



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

COUNCIL — *MINUTES*

Date & Time:	Thursday, April 20, 2017 / 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Location:	William B. Allen Room, Olver Transit Center, 12 Olive Street, Greenfield
Facilitator:	John O’ Rourke, Chair

REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDEES

Kaycee Warren, Ashfield; **Rob Riggan**, Buckland; **Kevin Fox**, Colrain; **John O’Rourke**, Conway; **William Bembury**, Erving; **William Martin**, Greenfield; **Hussain Hamdan**, Hawley; **Brian DeVriese**, Heath; **Michele Giarusso**, Leyden; **Chris Boutwell**, Montague; **Julia Blyth**, Northfield; **Marilyn Wilson**, Rowe; **Ellen McKay**, Shutesbury; **Dawn Magi**, Warwick; **Michael Idoine**, Wendell; **Lynn Sibley**, Whately; **Bill Perlman**, Regional; **Jay DiPucchio**, Regional; **Jim Basford**, FRPB.

STAFF & VISITORS: **Linda Dunlavy**, Executive Director; **Rebekah Boyd**, Admin Services Coordinator; **Patricia Auchard**, Dir. of Finance; **Bob Dean**, Dir. of Reg. Services; **Phoebe Walker**, Dir. of Community Services; **Dan Nietsche**, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator; **Phillipe Simon**, GCTV.

REGRETS: **Stanley Garland**, Bernardston; **Toby Gould**, Charlemont; **Carolyn Ness**, Deerfield; **Greg Snedeker**, Gill; **Wayne Hachey**, New Salem; **Diana Schindler**, Orange; **Beth Adams**, Leverett; **Tom Fydenkevez**, Sunderland; **ABSENT:** **David Nash**, Monroe; **Andrew Baker**, Shelburne.

1. Roll Call, & Adopt 1/26/17 minutes	John O’Rourke
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The Chair convened the meeting at 5:01 p.m. Roll call was taken and a general and financial quorum was met with 18 members and 65.81% of the weighted vote of the total membership attending.

Ellen M. moved adoption of the 1/26/16 minutes. Michelle G. seconded. Motion passed with all in favor.

2. Council Update	John O’Rourke
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The next meeting of the Council will be held July 20. John announced Gordon Fretwell’s retirement and welcomed Beth Adams of Leverett, and Montague reps Peter Ellis and Chris Boutwell (alt.).

John described the tornado that swept through Conway on February 25. He explained that while no one was seriously injured, the town lost many trees, 6 houses were declared uninhabitable, and the United Congregational Church suffered severe damage. Regional EMS and mutual aid from 23 fire and police forces responded and worked well together. EverSource came with fifty crews. MEMA and Northwest Incident Management team assisted. FRCOG’s Tracy Rogers crafted an outstanding after-action report. He said the town couldn’t have done it without towns and state agencies. Once it was declared a tornado, calls came from as far as the state of Florida. Nobody was hurt. With the exception of those who live in the 6 heavily damaged houses, everyone else has resumed life as usual, although the clean-up continues. Insurance payments are coming in slow, but there’s no doubt that the tornado victims will receive them. John thanked everyone involved immensely.

3. Executive Committee Update

Bill Perlman

See April 2017 Updates.

4. Executive Director Update

Linda Dunlavy

Linda summarized a handful of FRCOG initiative and ongoing projects (*See April Updates*), including:

- Meeting with Congressman McGovern to better understand how the region will be affected by proposed federal funding cuts.
- Beginning climate resiliency work, possibly as a qualifying vendor for municipal vulnerabilities funding.
- Offering a series of workshops on the recently updated, more stringent Public Records Laws
- Helping Monroe take down the abandoned Rampage Paper Mill. Kudos to Peggy Sloan and Jessica Atwood for working with the town and the state.

Linda announced that it's once again traffic counting season, reminding towns that staff can measure volume, speed, pedestrians, bicycle counts, and so on, all helpful with Complete Streets and making decisions about use of Chapter 90.

5. Personnel Committee Update

Bill Perlman

The Personnel Committee hasn't met since the November Council meeting.

6. Franklin Regional Planning Board (FRPB) Update

Jim Basford

The FRPB continues to monitor staff efforts to advocate for towns and other stakeholders in the Northfield Mountain Pumped storage and Turners Falls hydroelectric facilities relicensure process. With the legalization of marijuana, the board has also focused on helping towns to think about regulation, and making recommendations for zoning for marijuana processing and retail establishments.

