



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Meeting Minutes: FCCIP QUARTERLY ADVISORY BOARD			
Date	April 30, 2015	Location	JW Olver Transit Center, 12 Olive St. Greenfield
Time	4-5:30 PM	Room:	First Floor Meeting Rm.
		Facilitator	Brian DeVriese
		Minutes taken by:	Chris Brothers

STAFF:	MEMBERS:	REGRETS:
Phoebe Walker, FRCOG	Jim Ross – Whately	Shutesbury
James Hawkins, Building Commissioner	Todd Olanyk - Ashfield	Bernardston
James Cerone, Building Inspector	Jim Bonham – Buckland	Charlemont
Paul Lemelin, Software & Zoning	Thomas Hutcheson – Conway	Hawley
Tom McDonald, Electrical Inspector	Jacquie Boyden – Erving	Leyden
Chris Brothers, Permitting Administrator	Ray Purington – Gill	
	Brian DeVriese – Heath	
	Robert Schmid – Leverett	
	Janice Boudreau – Rowe	
	Chuck Washer – Shelburne	

Agenda items	Discussion and Motions
Introductions, minutes.	Welcomed new member Robert Schmid from Leverett. Motion made to accept 1/15/15 minutes. 2 nd . Accepted.
New Fire Code and change in permitting process.	Jim H made the Board aware of the new Fire Code. The Fire Chiefs no longer need to approve construction plans for smoke detector locations. We would still like to include the Fire Chiefs in the construction process. We will continue to send the plans to the Fire Chiefs and they can comment on them but we no longer need their approval to issue building permits, so their signoff will not be required in the software. We will now be getting a report from the fire alarm installers after the system has been installed. The Fire Chiefs will still issue permits for CO detectors. Fire Protection Systems, with the exception of ansul systems, in commercial buildings will no longer require permits from fire departments, but will require a permit from the building department. Memos were sent to contractors who install fire alarm & sprinkler systems informing them of the need to apply for permits through the building department. Memos were also sent to the Fire Chiefs.
Financial Report.	Jim C presented a spreadsheet showing our revenue target and accumulated revenue to date. At this time we are \$28,000 below our targeted amount, and according to Phoebe will likely need to dip heavily into our “rainy day” reserve fund (balance as of July 1” \$70,000), which was designed for just this kind of problem. However, we still have 2 months left of this fiscal year – Jim C reported that we generally get close to 25% of the year’s revenues during May and June -- and we are starting to see an increase in permit activity. The new fee increase that we are proposing will help with the revenue for the next fiscal year (see discussion below). Members discussed the source of the deficit. Staff explained that in addition to a very cold winter, which slowed construction, it may have been not a good idea to keep town assessments level with the 2012 number for the next year. Assessments are to cover about 20% of the budget, while permits fees are to cover about 80%. However, in the past few

	<p>years we have been able to cover more than 80% with fees, thanks to late-in-the-year big commercial permits, and the assessment has only covered between 17 and 19%. Tom Hutcheson advised that we should not count on large commercial projects for permit revenue.</p> <p>Staff reported that the planned increase in hours for Paul Lemelin has been put on hold until the fiscal situation improves.</p> <p>All agreed we need to be more conservative with revenue projections and that we will consider raising assessments for the FY17 budget.</p>
Changes in permit applications.	<p>We would like to make some changes to the building permit applications. We would like to remove the internal attachments from the Residential applications and add flood plain & land use codes from the assessor's information and create new application for Solid Fuel Appliances, one for Tents and one for Zoning items that do not require a building permit. Full Circle requires a fee for the new applications so the changes will wait until the money is available.</p>
Preliminary discussion of building permit fees.	<p>There was a proposal to raise the Building Permit fees from \$50 to \$55 and the \$6 per \$1000 of value to \$6.50 per \$1000 of value. Todd suggested considering a new formula next year with a baseline and the per/\$1000 in addition to that. Motion made to raise the fees as proposed, effective June 1, 2015. 2nd. Approved. Staff were asked to bring to the next meeting the % of total building fee revenue that the Value of the Project, Fee, and Other Fees contribute to the total revenue.</p> <p>Members discussed the different ways that costs can be covered, and how to approach it philosophically. There needs to be a balance between fee revenue paid by those that generate the inspection work and town taxpayer funds that support the general operations, including, most importantly, the large amount of zoning work we do. We are doing a lot of zoning reviews and fielding many phone calls without direct compensation. Jacquie suggested we should think about tracking the amount of zoning work done. Phoebe replied that we do not want to dis-incentivize calls and zoning questions by tracking and then billing for it somehow, as enforcement of the bylaws is a big part of how each town keeps its community looking and feeling the way it wants it to. Robert suggested that the program needs to educate the public about the importance of the zoning work, and what we do for towns in this area. All agreed.</p> <p>Phoebe asked town reps to also remember that it is important that the building department have the latest zoning bylaws, every time they are changed. Paul is running into a lot of trouble trying to get updated bylaws from towns.</p>
Discussion of fees for installation of municipal broadband.	<p>Tom McDonald, Electrical Inspector, explained that broadband is complex. The connection from the pole to the attachment on the house falls under the Electrical Code. The work done inside the house requires an electrical permit. In Leverett they are maintaining the lines outside of the houses, so the fees fall under municipal fees and were waived. The house connection does not fall under the definition of municipal fee and therefore is not a waived fee. It was decided to write a letter and/or meet with MBI and Wired West to discuss our belief that fees will not be waived from the pole to the house, and make sure they know that.</p>
Other Business	<p>None. Mtg adjourned 5:30pm.</p>