

VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Railroad Station, 12 Main St., Derby, CT 06418

Ph. (203)735-8688 _ Fax (203)735-8680

MEETING NOTICE

Regular Meeting Valley Council of Governments

Wednesday, April 15, 2009

(postponed from 4/8/09)

11:30 a.m.

VCOG Offices

AGENDA

(Pledge of Allegiance)

1. Public Session
2. Acceptance of Minutes of 3/11/09 Regular Meeting *(Enc.)*
3. Treasurer's Report *(Enc.)*
4. Approval of VCOG Resolutions for FTA Capital: *(Enc.)*
 - a) ConnDOT Authorizing Resolution re: Capital Projects
 - b) Non-Discrimination Certification
 - c) Incumbency Certificate
 - d) FTA Authorizing Resolution-Sec. 5307 Capital Projects
 - e) General Authorization for Ex. Director to Accept Funds
5. Update on State Budget, State Grant-in-Aid/VCOG *(Draft letter to be emailed)*
6. Update on ARRA-Federal Stimulus Projects
 - a) Section 1511 Certifications – David Elder

Note: A light lunch will be provided at 11:30 a.m.

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
Wednesday, April 15, 2009
at VCOG Offices**

Persons Present:

Mayor James Della Volpe, Ansonia
Mayor Anthony Staffieri, Derby
1st Selectman Robert Koskelowski, Seymour
David Fink, Partnership for Strong Communities
Rick Dunne, VCOG Staff
Clare Falcha “
David Elder “
Matt Fulda “
Jan Jadach “

Chairman Koskelowski called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was said. The Chairman then asked if anyone wished to speak during the public session. No one spoke and the public session was closed.

Minutes – The minutes of the 3/11/09 VCOG regular meeting were accepted.

Motion: By Anthony Staffieri; Second: James Della Volpe; Vote: Unanimous

Treasurer’s Report – Rick Dunne indicated he would be glad to answer any questions regarding the Treasurer’s Report and said that we are in relatively good shape. There were no questions.

Approval of VCOG Resolutions for FTA Capital –

(a) ConnDOT Authorizing Resolution re: Capital Projects. Rick indicated that this was a resolution authorizing the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman to act on behalf of VCOG in negotiating and executing all appropriate agreements with ConnDOT for the purpose of obtaining financial assistance for the Implementation of Capital Projects. David Elder indicated that VCOG is the recipient of all of the FTA funds for the Valley Transit District. It was always a problem for the State to give us money for capital that was going to be at the VTD. Now with this agreement, it will make it easier when going through the review process for capital projects.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To approve ConnDOT Authorizing Resolution re: Capital Projects; Second: Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous.

(b) Non-Discrimination Certification. (c) Incumbency Certificate. Rick explained that these two certifications are required for the execution of the agreement with ConnDOT re: Capital Projects.

Motion: By Anthony Staffieri; To approve the Non-Discrimination Certification and the Incumbency Certificate; Second: James Della Volpe; Vote: Unanimous.

(d) FTA Authorizing Resolution-Section 5307 Capital Projects. Rick explained that this is the same program but this resolution is directly with FTA, not with ConnDOT. Two different contracts but the same pass-through of funds.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To approve FTA Authorizing Resolution-Section 5307 Capital Projects; Second: Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous.

(e) General Authorization for Executive Director to Accept Funds. Rick indicated that this is a general authorization for him to sign any documents to accept state and federal assistance that the board has already approved and applied for.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To approve General Authorization for Executive Director to Accept Funds; Second: Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous.

Rick Dunne then handed out another resolution and said this was the one for the Rt. 67 improvements.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To place the Rt. 67 resolution on the table. Second: Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous.

