

# VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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## MEETING NOTICE

### Regular Meeting Valley Council of Governments

Wednesday, September 9, 2009

11:30 a.m.

VCOG Offices

## AGENDA

(Pledge of Allegiance)

1. Public Session
2. Acceptance of Minutes of 8/12/09 Regular Meeting *(Enc.)*
3. Treasurer's Report *(Enc.)*
  - (a) Discussion of Budget Impacts from ARRA BRLF *(Enc.)*
4. Presentation on Fuel Cells for Municipalities – Tom Drejer, CT Center for Advanced Technology *(Enc.)*
5. Discussion on Route 8, Exit 11 Project, Shelton
6. Update on Selection Process for Local Road Projects – David Elder
7. Update on GIS Parcel Update and Internet Development Project – Matt Fulda *(Enc.)*
8. Executive Session – Atty. Thomas Welch re: R. Eigen Request

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

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
Wednesday, September 9, 2009  
at VCOG Offices**

**Persons Present:**

Mayor James Della Volpe, Ansonia  
Mayor Anthony Staffieri, Derby  
1st Selectman Robert Koskelowski, Seymour  
David LeVasseur, Undersecretary, Office of Policy & Management  
Dimple Desai, Office of Policy & Management  
Tom Drejer, CT Center for Advanced Technology  
Atty. Thomas Welch  
Sheila O'Malley, City of Derby  
Jodie Mozdzer, Valley Independent Sentinel  
Rick Dunne, VCOG Staff  
Clare Falcha    “  
David Elder     “  
Matt Fulda     “

Chairman Koskelowski called the meeting to order at 11:43 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 8/12/09 VCOG regular meeting were accepted.

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

**Treasurer's Report** – Rick Dunne presented the Treasurer's Report to the board which showed that we are currently running a cash surplus of approximately \$58,000. That is mainly due to the full early and on time payment of municipal dues. Rick thanked the CEOs for their timely payments. The expenses for contractors were running very far ahead and Rick said that he would explain that under item (a) Discussion of Budget Impacts from ARRA BRLF. Rick identified that there were no line items other than contractors which were out of proportion to where they should be at this time of the year. Rick entertained questions from the board regarding the current budget. The board members had no questions.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To accept Treasurer's report as presented; Second: Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous

**Discussion of Budget Impacts from ARRA BRLF** – Rick presented the draft document that he and Clare Falcha prepared for board review. Rick acknowledged that it has been the policy of the VCOG in the past not to amend the budget mid-year; however, Rick felt that since we had a substantial deviation from what was anticipated, mainly due to the Recovery Act funding, that they would prepare an amended schedule and recommend to the VCOG Board that they adopt the amended schedule at next month's meeting. Rick went on to discuss the primary items within the proposed amended budget that would be affected primarily on the revenue side. Federal revenue was budgeted at \$153,000, and we are now predicting \$940,000 to be expended due to the various Recovery Act funding sources. The proposed amended budget reflects the substantial increase in Federal revenue and a substantial increase in both contractor costs and funding for wages of the Environmental Planner. Rick explained that the Environmental Planner

is paid on an hourly basis and, therefore, only paid as the program money permits. Rick also reported that in the recently passed State budget, the State Grant-in-Aid was funded at a much-reduced level. For budget purposes, we had adopted a budget that had no money anticipated from SGIA. Rick then questioned Undersecretary LeVasseur, who was present at this meeting, as to whether he knew the funding amount for VCOG under the recently adopted State budget. Mr. LeVasseur responded that OPM would be sending out notices but that his recollection was that VCOG would be receiving approximately \$11,000. Rick indicated to the Mayors that this draft would be amended when presented to them in October to include, if it was known, the actual amount of SGIA funding to come to the Agency or, if we have not received official notice, that we would budget \$10,000 for SGIA. The other costs associated with expense line items, other than the two enumerated—contractors and Environmental Planner—are not substantially altered from the original budgeted items.

Chairman Koskelowski then questioned Mr. Dunne, indicating that if it has not been our policy in the past to adopt an amended budget, why would we want to do it now. Rick went on to explain that due to the large differences in funding levels and the fact that expenditure items would be significantly over-expended, he felt it was proper and appropriate to adopt the amended budget as soon as possible and recommended that it be placed on the agenda for a vote at the October meeting. Chairman Koskelowski was satisfied with the answer and it was agreed that the item would be placed on the October agenda for further discussion and possible vote.

