

**MINUTES OF THE 10/15/2009
HVCEO MEETING
AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL**

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES ATTENDING

Bethel.....Absent
Bridgewater.....First Selectman William Stuart, Alternate Robert Brown
Brookfield.....First Selectman Robert Silvaggi
Danbury.....Alternate Planning Director Dennis Elpern
New Fairfield.....Absent
New Milford.....Absent
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 IN ATTENDANCE

Wilton First Selectman William Brennan, Thomas Drejer of the CT Center for Advanced Technology, Gary Kozak of Community Health Charities of New England, Executive Director Floyd Lapp of the South Western Regional Planning Agency, Richard Schreiner and Ann Katis of HART, Eric Hampton of CT DECD, SWRPA board member Henry Boucher of Wilton, Carla Iezzi of Conn DOT, Dirk Perrefort of the News Times, Robert Kenny of CT DEMHS, municipal assessors from Brookfield, Newtown and Redding, and from the HVCEO staff Camille Acquanita, David Hannon and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER / PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Andrea O'Connor at 12:35 PM, after which attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Public comment was deferred on Route 7 issues in favor of combining it with that agenda item. There was no oral input on the draft TIP; draft TIP written comment was included with the agenda packet.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

--- Minutes from 9/17/2009: On a motion made by Joseph Borst and seconded by Rudy Marconi the minutes of the meeting of 9/17/2009 were unanimously approved.

--- Financial Statement for 9/2009: On a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and seconded by Dennis Elpern the financial statement for 9/2009 was unanimously approved.

--- Transportation Improvement Program and Related Resolutions: Dave Hannon review the draft TIP and the resolution of TIP approval, written public comment, TIP project list and three related federally required resolutions. There was then a discussion of major funding cuts to Danbury's transportation projects and the upcoming appeal to Conn DOT by Mayor Boughton. Then on a motion made by Robert Silvaggi and a second by Joseph Borst the TIP with accompanying notes and staff direction was unanimously approved.

Then on a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and a second by Rudy Marconi the three TIP related resolutions (Conformity with Clean Act for Limiting Ozone, Conformity with Clean Act

for Limiting Fine Particulate Matter, Transportation Planning Program Self-Certification) were unanimously approved.

--- Proposed Membership Dues for 2011: Jon Chew reviewed an agenda attachment providing background on past dues levels and cost per member options for a 0% dues increase and alternatively a 2% increase. There was initial discussion, including a motion, second, and vote that failed to approve the 2%. Discussion then continued, noting that a 0% increase for all line items would be the norm for Ridgefield and other towns. Then on a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and a second by William Stuart it was voted unanimously to set FY2011 HVCEO membership dues at 0% increase.

--- Nominating Committee for Annual Election: On a motion made by Bob Silvaggi and seconded by Rudy Marconi it was voted unanimously that the Nominating Committee be composed of Natalie Ketcham and John Hodge, to report back at the January.

--- Proposed Legislative Agenda Topics for 12/3: Members reviewed the agenda attachment listing topics for the upcoming annual breakfast meeting with legislators.

ROUTE 7 CORRIDOR PLANNING DISCUSSION

Rudy Marconi stated his position opposing additional planning for the Route 7 Expressway. He noted that after much past study, for good reasons the expressway proposal had been removed from the Conn DOT State Transportation Plan and the HVCEO Regional Transportation Plan. He sees it as wasteful to continue with planning efforts for this deleted project. Also, that planning and implementation for corridor transit projects should continue and not be lessened by diverting time and funds to the outdated expressway idea.

Wilton First Selectman William Brennan then provided public comment on the Route 7 Expressway issue. He stated that the cost of the Expressway proposal was so great that state and federal governments could not possibly support its construction. Also that while the Norwalk State Senator advocates construction the impacts all fall outside of his district. Mr. Brennan stated that the current widening process accompanied by a Danbury Branch Rail Line service upgrade should first be completed and evaluated for their travel benefits. Also that he appreciates HVCEO's support of Wilton on the Route 7 issue.

Public comment was also made under this agenda heading by Dr. Floyd Lapp, Executive Director of the South Western Regional Planning Agency explaining his agency's position regarding the proposed Danbury to Norwalk Route 7 Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Study. This fresh effort would assess all relevant transportation modes such as rail, bus, jitney, additional widening, expressway construction, etc. at one time and in a comprehensive manner. This effort is not solely to gain advantage for the expressway option, he said. A discussion followed.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Bob Kenney gave his report, noting progress with the regional emergency response plan, completion of FY2008 Memorandums of Agreement for the funding process with municipalities, availability of web emergency operations center management training, a meeting of Region 5 municipal emergency management directors with DECD Commissioner

Boynton, certification of annual local emergency operations plans updates, notice of upcoming military flights flights, and other matters. A series of comments followed.

MULTI-TOWN BIDDING OF REVALUATION CONTRACTS

There was considerable discussion of this newly enabled option for bidding the revaluation process. It was reported that the new state authorizing legislation was tailored just for a group of very small northeastern CT towns. There were examples given by assessors of other joint efforts where the disadvantages outweighed the advantages.

Rudy Marconi quoted from a detailed memo by Ridgefield Assessor Al Garzi, predicting that increasing the size and complexity of the revaluation process would lead to significant problems. Mr. Garzi also noted that on 10/1/2009 the Fairfield County Assessor's Association concluded for this issue that there will be no savings and the quality and accountability of revaluations would be compromised. Discussion followed.

ASSISTANCE FROM THE CT CENTER FOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

A presentation was then made by the Center's Energy Specialist Thomas Drejer concerning assistance available to municipalities in the use of fuel cell technology for municipal governmental buildings. A handout with details was provided. His legislatively chartered non-profit Center will provide a cost-benefit assessment of fuel cell options. The local example of Weston, CT, tying municipal buildings together for use of this technology, was cited. A discussion followed.

SERVICES OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH CHARITIES OF NEW ENGLAND

Remarks were made by organizational President Gary Kozak, who also distributed a handout with program details. The group is a federation of the largest health related charities. It is distinct from parallel United Way coalitions which are primarily social service charities.

Goals and services were explained. The follow-up will be a request by Mr. Kozak to each municipal leader for access to municipal employees to explain the giving process. Ridgefield is the first cooperating town in this area. Questions and answers followed.

I-84 TOLL PLAZA STUDY

Jon Chew made a PowerPoint presentation on this topic and copies of the completed report were distributed. This research summarizes Greater Danbury I-84 tolling options formulated by the recent statewide toll report, critiques that report's impact statement and defines additional traffic, economic and social impacts. Legislators are to receive copies of the report.

ADJOURNMENT

Members agreed that with little pending business the scheduled November 19 meeting would be cancelled, the next Council meeting to be the annual legislative breakfast on December 3.

Members thanked retiring board members Joseph Borst of Newtown and Robert Silvaggi of Brookfield for their regional service. There being no further business, on a motion made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 2:15.