



# Franklin Regional Council of Governments

## COUNCIL — *MINUTES*

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

### REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDEES

**Kaycee Warren**, Ashfield; **Kevin Fox**, Colrain; **John O’Rourke**, Conway; **Bryan Smith**, Erving; **William Martin**, Greenfield; **Hussain Hamdan**, Hawley; **Beth Adams**, Leverett; **Wayne Hachey**, New Salem; **Julia Blyth**, Northfield; **Andrew Baker**, Shelburne(6:07); **Ellen McKay**, Shutesbury; **Dawn Magi**, Warwick; **Michael Idoine**, Wendell; **Lynn Sibley**, Whately; **Bill Perlman**, Regional; **Jay DiPucchio**, Regional;

**REGRETS:** **Stanley Garland**, Bernardston; **Beth Bandy**, Charlemont; **Carolyn Ness**, Deerfield; **Greg Snedeker**, Gill; **Brian DeVriese**, Heath; **Steve Ellis**, Montague; **Tom Fydenkevez**, Sunderland; **Jim Basford**, FRPB.

**ABSENT:** **Zachary Taylor**, Buckland; **Michele Giarusso**, Leyden; **David Nash**, Monroe; **Jennifer Morse**, Rowe. **VACANT:** Orange

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

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| <b>1. Roll Call, Reorganization, &amp; Adopt 4.20.17 minutes</b> | Chair John O’Rourke |
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The Chair convened the meeting at 5:36 p.m. Roll call was taken and a general and financial quorum was met with 15 members and 61.386% of the weighted vote of the total membership attending.

### Reorganization

Bill Perlman announced that the nomination committee is recommending officers remain the same from FY17 to FY18, except for that of the office of clerk/secretary. Recommended slate for:

#### *Council Officers:*

**John O’Rourke, Council Chair** John is a Select Board member for Conway; is actively involved with Massachusetts Municipal Association; is the District 1 representative for MMA’s Massachusetts Selectmen’s Association; sits on the LG’s Local Government Advisory Commission; and attends nearly every FRCOG Executive Committee (EC) meeting. We’d like John to continue in a FRCOG leadership role so he is aware of our small town issues as he represents our region at the statewide level.

**Dawn Magi, Vice Chair** Dawn has been a long-time Council member, attends nearly every meeting and is an active member of the FRCOG’s Personnel Committee.

**Kevin Fox, Clerk/Secretary** For years, our Clerk/Secretary was FRPB appointment Sam Lovejoy who also held this position for the EC. Kevin recently volunteered to take on that role for the EC. Our need for an official Clerk/Secretary is infrequent so we think it makes sense to appoint Kevin as Clerk for both boards and he is willing.

*Appointments to the Executive Committee:*

**Kevin Fox, Colrain** Kevin is willing to stay on EC, offers good small town perspective, and finds the position enjoyable.

**Mayor Bill Martin, Greenfield** Since Greenfield transitioned to a mayoral form of government, the Greenfield Mayor has sat on the EC. We think it important to have Greenfield in a leadership role with the FRCOG and to bring the perspective of our largest community to the committee.

No nominations were made from the floor. **John O. moved the recommended slate of officers. Ellen M. seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

**Hussain H. moved adoption of the 4.20.17 minutes. Ellen M. seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

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| <b>2. Council Chair Update</b> | John O'Rourke |
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FY18 Council Meeting Dates are: October 19, 2017, January 25, 2018, and April 19, 2018.

John explained that FRCOG is looking for volunteers to serve on the following Council subcommittees and boards of other organizations for which the FRCOG has appointing responsibility:

*Council Subcommittees*

**Finance** — This committee works with staff to develop the FRCOG's operating budget, determine the annual membership assessment, and monitors the FRCOG's fiscal health. It's a critical committee, and interesting and challenging work. The committee usually meets quarterly with monthly meetings during budget development.

**Personnel** — This committee is responsible for development of personnel policy and some personnel decisions (recently conducting a wage and salary survey and updating the personnel policy). The Personnel committee currently has one member due to municipal Council reappointments; the need for new members is great.

*FRCOG Committees*

**CEDS** (Regional economic development planning) — meets end of the day, bi-monthly  
**TPO** (Regional transportation planning) — meets mid-day approximately 9 times per year  
**FCCIP** (Building, plumbing, wiring inspections) – meets quarterly

*Other Organizations that FRCOG has legislative responsibility to appoint Board members (vestige of county government)*

**FCCDC** (Small business development and assistance)

HRA (Housing development)

John encouraged returning and new members to get involved on one or more of these committees to learn more about the FRCOG, an active and complex organization involved with dozens of projects, advocating on behalf of our region and rural areas, and enhancing the lives of our citizens.

### 3. Executive Committee Update

Bill Perlman

This quarter the Exec Com:

- Viewed and held two public hearings for road-change petitions in Whately and Shelburne
- Authorized a new credit card account for large purchasing needs when a purchase order can't be used and a direct credit line cannot be established
- Reviewed FRCOG's role in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) relicensing of FirstLight's Northfield Mount Herman pumped storage and Turners Falls hydroelectric operations. The EC supported the idea of using reserves from the FY17 budget to hire a consultant to assist in drafting a framework for a river management plan that includes monitoring, assessment, and mitigation components.
- Reviewed and adopted the FRCOG's OPEB Declaration of Trust
- Submitted a letter to state Treasurer Goldberg's Alcohol Policy Task Force with suggestions for how to improve alcohol rules and regulations and decrease youth drinking

### Franklin County Emergency Communication System (FCECS)

Bill told the Council that the (FCECS) oversight committee is aware that the system is having problems, but doesn't want to replace parts — which are nearly obsolete and increasingly hard to find — without an engineering study. Staff and others recently met with the state about transferring the FCECS to the state's 800 MHz system, and learned the state is willing and happy to include our system. The oversight board is hoping our towns' system can survive until then. Towns are currently testing 800 MHz radios.