**Discussion w/OPM re: ARRA Program and Davis-Bacon** – Undersecretary LeVasseur addressed the VCOG Board and explained that he had been designated by the Governor as the implementing point person for the State for the Recovery Act Program. Mr. LeVasseur passed out a document that showed where a number of the funding sources were being allocated by the State from stimulus to the projects. There was discussion between the CEOs and Mr. LeVasseur about several of the program items, particularly the Clean Water money. Mayor Della Volpe specifically asked about the Clean Water funding and the impact to the Ansonia sewage treatment plant project which is underway. Mr. LeVasseur could not specifically answer about the Ansonia situation. Other items were reviewed and discussed. Rick Dunne asserted that the programs like Clean Water, while they were funded under the Recovery Act and were intended for shovel-ready projects, still had to go through the normal DEP vetting process and waiting list. Therefore, the net effect was that projects that were on the waiting list were advanced with Stimulus funds moving the entire program forward vs. where it would have been without the Stimulus funds. The regular process was still being observed for rating and ranking project priorities.

Undersecretary LeVasseur introduced Dimple Desai who would be our primary contact person for VCOG for the ARRA Program with the State. Rick asked if Dimple was also assigned to the GBRPA area. He responded that he was. Undersecretary LeVasseur then went on to remind the CEOs that Davis-Bacon wage rate training was being sponsored and held by OPM on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>. He strongly urged each CEO to have at least one municipal representative there for the training. Rick advised that Arthur Bogen would be attending on behalf of VCOG in that VCOG had significant responsibilities with Davis-Bacon with regard our direct Recovery Act funding as well as state programs. Rick explained to the CEOs that they had various projects that were funded directly to them that would require wage rate compliance. Rick mentioned the dam project in Seymour. Chairman Koskelowski responded that the money was not given to Seymour; it was given to DEP to do the project. DEP has the regional authority. Rick further

explained that there would be reporting requirements with Davis-Bacon connected with the road paving projects funded by DOT directly to the towns under the Stimulus program. First Selectman Koskelowski asked whether David Elder would be attending the Davis-Bacon training. Rick responded that we had not planned to send David for training since we were sending Arthur. The First Selectman directed that David attend the training session and perform the Davis-Bacon wage compliance work for the towns on road projects. David agreed that he would register that day.

Undersecretary LeVasseur further went on to discuss various other reporting requirements under the Recovery Act which were much more stringent aside from Davis-Bacon. Quarterly progress reports are required among other means of compliance. Undersecretary LeVasseur then took questions from the CEOs and a discussion ensued about some of the implementing and reporting requirements. There being no further questions, Chairman Koskelowski thanked Messrs. LeVasseur and Desai for their attendance and information and looked forward to having our staff work with theirs in advancing these very important projects.

**Presentation on Fuel Cells for Municipalities** – Mr. Thomas Drejer from the CT Center for Advanced Technology then made a brief presentation on the Fuel Cells for Municipalities program. Mr. Drejer explained that there were various energy management models that could be adopted by municipalities to reduce costs, as well as various clean energy programs that could be implemented with buildings of a certain size, with municipal solid waste treatment facilities. Mayor Staffieri indicated his interest in being able to use F-1 gases from the treatment facility to generate power and that Derby was interested in looking into that. Mr. Drejer indicated that fuel cells could be used at sewage treatment plants, at buildings over a certain square footage in capacity, and that grants and other opportunities were available from CT Center for Advanced Technology to implement these programs. Mr. Dunne asked whether this could be applied to distributed generation as would be involved in the state Energy Improvement District, such as the one in Ansonia. Mr. Drejer responded that that would be feasible but that there would be a cost for the installation of transmission lines. Mr. Dunne then questioned whether the existing UI lines could be used to transmit power within the EID. Mr. Drejer said yes, they were working with United Illuminating and Northeast Utilities to allow for such transmission. Mr. Drejer then went on to give several examples of funding and projects that would be typical of what could be accomplished with the fund. There were several questions from the board members which Mr. Drejer responded to and a copy of the presentation was left with each member.