David Elder then explained that this was for the \$800,000 for spot improvements from Klarides Village down to the Franklin Avenue intersection. It will be minimal design, mostly construction. They will go out to quality-based selection for consultants to do the work. We will have a selection committee. The money should really get some work done. There is nothing major. There will be some lane reconfigurations, maybe some widening in front of the Health District offices, if possible, but definitely some turn movements. In answer to a question from Chairman Koskelowski, David said that we should be able to start consultant selection this month. It'll be two months before we get someone on board and possibly work could start in a year.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To approve the Authorizing Resolution re: the Rt. 67 Agreement; Second: Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous.

Since the VCOG Secretary, Mayor Lauretti, was not present, a motion was required to appoint an Acting Secretary for today to sign the resolutions.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To appoint Anthony Staffieri as Acting Secretary; Chairman Koskelowski stepped down from Chair to second the motion; Vote: Unanimous.

Update on State Budget, State Grant-in-Aid/VCOG – Rick indicated he did not send the Mayors a draft letter on this yet as he indicated he would. This is specifically regarding the funding the 15 RPOs receive. The Governor cut it to zero which is about a \$65,000 cut for this agency. What it amounts to is a million dollars that becomes a hidden unfunded mandate because the towns statewide are still liable to do the work that this grant pays for. This grant pays for items like land use referrals, all of the items that go before the Regional Planning Commission, plans of conservation and development, etc. The legislature in draft only put \$200,000 of the million back. Rick said he drafted a letter but did not distribute it because it is sort of an ongoing process. He just wanted to bring the Mayors up to speed. He will email them in a week or so with a draft letter, get their comments on it and then send it up to the Governor and the legislature just basically taking a position on the funding issue. We are trying to work through some of things and reach a compromise with the legislature so it may not be necessary.

Update on ARRA – Federal Stimulus Projects – Rick passed out a draft letter. He said at the last MPO meeting, Mayors Lauretti and Finch asked that we draft this letter regarding the distribution of funds under the stimulus program for primarily transportation. We received comments from Mayor Lauretti and the GBRPA CEOs and made some minor changes to it. He asked the Mayors take a look at it and see if they have any changes or comments.

Rick then gave general update on the stimulus. The money is released. The state can draw it down at any time. We have some disturbing news though. We met with town engineers and the state. We are all doing road paving, and, basically, they are taking \$200,000 off the top of our \$2.4 million--\$50,000 per town. Chairman Koskelowski indicated that he just sent out a letter to the Governor regarding the stimulus package. Rick said DOT is taking this money to review the towns' paving projects before they go to bid. All we are submitting are cross sections and bid specs. They could review these in five minutes. They could run it through their vendors-in-place program and we could just select vendors under that program. Instead, because they have committed the benchmark amount of funds that need to be expended in the first 90 days to the big projects, they have met the federal benchmarks. The 30% they gave to the MPOs is the legal minimum they could give us. Basically, they are telling us we won't be able to pave this year, given their timeline for review and approval. Chairman Koskelowski said he is very upset because with the economy the way it is, Seymour cut all their infrastructure projects this year to try to keep taxes as low as possible and they were depending on this. Rick continued that he is worried about cost estimates. There is so much milling and paving going on with the stimulus money, so by having to wait until next year, we will see prices go up significantly.

David Elder then explained the Section 1511 certifications. He said this is related to ARRA. It is what the federal government and the DOT will be asking the towns to sign on their town letterhead and return to the VCOG staff to submit to DOT. It will then be put on the federal website. This certifies that the town is accepting federal money to do the ARRA project. The state first has to obligate the money on the State TIP. When that happens, the state will fill these out and send them to us. We will then send them out to the towns.

David Fink from the Partnership for Strong Communities then asked to say a few words. He reminded the CEOs that he spoke to them last year regarding the HOMEConnecticut program. This has been very successful around the state. Over 60 towns are planning high density zones. They are holding two workshops on May 14th at Housatonic Community College and May 15th at the Lyceum Resource and Conference Center in Hartford. They are bringing in a national expert on how to make density look nice. These workshops are for CEOs, town planners, etc. Chairman Koskelowski indicated that this is a program that wants to put more homes in a smaller area and he has a lot of objection to that.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark A. Lauretti,
Secretary