Bill said the way council members can best help is to encourage first responders is to use the ticket system, filling out a ticket when there's a problem, so maintenance staff are notified and can get to it right away. Otherwise we won't know about it.

### 4. Executive Director Update

Linda Dunlavy

In recognition of this month being the FRCOG's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Linda presented a short slideshow highlighting some of the projects FRCOG and members towns completed together in the last 20 years (see handout). FRCOG staff has been and will continue through the summer to tweet and post daily briefs about some of FRCOG's many past initiatives on social media. (See updates.) Staff hope to create a story map for all to explore and to be presented at the fall celebration (date as yet unconfirmed). Linda thanked members and the citizens of their towns for their support for 20 years.

In another matter, Linda announced that she's been asked to sit on new working group to try to come up with next generation of municipal managers and financial officers. The need to attract and groom a new generation of local officials is the focus of the group's discussion.

Next, Linda briefed the Council on some of our current and ongoing projects, including:

*Community Compact* — All but 3 towns received assistance in the first year which means they can receive assistance again this year.

*Free Bike Racks* — MassDOT will distribute through July; towns must install.

*Collective Purchasing* — \$6.3 million was spent on behalf of 25 towns. Fuel, asphalt, and heating oil remain same price as last year. Sand, salt, and pre treatment liquid bids start in September.

*DLTA* — Made it into the FY18 budget. This is flexible funding that allows FRCOG to help you with regionalization and traditional planning projects.

Members were encouraged to check our website for tick testing and reporting processes, and fall local officials workshop series updates.

## **6. Franklin Regional Planning Board (FRPB) Update**

Jim Basford

Linda reported that the planning board and staff expect that FY18 will be full of helping towns with recreational marijuana bylaws and siting issues, and advocacy related to the FERC relicensing of the hydroelectric facility. Staff has recently submitted a letter encouraging legislation to start to address issues that have arisen regarding Air B&B-type short-term rentals, which promises to be another issue for the Board. And this may finally be the year for zoning reform, she said. Linda suggested that perhaps Steve Kulik might come talk to the Council about zoning reform.

One member asked what changes the board would like to see. More predictability for planning boards and developers, Linda replied. MA is one of the only states with Approval Not Required provisions and we hope the legislature will address this so we don't have continuing sprawl. The eastern part of the state is mostly built out, but here we typically encourage compact residential development in village centers while keeping undeveloped areas undeveloped.

## **7. Finance Committee Update**

Lynn Sibley

Lynn told members that the Finance Committee recommends they vote to spend a small allocation of the unreserved fund balance of up to \$5,000 for use in celebrating the FRCOG's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The money will primarily fund staff time for training on story telling software and for creating FRCOG's story, know-how that can be utilized for town and regional projects going forward.

**Dawn M. moved that the Council appropriate \$5,000 of unreserved funds for the FRCOG's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.**

*Discussion:* Pat A. told the Council that the current unreserved balance is \$661,245. Beth A. asked the budget for the party. \$5,000, to be used creatively, said Lynn.

**Ellen M. seconded the motion, which passed with all in favor.**

Other activities of the Fin Com over the quarter include:

- Working on OPEB trust reauthorization
- Year-end transfers from one line to another
- Small tweaks to benefits accounts related to unexpected FMLA use, and so on

Lynn reported that the transfer to new accounting software is complete and members of the finance department and the town accountants are learning and using it. She said there's quite a learning curve, but once they've grasped it, they'll be able to produce excellent reports. She added that New Salem has received a grant for the town accounting program.

## 8. Special Presentation: Rural Policy Commission Demographic Mapping

Linda Dunlavy

Linda presented a slide show of the demographic mapping work recently accomplished by the Rural Policy Advisory Commission. (See slideshow handout).

Members discussed the mapping project and the regional challenges of:

- Providing viable work for young adults seeking to raise a family
- Retaining students returning from college
- High cost of living
- Lack of low income housing
- Luring second homeowners

They requested information/maps focused on:

- Density of second homes in area
- Density of high-speed internet, especially in relation to the integration of young people
- Young couples living with aging parents

Beth A. remarked that public transportation is key and steady bus service necessary to retain and attract population. Hussain H. opined that UMASS is trying to attract out-of-staters rather than putting their energy into supporting western Mass students. Members requested digital copies of the RPC's mapping study.

The Rural Policy Commission is turning its attention to 3 areas of focus currently:

1. Sewer, water, and title five issues that constrain econ dev
2. Small business development and support
3. Rural service delivery

Linda recently sent a survey to towns asking questions about these 3 topic areas. The Commission will use town's responses to prioritize their work.

## 9. Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance

Michael Idoine made the Council aware of his initiative to convince the legislature to raise \$75 million to build out internet in western mass.

Beth Adams passed around her proposal outlining ways FRCOG could help the state reach its 2050 Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act goals (*see Beth's handout*).

Ellen asked if FRCOG has responded to the state's abandonment of east-west high speed rail. Linda replied that the FRCOG's primary focus has been on North/South expansion. We haven't been lead on East/West service, she said.

Phoebe Walker announced that she's been asked to serve on a special state commission on local and regional health. The commission will take stock of local health systems, asking how they're doing and how they're meeting their mandates. To give or receive input, call Phoebe.

**Hussein H. moved meeting adjournment. Ellen M. seconded. Meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.**

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda
- Draft Minutes of April 20, 2017
- July 2017 Updates of FRCOG Initiatives and Projects
- *Local Officials Essentials Workshop for Fall & Winter 2017/18* flyer
- *Handout from Beth Adams*