviewed the roadway improvement applications received from Brookfield and

Ridgefield. Rudy Marconi emphasized the intent of the Ridgefield application, which was to avoid new signalization on Route 116. Then on a motion made by Alice Hutchinson and seconded by Jerry Murphy, the two applications were unanimously approved for submission to Conn DOT.

UPDATE ON EMERGENCY PLANNING

Dave Hannon reviewed an agenda attachment on this topic. He noted that the FEMA-CT OEM sponsored regional emergency planning program ends 5/31/2004, while HVCEO involvement with the CT Department of Health regional bioterrorism planning effort will continue.

TIGHT MUNICIPAL BUDGETS FOR FY2005 AS A REGIONAL PROBLEM

Comments on this topic comments were made by Brookfield First Selectman Jerry Murphy and others. A table of the last two budgets and the current proposed budget, as percentage increase, were distributed. Members were asked to complete an additional data questionnaire, distributed at the meeting, as soon as possible.

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENTS TO NORTHWEST CT HAZMAT PLANNING TEAM

The Hazmat planning team, and the need for representatives to it from this Region, were explained by Robert Tomlinson of the Danbury Chapter of the Red Cross. The process will coordinate responders from 45 municipalities without regional HAZMAT service.

This large area would be divided into manageable subsections. These would be a northern Torrington area, extending westerly to the New York Line, a Waterbury area, and third a Greater Danbury area. It was agreed that HAZMAT and the proposed appointments will be discussed at the May 21st meeting.

JOBLINKS BUS SERVICE TO WORK

An overview of this program was given by Carolann Belforti of JobLinks, Richard Schreiner of HART and John Lyons of Metropool. Service has been provided since 1999 for those coming off of public assistance and entering the work force. The assistance goes beyond transit service, to fuel and car repairs, on a case by case basis.

Social service agencies are able to access all Joblinks brochures on the web site, joblinksct.com. The special bus route services in the Danbury area were described in detail. The speakers were then thanked for their courtesy in providing an informative presentation.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION BY FRIENDS OF LAKE LILLINONAH

A new advocacy group for Lake Lillinonah, the Friends of the Lake, made a PowerPoint presentation on their activities. This was led by Brookfield resident George Walker, with Jeff Silverman and Gregg Bollard of Bridgewater and Scott Conant of Newtown. There are many Lake related activities, including a June 5th cleanup, planned. The group's web site is www.savingthelake.org.

LYME DISEASE ISSUES

Herb Rosenthal introduced Town of Newtown staffers Kim Harrison and Maggie Shaw, who addressed municipal practices on this issue. Generally the size of deer populations correlates with disease rates, they said.

Rudy Marconi noted that Ridgefield has 400-500 cases per year. The inadequacies in tracking the disease, including the elimination of the requirement to submit copies of lab reports to the state,

were also discussed. Natalie Ketcham will contact an additional speaker on this topic.

PERMIT COORDINATION AROUND CANDLEWOOD LAKE

On a motion made by Jerry Murphy and a second by Bob Brown, it was voted unanimously to add this item to the agenda. Sherman First Selectman Andrea O'Connor addressed the coordination issue. She noted that two or more municipal permits are usually required for property impact changes.

These are municipal zoning and wetlands permits, and also a permit from Northeast Generating Company (NGC) as the changes affect its property. The problem being experienced is that residents obtain only the NGC permit, proceed to make the property changes, all without having taken the time to obtain the needed local permits.

Thus some work is not in accordance with local laws, often by exceeding the NGC permit conditions, and is not reviewed by local staff or the CLA staff. But the local staff inherits the problem of enforcement and mitigation.

It was recommended that NGC be requested to delay issuing permits until evidence is provided that either local permits have been obtained, or the resident provides evidence from town officials that permits are not needed. In other words, that NGC permits be last in the chain, not first, as the current position is causing problems to the municipalities.

There was then a general discussion by the mayors and first selectmen of this issue. It was noted that in many instances it is local practice of long standing for one permit to be contingent upon another, this to avoid coordination problems as is currently the case with NGC permits.

The on a motion made by Alice Hutchinson and a second by Jerry Murphy, it was voted unanimously to recommend that NGC be requested to more fully coordinate its land use permits with the municipalities around Candlewood Lake, such that it is the last permit given, rather than the first.

OLD BUSINESS

Jerry Murphy of Brookfield will distribute copies of a local permit fee survey recently completed by Brookfield municipal staff. Chairman Ketcham reminded members of the Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Class to be given by Cheryl Reedy at 9 AM on 5/21/04 in Brookfield Town Hall.

DISCUSSION OF APPEAL OF SCHAGHTICOKE RECOGNITION

As this topic dealt with the Council's legal strategy as interveners in the recognition of the Schaghticoke Tribal Nation by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, there was a vote to enter executive session. This was accomplished by a motion made by Herb Rosenthal and a second by Rudy Marconi, all aye.

During the executive session the appeals process was discussed. Then on a motion made by Alice Hutchinson and seconded by Rudy Marconi, it was voted unanimously to end the executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 P.M.