

# Capitol Region Council of Governments

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES CRCOG Boardroom, 241 Main Street, 4th Floor, Hartford, CT Wednesday August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Noon

### Attendance

Brandon Robertson  
Jon Colman  
Jim Hayden  
Marcia Leclerc  
Chip Beckett  
Scott Shanley  
Paul Shapiro  
Matt Hart  
Steve Werbner  
Chris Kervick  
Dave Kilbon

### Town/Organization

Avon  
Bloomfield  
East Granby  
East Hartford  
Glastonbury  
Manchester  
Mansfield  
West Hartford  
Tolland  
Windsor Locks  
East Granby-Phoned In

### Staff

Cheryl Assis  
Emily Hultquist  
Lyle Wray

CRCOG  
CRCOG  
CRCOG

### Guests

Charles Rothenberger

Rome Smith Lutz

### 1. Roll Call

Chairman Chip Beckett called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

### 2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

### 3. Approval of Minutes from May 10th, 2017

Chairman Beckett requested a motion to approve the minutes from the May 10th 2017 meeting. Mayor Leclerc made a motion that Steve Werbner seconded to adopt the minutes of the May 10th Executive Committee Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Chair and Executive Director Remarks and Report**

Lyle Wray gave a directors report and highlighted the following items:

- UCONN is opening its Hartford campus in downtown this fall semester.
- CRCOG is looking into a new healthcare provider for employees due to a 30% increase in costs with the current provider.
- Staff have begun researching options for potential new office spaces for the CRCOG offices in Hartford. The lease on the current space at 241 Main Street ends in September 2018.
- CRCOG received a federal grant to complete the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy update for the Hartford region. This work can serve to advance the Regional Futures agenda to be discuss at this meeting – memo included in meeting packet.
- Lyle met with Jay Williams, new President of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Mr. Williams has strong leadership skills and an excellent background from Ohio to complement the needs of the Hartford Region as a Foundation President.
- Staff are continuing to work on the crumbling foundations issue with regard to the state budget and legislative actions. Lyle taped an interview with Len Besthoff of Channel 3 News on this topic. Subsequently in the meeting, Mary Leclerc communicated with the point person at the legislature who will be looking into this matter and who is willing to set up a meeting with CRCOG.

#### **5. 2017 Legislative Session Update**

Charles Rothenberger of Rome Smith Lutz gave an update on the legislative process to pass a state budget. Legilstive demotractic leaders are working to produce a budget package that they can get through the Hosue, but are falling short on votes in the Senate. Early September may bring leaders back together to work further on a final package.

Executive Committee members asked about ECS funding, teacher pensions, the car tax, and town aid road funding. As of now, all details are yet to be determined, but Mr. Rothenberger indicated that teacher pensions appear to be off the table as a potential cut from the state budget. ECS funding has typically been transmitted to the towns in October.

Lyle Wray indicated funding for CRCOG in the order of \$1 million is also uncertain. The state is also considering a bonding cap for transportation projects – bond funds are important for matches to federal funding.

## **6. Revisions to CRCOG Rules of Procedures and By-Laws Action Item:**

Due to a new FHWA requirement, the Metropolitan Planning Organization of the CRCOG region must add a transit representative to the MPO board. This change will require a bylaw amendment.

Jon Coleman made a motion to approve changes to the bylaws to clarify MPO activities and voting rights; to adjust the formatting of the bylaws document; to clarify the Policy Board's role as both the MPO and COG board and to clarify which items the public transportation representatives can vote on. The motion was seconded by Steve Werbner and passed by a unanimous vote.

## **7. Regional Futures Initiative Discussion**

Chip Beckett gave an overview of the background for the Regional Futures Initiative Discussion.

Lyle Wray asked the Executive Committee to consider the four guiding bullet points highlighted in the memo included in the meeting packet and also to comment on any next steps that they have in mind including a potential listening tour of key individuals that have a stake in the initiative's outcome.

Themes that emerged in the committee conversation were as follows:

- Job creation and shaping policies to foster a supportive, creative atmosphere for young entrepreneurs are key components to the success of retaining and attracting millennials. To that end, adding to the list of key stakeholders an individual connected to young entrepreneurs would be helpful
- We must do more to highlight the positives of our story – the listening tour should seek out positive stories and ensure that the entire focus is not on what is wrong with the region. Why is Hartford a desirable place to be?
- Although some cities have figured out how to engage the larger corporations (Austin – Dell; Ohio – Nationwide Insurance), specific attention will need to be paid to engaging the corporate sector in this initiative which seems to be tied less and less to one location. Larger corporations may have less allegiance to place. Engaging middle tier businesses located in the region will be key to the success of the initiative. Also recognize that the best people to engage businesses in conversation are sometimes city mayors (concept put into play in North Carolina)

- This initiative will take a long term commitment to developing a network and making progress toward a common regional futures initiative
- Key people to consider adding to the stakeholder list – Kevin Bouley, NERAC (Tolland), President of iDevices (Avon); Authors of the recent Hartford Courant Article from Deep River; Patrick McMahon, new Executive Director, CT Main Street

Jon Colman made a motion to commit CRCOG to working toward the organization and coordination of the Regional Futures Initiative and to proceed with a listening tour of key individuals and organizations with a stake in the outcome. Matt Hart seconded the motion which was passed by a unanimous vote.

#### **8. Other Business**

No other business came before the committee.

#### **9. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.