

# Capitol Region Council of Governments

241 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106  
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**Policy Board Meeting**  
**Former MIRA Trash Museum, 211 Murphy Road, Hartford, CT**  
**Wednesday, January 24, 2018**  
**12:00 pm**

## Members and Alternates

Joe Higgins  
Jon Colman  
Joyce Stille  
Leslee Hill  
John Elsesser  
Dave Kilbon  
Marcia Leclerc  
Lori Spielman  
Peter Falk  
Vicki Shotland (MPO Board Member)  
John Ward  
Alex Beaudoin  
Paul Shapiro  
Scott Shanley  
Danny Salerno  
Robert Lee  
Robert Phillips  
Matt Galligan  
Dan Champagne  
Shari Cantor  
Peter Souza  
Chris Kervick  
Stephanie Askeland

## Town/Organization

Andover  
Bloomfield  
Bolton  
Canton  
Coventry  
East Granby  
East Hartford  
Ellington  
Enfield  
GHTD  
Granby  
Hartford  
Mansfield  
Manchester  
New Britain  
Plainville  
Southington (via phone)  
South Windsor  
Vernon  
West Hartford  
Windsor  
Windsor Locks  
Wethersfield

## Staff

Cheryl Assis  
Winsome Barnaby  
Kimberly Bona  
Jennifer Carrier  
Mary Ellen Kowalewski  
Lyle Wray  
Pauline Yoder

CRCOG  
CRCOG  
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CRCOG

**Guests**

Courtney Hendrickson	CERC
James Redeker	CTDOT Commissioner
Pam Sucato	CTDOT
Grayson Wright	CTDOT Dept. Coordinator
Peggy Diaz	DEEP
Lee Sawyer	DEEP
Becky Nolan	Metro Hartford Alliance
Charles Rothenberger	Rome, Smith and Lutz
Dennis Solensky	CTDOT Transit

**1. Call to Order:** With a quorum present, Chairperson Marcia Leclerc called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm.

**2. Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

Mayor Leclerc requested the presentation from CTDOT Commissioner James Redeker be moved to the top of the agenda.

Scott Shanley moved that the Special Transportation Fund (STF) Presentation be the first item on the agenda on the agenda as requested by Mayor Leclerc. Joyce Still seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**6. PRESENTATION/UPDATES**

- **Special Transportation Fund (STF) Presentation - DOT Commissioner James Redeker**

Jon Colman introduced Commissioner Redeker and thanked him taking time to present to the Board. He then turned the floor over to the Commissioner.

Commissioner Redeker began by discussing the condition of the STF from February 2017 to the present. He explained that the major contributor to STF total expenditure increase is debt service although CT DOT and other agency operating expenses are also growing. He stated that DOT's total budget growth (capital and operating) percentage between FY 1997 to FY 2017 is 815%. Commissioner Redeker explained that the only place they are able to cut is state funded projects. The most severe cut will be municipal funding, i.e. TAR and LOTCIP funding. The Commissioner stated that the total impact over the next five years looks to be approximately 4.3 billion dollars, and an estimated 400 million dollars of uncompleted projects in FY 2018 alone. Commissioner Redeker discussed short term and long term problems. Short term: Inability to sell bonds and long term: existing revenue levels are insufficient to support STF. Currently the state Treasurer is borrowing from cash accounts, and hoping for bond sales to maintain transportation

funding. He explained that DOT budget impacts without new revenue could result in a series of operating cuts beginning in FY 2019, and significant reduction of the capital program beginning in the upcoming construction season. Operating budget actions could will include cuts to rail service, increased fees in for transit and rail service and an approximate 14% cut in DOT staffing. He explained that with no new revenues coming in, they are balancing the budget with transit service cuts and fare increases among other steps. He discussed gas tax history, stating that gas tax has been reduced from 39 cents to 25 cents starting in 1997. Commissioner Redeker spoke about New Car Sales Tax and Tolls. Currently, DOT has no authorization regarding tolls and the implementation for tolls would take 4-5 years after authorization to proceed is received. He explained that revenue from tolls could yield \$750 million/year. Commissioner Redeker explained that the Governor will be proposing a plan regarding the STF by the end of January. Discussion followed.

Scott Shanley asked what the impact of CT Representative Jason Rojas' proposal for a 4 cent gas tax increase would be. Commission Redeker stated that this increase would address the needs for FY 2019. Scott Shanley asked if this crisis was predicted five to seven years ago. Commissioner Redeker said yes, it was talked about repeatedly.

Marcia Leclerc asked what the probability is of this 4 cent gas tax increase passing when it goes in front of legislature.

Dr. Lyle Wray spoke about tolling. He explained that he feels this will be a major and ongoing source of revenue once it is established. He asked if there is any way to speed up implementation of tolling. The Commissioner stated that he has tried, but it would still take 18 months to 2 years minimum.

John Elsesser feels that we should frame Representative Rojas plan as a partial restoration of the 14 cent gas tax cut in 1997, and not as raising the gas tax.

Peter Falk asked about impact on the rail line between Hartford and Springfield. The Commissioner explained that the construction is moving forward, but design work has been put on hold for stations and additional double tracking.

Joyce Still asked for clarification regarding Town Air Road (TAR) funding for towns. The Commissioner stated that next year, municipalities should expect about half of TAR funding.

Paul Shapiro asked if the Express Bus Mansfield/UCONN/Hartford program will be affected. Commissioner Redeker stated that the only bus cuts being considered are for transit districts. He feels that this is one of the most cost effective routes that operates. Increase in UPass may be discussed.

Chris Kervick asked if the three solutions discussed (gas tax, new car tax and tolls) will be solvent to the STF situation. The Commissioner said yes.

Joyce Still made a motion to address agenda item 18 entitled, “Tolling and Transportation Revenue Discussion” at this time. Jon Colman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

### **INFORMATION/OPPORTUNITY/RESOURCE ITEMS**

#### **18. Tolling and Transportation Revenue Discussion**

Jon Colman spoke on behalf of the Transportation Committee. He explained that the following four recommendations were discussed and generally supported:

- Implementation of tolls, as long as they are not restricted to border tolls only;
- Gas tax increase, and once tolls are implemented, consider reducing gas tax again;
- New car tax, should be accelerated as of July 1, 2018; and
- Support for lock box legislation; and
- Consideration of authorization of special assessments on a regional basis that could sunset if a project is completed.

#### **3. Adoption of Minutes from December 13, 2017 Policy Board Meeting:**

Chairperson Marcia Leclerc requested a motion to adopt the minutes.

Jon Colman made a motion to approve the Policy Board Meeting minutes from December 13, 2017. Joyce Stille seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

#### **4. Correspondence/Handouts:**

- Letter from Town of Andover re: CRCOG representative
- Letter from Town of Coventry re: CRCOG representative
- CTCOG-COG County Equivalency DRAFT Letter to OPM
- Letter from Town of Tolland re: LOTCIP projects
- Letter from Metro Hartford Alliance re: Funding of Update of CEDS
- Op-Ed: Let Regional Councils Tax So We Can Build and Serve
- CT OPM COG FY 2018 Spending Plan
- 2018 Policy Board Member and Alternate Contact Lists

#### **5. Monthly Reports:**

##### **a. Chair and Executive Director Report**

Executive Director Dr. Lyle Wray provided this update to the Board. He asked if the Board had any questions regarding his monthly report. There were no questions.

**b. Opportunities and Resources**

Dr. Wray provided this update to the Board. He will be sending additional information to the Board regarding State and Local Tax Limitation impact on Connecticut.

**c. Municipal Services and Purchasing Council**

Peter Souza stated the Salary Survey Benefits is planned to be released next week.

**d. Policy and Planning**

Mary Ellen Kowalewski provided the following update to the Board:

**Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update**

- Our project consultant, Milone & MacBroom, is continuing to hold meetings with town officials and staff to get status reports on mitigation actions and updates on recent natural hazards and development activities.
- So far, they have met with 27 of our 38 towns.
- We are working to schedule the final meetings soon, and will appreciate your cooperation on this.
- Our first regional project meeting was held yesterday in Farmington.
- 33 local representatives from 25 towns participated in the workshop.
- Its purpose was to collaborate on the planning process and learn about some of the initiatives that are being incorporated into the next edition of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- There was a presentation from CIRCA (the Connecticut Institute for Resiliency and Climate Adaption), a partial funder of the plan update, on modeling UConn is doing to better understand Connecticut's risks from inland flooding.
- There was also a presentation from CT DEEP Pollution Prevention officials about the risks of hazardous spills from small businesses during natural hazards, and strategies to prevent those events.
- Milone & MacBroom also reported on what they've learned from the towns so far.
- The consultant will also be meeting with MDC soon to discuss MDC projects that relate to drainage and flooding within our study area
- If you have any questions on this planning process, please feel free to contact Mary Ellen Kowalewski or Lynne Pike DiSanto on staff.

**e. Public Safety and Homeland Security**

Joyce Stille reported that there was a FirstNet presentation in regard to the first nationwide public safety broadband network at the CREPC meeting last week

recommended that the Policy Board may want to have a presentation at a future meeting.

The CT Department of Public Health has proposed a Statewide Flu Vaccination day for Saturday January 27<sup>th</sup>. We held conference calls with the health directors in our region and it was determined that Middletown/Cromwell and Glastonbury would host clinics. Most departments indicated that they are not seeing a high demand for flu shots at this point.

CRCOG continues to participate in weekly phone calls in regard to Puerto Rico hurricane relief. Hartford, East Hartford and New Britain have seen the highest numbers of new students. TSA ineligibility and Housing remains the top concern for the municipalities.

#### **f. Transportation Committee**

The MPO Federal Certification Review was held on January 8. FTA and FHWA conducted the review and the overall the process went well. A draft report will be issued in March.

Jon Colman introduced Dennis Solensky from CTDOT who will be attending Policy Board meetings as a representative of public transit.