**Discussion on Route 8, Exit 11 Project, Shelton** – Rick distributed a copy of the letter that was sent on August 13, 2009 to Mayor Lauretti with copies to the other CEOs indicating that the State of CT, Dept. of Transportation would no longer pay the 20% share that they committed to for the Entrance Ramp 11 Design Project. Rick explained that an earmark of \$750,000 was received through the last transportation funding authorization in Congress and that the GBVMPO had placed it on its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as a 20% State share, 80% Federal. ConnDOT has, in fact, continued through this date to have the project listed as an 80/20 with the State share commitment. Mr. Dunne explained that he received the proposed contract agreement between DOT and VCOG for the project which indicated that VCOG would be responsible for the 20% share or approximately \$140,000 and that further, DOT was requesting a demand deposit of \$35,000 from VCOG upfront to cover some of DOT's costs in reviewing the project. Mr. Dunne explained that while he was aware of the ConnDOT policy of not funding the non-Federal share of High Priority Earmarks, that the DOT had not requested or approved of

in advance, that he had never heard of this policy being implemented on a limited access State highway. Rick gave four examples of High Priority Earmarks that were funded in the same transportation authorization bill for Route 8, all of which had the non-federal match provided by ConnDOT. None of those projects were requested by ConnDOT or previously approved. Rick identified these as Exit 18, Exit 16 and Route 34 projects from that authorization bill. Rick reviewed the letter and indicated to the CEOs that he was looking for guidance from them on how to respond to the Department since he has not yet responded. Rick further explained that the 20% share could not fairly be split among the Valley communities in that Derby, Ansonia and Seymour would not derive a direct benefit from a new entrance ramp in Shelton, that the VCOG did not have the funds to provide such a local match under any circumstances, and that, therefore, the responsibility would fall to Shelton to provide the match. In that Mayor Lauretti was not present to discuss this item due to a death in his family, the Board directed that the item be tabled until the October meeting so that Mayor Lauretti would have a chance to participate in the discussion.

Motion: By James Della Volpe; To table this item until the October meeting; Second : Anthony Staffieri; Vote: Unanimous

**Update on Selection Process for Local Road Projects** – David Elder updated the CEOs regarding the solicitation and selection process for local road projects. He explained that we had not programmed funding under the STP-Urban Program beyond 2009 and that we needed to solicit projects from the towns and prioritize them for implementation in 2010-2013. David reviewed the process that would be adhered to and the letter that was sent out to municipal officials, including chiefs of police, highway superintendents, town engineers and town planners asking them to submit projects regarding capacity and safety for consideration by the VCOG board. David then indicated that the selection committee composed of those same people would be convened later in the summer or early fall to rate and rank the projects. There were no questions from the CEOs.

**Update on GIS Parcel Update and Internet Development Project** – An update was then given by Matt Fulda regarding RPIP grant program that we had previously received for a GIS Parcel Update and Internet Site Development Project. Matt indicated that New England Geosystems has collected the most recent parcel information from the towns and has begun updating the GIS parcel layer which was last updated in 2002. The next phase of the project will be the creation of a web-based viewer which will allow residents to view property information without needing to visit their town hall. New England Geosystems will be making a presentation to the VCOG at their October meeting at which time they will highlight their progress and demonstrate the web-based viewer. There were questions from Chairman Koskelowski as to whether there were savings from implementing this program, especially since Seymour had already gone ahead on its own. Matt agreed that Seymour's program was more advanced but that there were still significant cost savings for Seymour by doing this project jointly with the other Valley towns. There would be more information available to the public. Implementation on the internet would make foot traffic into the various town clerks and assessors' offices less necessary and make the information available 24/7 to an interested party at a lower overall cost to the towns.

**Executive Session** - At this point, the Chairman called for a motion to go into Executive Session.

Motion: By Anthony Staffieri; To go into Executive Session and invite Rick Dunne and VCOG Atty. Tom Welch to attend, subject to adjournment; Second: James Della Volpe; Vote: Unanimous.

The Board went into Executive Session at 12:20 p.m., came out at 12:35 p.m. and adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark A. Laretti,  
Secretary