Bob Dean mentioned that three versions of zoning reform were filed last year, and one passed the senate, which means we again see zoning reform addressed by the legislature this year. The FRCOG will again track the differing versions and advocate on behalf of the municipalities of FC.

7. Finance Committee Update

Lynn Sibley

The Finance Committee (FC) met last month and reviewed the final audit and management letter, which recommended the Council consider reauthorizing the FRCOG OPEB trust under amended MGL Chapter 32B Section 20, legislation which expands upon and clarifies the responsibilities of the role of governmental agencies in maintaining OPEB trust funds. The new legislation requires either a trustee or board of trustees be appointed to oversee the trust fund. Council authorized FRCOG's finance director as the trustee.

Currently OPEB is invested with Vanguard, but the company couldn't confirm if their product complied with the amended legislation. Looking for a better fit, staff and the Finance Committee met with the State Retiree Benefits Trust Fund (SRBTF) board, and are considering moving funds from Vanguard to the SRBTF. The committee supports moving funds from Vanguard to the SRBTF not only because returns are comparable, but also because doing so assures compliance, gives us access to a larger

allocation pool, and gives us direct access to a professional management team. The FC recommends adoption of the new law and reauthorization of the trust fund.

Ellen M. moved that the Council adopt M.G.L. c. 32, Sec. 20, as amended by Chapter 218 of the Acts of 2016, to reauthorize the OPEB Trust Fund. Bill P. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Ellen M. moved that the Council designate the Finance Director as trustee of the fund. Bill P. seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

In another matter, the finance department chose Abila MIP as the new accounting software. Now the conversion begins. In June they will test it, and go on line (with the Town Accounting program), July 1.

8. Special Presentations and Discussions

Dan Nietsche & Phoebe Walker

Staff reminded Councilors that at their previous quarterly meeting they heard a presentation about how money being invested in the FC emergency communication system will extend its life of by 2 to 5 years, but the FRCOG still needs a long term system replacement plan. The FRCOG and FCECS Oversight Committee are looking at all available options. Dan N. has been talking with the state about migrating to its 800 MHz system. (*See PowerPoint slideshow.*) Mike Salzman of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) believes Franklin County is a great place for the state to pilot a program. This option would move all of the local public communication system over to state system to increase interoperability.

Linda D. explained that staff is proceeding with care and some trepidation. This transfer to the state seems like the best option because 800 MHz will give the county good communication, and won't result in FRCOG wondering what expensive piece of equipment will need to be replaced next. Michelle G. was elated about the prospect of a turnover to the state. Bill P. explained that the dispatching function went to state police years ago, adding that it's time to hand over the infrastructure we can no longer maintain.

Hussein H. expressed skepticism in that Franklin County is talking about an 800MHz system, given the hilly topography, and the lack of "reach." He felt the FRCOG should not be saying what we're going to use until we've evaluated cost and its performance. Dan N. explained that every town has several borrowed radios, and that town emergency personnel are logging areas where there is no coverage in order to create a map to analyze and to compare to the state police map. So far they've heard from Charlemont, Monroe, Rowe, New Salem, and Ashfield, and coverage is reportedly better in each town. Staff are determined not to lose coverage area by making the switch, and not yet committed to the idea, but currently doing the due diligence research and testing to see if it's feasible. Good radio people from the state and private sector are assisting.

Franklin County Community Health Improvement Plan (FCHIP)

Phoebe W. explained that the series of FCHIP gatherings gave stakeholders from all different arenas a chance to meet and plan. They looked at health data (including the state's county health rankings) to determine what the priorities are, taking stock of the health behaviors, care practices, social and economic factors, and physical environments that add to or detract from good health. They then asked what evidence-based strategies might be employed to improve health and took a pulse on the region to see if they are occurring, asking how they could begin where needed, or if in place, how they might be strengthened. She briefed the committee on the outcomes of their work. (*See PowerPoint.*)

Michelle G. asked if FRCOG staff has thought about the cost if the federal government cuts Medicaid, which she felt would amount to a disaster for the County. Linda D. said this is a topic of her discussions with McGovern.

9. Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance

Ellen M. moved meeting adjournment. Chris B. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes of January 26, 2017
- April 2017 Updates of FRCOG Initiatives and Projects
- *Legislative Advocacy for Health 101* flyer
- *The New Public Records Law Regulatory & Implementation Updates* flyer
- *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps* Handout
- FCECS handout
- *Franklin County/North Quabbin Community Health Improvement Plan*