



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

COUNCIL — *MINUTES*

Date & Time:	Thursday, July 21, 2016 / 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Location:	GCTV Studios located at 393 Main Street in Greenfield
Facilitator:	John O’ Rourke, Elected Chair

REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDEES

Rob Riggan, Buckland; **Toby Gould**, Charlemont; **Kevin Fox**, Colrain; **John O’Rourke**, Conway; **William Martin**, Greenfield; **Hussain Hamdan**, Hawley; **Gordon Fretwell**, Leverett; **Michele Giarusso**, Leyden; **Brian Noble**, Northfield; **Wally Herk & Diana Schindler**, Orange; **Andrew Baker**, Shelburne; **Michael DeChiara**, Shutesbury; **Dawn Magi**, Warwick; **Lynn Sibley**, Whately; **Sam Lovejoy**, Reg. Plan. Board; **Bill Perlman**, Regional; **John Paciorek**, Regional

STAFF: **Linda Dunlavy**, Executive Director; **Rebekah Boyd**, Admin Services Coordinator; **Bob Dean**, Dir. of Regional Services; **Kat Allen**, Partnership for Youth

REGRETS: **Stanley Garland**, Bernardston; **Carolyn Ness**, Deerfield; **Greg Snedeker**, Gill; **Tom Fydenkevez**, Sunderland

ABSENT: **William Bembury**, Erving; **David Nash**, Monroe; **Richard Kuklewicz**, Montague; **Wayne Hachey**, New Salem; **Marilyn Wilson**, Rowe; **Daniel Keller**, Wendell

1. Reorganization, Roll Call, & Adopt 4/21/16 minutes	John O’Rourke — 10 Mins
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Chair John O’Rourke convened the meeting of the Council at 5:37p.m. Roll call was taken and a general and financial quorum was deemed present with 16 members present and of the weighted vote 52.770 % of the total membership in attendance.

Bill Martin moved adoption of the 4/21/16 minutes. Michele Giarusso seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Bill Perlman reported that the nominating committee —himself, Gordon Fretwell, and Brian Noble — met July 18 to discuss FY17 Council officer, and election of two members to serve on the Executive Committee. Because some towns have not yet assigned reps (and the regionally elected seat will be open until Jan 1) the committee is recommending the existing slate for now. The slate of nominees is:

- Chair**, John O Rourke, Conway Representative
- Vice Chair**, Dawn Magi, Warwick Representative
- Secretary**, Sam Lovejoy, Franklin Regional Planning Board
- Executive Committee**, Kevin Fox, Colrain Representative
- Executive Committee**, Bill Martin, Greenfield Representative

With no nominations made from the floor, Brian Noble moved that nominations be closed. Gordon Fretwell seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Brain Noble moved that the secretary cast one ballot for the slate of officers as presented by the nominating committee. Bill Perlman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Council Update	John O'Rourke — 5 Mins
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John welcomed new Council Representatives and reported the dates FY17 Council meeting dates are to be: October 20, January 26, and April 20. All will be held at the Olver Transit Center at 5:30 p.m.

The chair announced that Regionally Elected Representative, John Paciorek, has decided that he will not pursue re-election of his seat after many years of valued service to the FRCOG. Nomination papers for the open seat are out now. To be included on the November ballot, prospective candidates must have 150 registered signatures by August 1, 2016. Jay DiPucchio of Montague, a former Franklin County Administrator is currently the only candidate staff running for the council seat.

The Council's regular meeting room at the Transit Center will be dedicated to Bill Allen. Bill passed away in 2015 after decades of community service to Greenfield and the County. He was the County Engineer in the 1990s and sat on the Franklin Regional Planning Board for many years.

John requested that towns that have not yet assigned representatives do so, and suggested they also assign an alternate representative to be certain that their town can be represented and be kept up to date on all FRCOG activities. The chair will soon assign members to at least 2 sub committees, Finance and Personnel, and asked that anyone interested please contact him or Linda.

3. Executive Committee Update	Bill Perlman — 5 Mins
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Bill reported that the Executive Committee met with Bill Ennen, the new broadband liaison to unserved communities, about the potential of becoming a FRCOG employee or using FRCOG office space, at Ennen's request. The Executive Committee was willing to support both, but Bill decided against FRCOG employment and found an office in Cummington, and unserved town.