#### **g. Metro Hartford Alliance**

Becky Nolan stated that they hope to have a replacement for Oz Griebel as CEO within the next few weeks. She explained that out of approximately 60 candidates, they have narrowed the search for a new CEO down to two. She stated that Metro Hartford Alliance is striving to become stronger in economic development.

### **6. Presentation/Updates: (continued)**

- **Solid Waste Resource Rediscovery RFP Presentation- Lee Sawyer and Peggy Diaz, CT DEEP**

Peggy Diaz introduced Lee Sawyer of CT DEEP to the Board who explained that the cost of garbage disposal continues to increase over time, which is due to the lack of capacity throughout the state for solid waste disposal.

Peggy Diaz stated that DEEP has completed its review of Resource Rediscovery RFP submissions and has selected Sacyr Rooney Recovery Team for the Connecticut Solid Waste System Project (CSWSP). She explained that this proposer is well qualified to execute the project in partnership with MIRA. Sacyr possesses financial strength and environmental benefits, and also offered the most favorable pricing. Although it is subject to change, the estimated cost for Hartford is \$65 per ton. MIRA will enter into discussions with Sacyr Rooney to agree on a Term Sheet outlining key issues to be

addressed in the Comprehensive Development Agreement and how the parties will work together to secure waste commitments over the next few months. The Comprehensive Agreement should be reached no later than August 31, 2018, which will then be reviewed by DEEP. This will be a 30 year contract.

Mayor Leclerc asked who owns the land. Peggy Diaz stated the land is owned by MIRA. Marcia Leclerc asked about tipping fees. Peggy Diaz explained that fees were established by the developers, not by DEEP and that contracts will be negotiable between the towns and MIRA. Mayor Leclerc referred to Hartford's objection to this project and asked if there will be has been financial help calculated into the tipping fee. Peggy Diaz stated yes, discussion with Hartford will ensue over the next couple months.

Alexandra Beaudoin spoke on behalf of Mayor Bronin stating his disappointment for this project stems from the loss of potential economic development, however, he is pleased about the opportunity for local hiring.

Scott Shanley thanked DEEP for moving this project along as promised. He expressed appreciated on behalf of the MIRA Board.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **7. Action: Letter to the Governor on Fiscal Disparities**

**Jon Colman moved to approve the letter to the Governor from CRCOG in response to Fiscal Disparities. Dave Kilbon seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **8. Action: 2018 Legislative Agenda**

**Robert Lee made a motion to approve the 2018 Legislative agenda. Joyce Stille seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **9. Action: Resolution: Contract Execution for the Next Steps in Engaging Anchor Institutions and Neighborhoods in Transit-Oriented Development**

**Joyce Stille made a motion to approve the resolution for "Contract Execution for the Next Steps in Engaging Anchor Institutions and Neighborhoods in Transit-Oriented Development" as presented. Scott Shanley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **10. Action: Resolution: Support of Recognition of Councils of Governments as counties for Census and Federal Grant Purposes**

**Jon Colman made a motion to approve the resolution for "Support of Recognition of Councils of Governments as counties for Census and Federal Grant Purposes" as presented. Joyce Stille seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**11. Action: Resolution: 2018 Regional Services Grant**

**Jon Colman made a motion to approve the resolution for the “2018 Regional Services Grant” as presented. Joyce Stille seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**12. Action: Resolution: Authorizing Amendment 3 to Professional Services Agreement by and Between the CRCOG and Tighe & Bond, Inc. for Qualified Environmental Professional Services**

**Jon Colman made a motion to approve the resolution “Authorizing Amendment 3 to Professional Services Agreement By and Between the CRCOG and Tighe & Bond, Inc. for Qualified Environmental Professional Services” as presented. Joyce Still seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ACTION ITEMS:**

**13. Action: TIP Amendments**

**Jon Colman made a motion to approve the TIP Amendments as presented. Dave Kilbon seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**14. Action: Resolution: Authorizing Execution of Agreement with Consulting Firm for Modeling Assistance**

**Jon Colman made a motion to approve the resolution “Authorizing Execution of Agreement with Consulting Firm for Modeling Assistance” as presented. Dave Kilbon seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**Information/Opportunity/Resource Items**

**15. Legislative Agenda**

Charles Rothenberger of Rome, Smith and Lutz stated a short veto override session will take place on January 31<sup>st</sup>.

**16. Strategic Planning Materials**

Dr. Wray asked the Board to kindly review the materials in preparation for the Strategic Planning Session being held on February 21, 2018 at 10:30 am.

**17. Amended Budget and Audit**

Dr. Wray informed the board that the Personnel and Finance Committee approved an amended budget that incorporated the Regional Services Grant funding and approved the current audit.



**19. Other Business:**

Vicki Shotland encouraged municipalities to attend a transit annual legislative breakfast to be held on February 28, 2018, from 8:30 am – 10:00 am at the State Capital.

**20. Adjournment:**

With no further discussion items, Chairperson Marcia Leclerc requested a motion to adjourn.

**Joyce Stille moved adjourn meeting. Scott Shanley seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:37 pm.**