

**MINUTES OF THE 6/18/2009
HVCEO MEETING
AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL**

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES ATTENDING

Bethel.....First Selectman Robert Burke
Bridgewater.....Alternate Robert Brown
Brookfield.....First Selectman Robert Silvaggi
Danbury.....Alternate Chief of Staff Wayne Sheppard
New Fairfield.....First Selectman John Hodge
New Milford.....Mayor Patricia Murphy, Chairman
Newtown.....First Selectman Joseph Borst
Redding.....First Selectman Natalie Ketcham
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi, Secretary-Treasurer
Sherman.....First Selectman Andrea O'Connor, Vice Chairman

OTHERS ATTENDING

Karen Gaudian of the Ridgefield Lyme Disease Task Force, HART Service Development Director Richard Schreiner and HART Transportation Planner Ann Katis, Carla Iezzi and Paul Corrente of Conn DOT, Newtown Probate Judge Margo Hall, New Milford Fire Marshal Karen Facey, Danbury Deputy Fire Marshal Jordan Leach, Conn DOT consultants Thomas Mangan, Thomas Ryan and Keith Anderson of Close, Jensen and Miller, Danbury Housing Partnership Chairman Mark Nolan, Andrew Gorosko of the Newtown Bee, Newtown Director of Public Works Fred Hurley, Newtown Land Use Director George Benson, Newtown Assistant Land Use Director Rob Sibley, Ann Marie Mitchell of Newtown, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Ridgefield residents Ellen Burns, Sara DaSilva, Eric Kristofferson, Tom Elliott and Peter Stewart, Patrice Gillespie of the CT Sierra Club, and from the HVCEO staff Camille Acquanita, David Hannon and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER/ PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Patricia Murphy at 12:35 PM, after which attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Public comments was made by several citizens concerning today's agenda items, with additional draft plan comment deferred to that agenda slot.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS AND REPORTS

--- Minutes from 5/21/2009: On a motion made by Andrea O'Connor and seconded by Wayne Sheppard the minutes of the meeting of 5/21/2009 were unanimously approved.

--- Financial Statement for 5/2009: On a motion made by Andrea O'Connor and seconded by Robert Burke the financial statement for 5/2009 was unanimously approved.

--- Annual Budget for FY2010: On a motion made by Andrea O'Connor and seconded by John Hodge the annual budget for FY2010 was unanimously approved.

--- Authorization to apply for DEMHS funding: Dave Hannon reviewed upcoming CT DEMHS grants available, requested approval to make the applications, and for authorization for the chairman or the executive director to sign resulting agreements. On a motion made by John Hodge and seconded by Joe Borst the authorizations were unanimously approved.

--- ***Nondiscrimination Certification for DEP Grant:*** Dave Hannon explained that board endorsement of the certificate was requested by CT DEP as part of the Sherman hazard mitigation planning grant. On a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Bob Burke the certification was unanimously approved.

--- ***Update on Alliance for Sensible Airspace Planning:*** Alliance Chairman Rudy Marconi stated that the U.S. Court of Appeals for D.C. had rejected the Connecticut lawsuit intending to block the Federal Aviation Administration's proposed rerouting of Metro New York air traffic over Connecticut. An appeal is pending. The Alliance's parallel strategies were then summarized.

--- ***Communications on draft Shoreline Management Plan:*** John Hodge gave a report on this topic, with four of the five lakeside municipalities supporting the draft plan.

--- ***Federal Lyme and Tick-Borne Diseases Prevention, Education and Research Act of 2009, H.R. 1179:*** A request for support of this federal legislation was made by Jon Chew and Karen Gaudian on behalf of the HVCEO Tick Borne Illness Task Force. After discussion and on a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and seconded by Bob Burke, HVCEO support was voted unanimously, with Chairman Murphy to notify Connecticut's federal elected officials by letter. As for the state legislation offering physicians additional legal protections for treating long term Lyme sufferers, staff was directed to send a letter to Governor Rell requesting that she sign that bill.

--- ***2009 Update of 1997 Regional Growth Plan:*** Several citizens spoke of their concerns on the Ridgefield portion of the plan, the extent of growth designation in the Routes 7 and 35 area. Rudy Marconi reviewed the history of town planning in that area and Jon Chew reported that the draft map designation portrayed the latest thinking of local land use officials. Rudy Marconi left the meeting at this point. There was lengthy public input. After further discussion and on a motion made by John Hodge and seconded by Robert Burke, the Council voted unanimously to adopt the draft Housatonic Valley Regional Conservation and Development Plan as presented, to be effective 7/1/2009.

--- ***Transportation Improvement Program Amendments:*** Dave Hannon reviewed the amendments requested by Conn DOT and HVCEO staff. These were for a) revisions to funding levels for New Fairfield's HART shuttle commuter lot and Town Center Enhancement Project, b) additional funds for the Danbury Branch Centralized Train Control system, c) replacement of HART bus fare boxes, d) automatic vehicle location equipment for HART buses, and e) intersection improvements and signalization of Routes 107 and Route 57, and also Route 107 at Main Street, both in Redding. A resolution to this effect was presented. Then on a motion made by Andrea O'Connor and seconded by Joe Borst the TIP amendments were unanimously approved.

--- ***Conn DOT Local Road Accident Reduction Grant Applications:*** Dave Hannon reported that two applications had been received, one from Brookfield at the intersection of Pocono Road and Silvermine Road and the other from New Milford for the intersection of Bennitt Street, Housatonic Avenue and Wellsville Avenue. The Council endorsed these applications and their submission to Conn DOT.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS UPDATE

Dave Hannon reviewed the results of the recent DEMHS 5 areawide meeting at which grant decisions were ratified for the program year. Ongoing web hosting fees for the regional video conferencing system will now be federally funded, with special credit to Danbury's Emergency Management Director Paul

Estefan. Attendance at an upcoming workshop on the legal liabilities of municipal leaders declaring emergencies was also discussed.

PROPOSED REGIONAL COALITION FOR FIRESETTER INTERVENTION

Remarks on this topic were made by New Milford Fire Marshal Karen Facey, accompanied by a hand out. The frightening national statistic is that 74% of arson fires are set by children.

Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Programs currently operating in Danbury and New Milford are assessment and educational tools to reduce the number of juvenile fires. An integrated approach is taken with referrals from fire and police departments, courts, mental health professions, etc., she said.

Trained screeners interview child firesetters and their families as a key to prevent recurrence. The constant problem is that two trained screeners are needed on each visit to a child, as the firesetter intervention visit may not include the fire marshal that had determined the cause of the fire, thus child interview staffing is always short.

As present municipalities need to borrow trained screeners from each other in order to have the second person present, the presence of two persons always the minimum requirement. As Danbury has the most trained child screeners, the City has graciously been bearing the regional load and loaning its screeners freely.

Fire Marshal Facey's proposal is for a no cost regional approach to allow for greater communications between municipalities on this topic, and to encourage the 16 hours of training for additional certified screeners, and then their regional sharing for the child visits. She proposed that this cooperative volunteer process run by itself via email and occasional face to face meetings.

Ms. Facey concluded that this activity will improve the firesetter intervention process in each community as the necessary minimum of two screeners will be more readily available. The goal is one trained person per municipality followed by sharing.

Discussion followed. It was agreed that the written proposal should continue to evolve over the summer with this item to be placed on the September meeting agenda for consideration.

DISCUSSION OF REGIONALIZING PROBATE COURTS

The realignment of the probate court districts, as required by a new state law, was then discussed. Joe Borst distributed the map and table resulting from the judge's statewide meeting on 6/11. It was decided that this topic needed more extensive discussion time than available at this meeting and that a workshop devoted solely to this topic would be scheduled for Monday, June 22 at noon.

HAWLEYVILLE SOLID WASTE TRANSFER STATION

Joe Borst and George Benson spoke to this topic. The Housatonic Railroad Company (HRR) in Newtown's Hawleyville section wishes to license its presently existing solid waste rail transfer facility as a volume reduction plant. At present HRR transfers construction and demolition material and other waste commodities into rail cars.

An application newly before CT DEP seeks a volume reduction permit for solid waste as defined by the Clean Railroads Act of 2008 including construction and demolition debris, but also industrial waste including contaminated soils and other solid waste.

The issue was discussed at some length. Due to federal regulatory involvement key aspects of municipal authority over this proposal remain unclear. Members agreed that both the Town and HVCEO should be concerned about potential contamination of area soil and water due to this lack of nearby governmental oversight and enforcement.

Further, a key regional concern is that Greater Danbury's long standing solid waste plan, with Danbury as the acknowledged center for regional waste transfer, is put at risk.

After additional discussion it was moved by Wayne Sheppard and seconded by Andrea O'Connor that Newtown staff and HVCEO staff jointly formulate a draft letter to CT DEP stating opposition to the proposal, with the text to circulate to members for review prior to its completion.

INITIATION OF INTERSTATE 84 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Paul Corrente of Conn DOT introduced this topic, after which Conn DOT consultant Thomas Ryan of Close, Jensen and Miller made a PowerPoint presentation. The EIS is needed to enable additional federal investment in the I-84 transportation corridor, he said.

A project milestone schedule was presented and a technical committee of local officials and stake holders will be formed. After brief discussion the visitors were thanked for their presentation.

UPDATE ON PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Danbury Housing Partnership Chairman Mark Nolan then spoke to the Council. He reviewed a variety of current services and program to prevent homelessness, serve the homeless and promote affordable housing. Problems are severe at present due to foreclosures he said, with a family with children in Brookfield recently made homeless and another family with children in Bethel falling to the same status due to foreclosure.

A handout documenting housing activities and services was provided. Mr. Nolan thanked members for their past local and regional efforts. Partnership member Wayne Sheppard invited HVCEO members to the annual Danbury Housing Partnership breakfast planned for October 1.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 P.M.