The Committee heard a presentation by FRCOG staff, Kat Allen, about the November marijuana ballot question. The committee wondered if it was prudent for the Council to take a position on this question. Kat will talk with members on the topic this evening.

The Committee discussed sending a letter to our Congressional delegation outlining suggestions for ways the FERC pipeline process could be improved. This letter is being drafted currently.

4. Executive Director Update	Linda Dunlavy — 10 Mins
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Linda welcomed members and explained that they will receive council updates in advance for perusal (*see Updates handout*). She then highlighted some of recent FRCOG initiatives:

Community Compact Programs in which staff members are involved include, creating a housing plan for Buckland; a regional IT best practices template which can be customized for all FC towns; and financial management best practices for 14 towns.

Complete Streets funding program registration is currently underway and FRCOG transportation planners will gladly help towns apply.

Cooperative Public Health Service offered 6 family clinics, 4 senior clinics, 2 Emergency Dispensing Site drill clinics, and 169 vaccinations 168 at our regular clinic times in four member towns.

Cooperative Purchasing facilitated purchasing \$7.7 million highway summer products saving towns thousands of dollars. Towns should be thinking about sand and salt needs as bids go out in Aug.

District Local Tech Assistance grants, which fund our towns with traditional planning and regionalization projects they've requested, were vetoed by Governor Baker. FRCOG is advocating for override and restoration of these relied-upon funds.

Regional Brownfield's Program is conducting environmental site assessments in four towns and has been working with Monroe to help take down the Ramage Paper Plant, which is at risk of falling into the Deerfield River.

Traffic Counting studies done by FRCOG transportation planning staff is helpful for roadway design and construction projects. Call the FRCOG if your town has traffic-counting needs.

5. Personnel Committee Update

Personnel Committee — 20 Mins

Second Reading of FRCOG Personnel Policy

Brian reviewed the mostly minor edits of the FRCOG Personnel Policy made since the Council last met (*See Updates.*) The Committee recommends acceptance of the policy — sent to the Council a week ago — for the Second Read and hopes for endorsement of this revision. Linda D. asked if Council members would be willing to adopt and accept the policy. No discussion occurred.

Brain Noble moved that personnel policy be forwarded from second reading to implementation. John Paciorek seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Brian reported that the Wage and Classification study is now complete and offers a salary range that matches market conditions and rewards longevity. Every position was analyzed as it relates to other internal roles and for market competitiveness in an effort to move to external and internal equity. Fewer than 12 positions require wage increases, which may not begin until FY18. There is no expectation that salary increases will effect town assessments. Linda Dunlavy noted that this is the first major overhaul since 1996, and it makes FRCOG current with state and local laws. She offered the document as a resource to towns, if desired. Brian recognized the hard work of the Personnel Committee and staff in this effort.

6. Planning Board Update

Sam Lovejoy — 10 Mins

Sam waived his report saying he had nothing of great substance (post pipeline effort) to share.

7. Finance Committee Update

Lynn Sibley — 10 Mins

Lynn said the Finance Committee met to review the audit (of which there were no internal control deficiencies identified); to discuss transition from use of Fundware, no longer supported, to a new, as yet undetermined, accounting software; to discuss putting off hiring for the proposed Fiscal Grant Manager position; and to review the Fiscal year-end projections (see Updates).

Sam Lovejoy asked if the Department of Revenue (DOR) has been approached to help with the change and rollout of a new program. Linda responded that one project in which DOR was involved was looking into an open-access financial management software for towns. Because replacing accounting software will cost tens of thousands of dollars, our current agreement with our vendor gives our small towns' access to our accounting software so they don't have to bear the software cost. We're not sure we'll have the same agreement with the new software vendor and will want to know if the open access project is further along. Bob Dean said the program is now being tested in Berkshire County.

8. Special Presentation and Discussion – Information about Marijuana Ballot Question

(switched in order with item #9)

Kat Allen, FRCOG Partnership for Youth — 20 Mins

Kat Allen described her substance abuse prevention work with FRCOG's Partnership for Youth. She said surveys made it clear that young people's perception of risk of harm of marijuana use has changed since decriminalization. As a result of that shift and with the introduction of a ballot question to legalize the drug, FRCOG created a slideshow and trained 8 community members to give the presentation. We know how marijuana harmfully affects the adolescent brain and are happy to come present to schools and parent groups considering outcomes to changes to the law, said Kat

The Report of the Special Senate Committee on Marijuana (see handout), found that if marijuana is made legal, the state and local governments will be responsible for all regulation, including crafting policies for minimum legal sales age, use in public, driving under the influence, marketing and advertising, packaging, types of products legalized (smokable, edible, drinkable), taxation and revenue uses, and so on. The state should also consider criminal, social, and racial justice ramifications of changing marijuana laws, and corporate influence on rollout and consumers, Kat said.

The Council discussed possible FRCOG actions, which including education of parent groups and schools, and having the FRCOG presentation put on local TV stations and on the FRCOG website. Kat relegated most of her time before the Council answering member's questions (summarized below):

What is the age of adulthood considered to be? *The brain continues to develop up to age 26, from back to front. Because adolescents' cognitive controls are slower to develop, there's a greater susceptibility to addiction. At younger than 15, a youth is five times more likely to develop addiction from regular use than someone who waits until age 21.*

If marijuana is legal do you think there will be a reduction in use of heroine? *We don't yet have that data, but some animal studies show addiction to opioids happens more quickly.*

Tell us about the dangers of marijuana infused products; candy and soda, hand lotions, etc., and their potency. *In the 1970s, THC (the psychoactive chemical in the plant) was 2%. Now we can have concentrates that are up to 90%. In states where marijuana is legal, hospitals are seeing significant increases in emergency room visits because kids accidentally eat THC infused candy and soda.*

Driving impairment is a concern. How is state dealing with driving impairment from use of marijuana, which is widely available now? *Because there's not as much impairment as with alcohol, those under the influence of marijuana feel they are not impaired. In the real world people are combining alcohol and marijuana, but there's no marijuana breathalyzer test.*

Does education help marijuana use? *We saw a drop in tobacco use with good education. But tobacco has a strong lobby; every little loophole gets exploited. Now eighth graders can buy loose cigars and vape. Profit motive crushes efforts toward public health. Teens now think marijuana isn't that bad because its legal elsewhere and some kids use it for ADHD. Educating teens is already harder.*

9. Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance

(switched in order with item #8)

Bill Martin asked if there was any word on the local option regional transportation infrastructure tax proposed by Senator Downing. Linda Dunlavy said the bill is currently in conference committee. She

explained to members that the bill poses that regions should have opportunities to tax themselves for infrastructure projects of their choosing because there isn't enough funding devoted to it. The way transportation funds are allocated now is based on population numbers and road miles, of which FC towns have few. For most of our projects it takes about 2 years of funding to get projects done.

Bill Martin asked for an explanation regarding (an unidentified) notice to the fire department that towns need to come up with \$800,000 for the "regional communication systems." Bill Perlman, of the FCECS Oversight Board, said he didn't know where that figure is coming from, but that the system may need a complete overhaul if the FCC changes the frequency band. If that happens none of the towns will be able to pay for it, he said. Linda said she'd research the figure and respond to the Mayor.

Hussain Hamdan remarked that he utilizes the radio system as a fire fighter and that use of 400 band, limits those with hilltown topography. Going to 700 or 800 would be very difficult, expensive and disastrous, he said, and expressed his desire for FRCOG to push back on regulatory efforts that would raise the band. Bill Perlman said a gap analysis study by Homeland Security found many dead spots in the county, which, he acknowledged, will get worse if the system goes up in frequency. Hussain asked if FRCOG was aware that state police have had to patch Hawley through because they don't have communications. Linda D. agreed that lower frequencies worked better, explaining that the system started with the lower frequency until the FCC prohibited such use.

John O' Rourke noted that it was good to have Kevin Fox back from his extended medical leave.

Hussain Hamdan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bill M. seconded. Adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes of April 21, 2016
- July Updates of FRCOG Initiatives and Projects
- Personnel Policy First Council Reading
- *Report of the Special Senate Committee on Marijuana*
- Boston Globe article dated March 4, 2016: *Mass Should not legalize marijuana* by Charlie Baker, Maura Healey, and Martin Walsh
- *Recreational Use of Marijuana Initiative Petition*, April 2016 Position Statement of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents.