



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Executive Committee —MINUTES

Date & Time:	Thursday, April 13, 2017/ 6:00 p.m.
Location:	JW Olver Transit Center, 12 Olive Street Greenfield, MA – Room 221/Library
Facilitator:	Bill Perlman, Chair

Representatives Present:

- Kevin Fox, Council Appointee, Colrain
- Bill Perlman, Regionally Elected
- Jay DiPucchio, Regionally Elected
- Jim Basford, Regional Planning Board
- Bill Martin, Council Appointee, Greenfield

Staff Members Present:

- Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director
- Rebekah Boyd, Admin Services Coordinator

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA:

1. Adopt 2.23.17 minutes

Bill P. opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Jay P. moved to adopt the 2.23.17 minutes. Bill M. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Donna MacNicol’s counsel on a.) Whately Road Action; b.) FERC relicensing confidentiality agreement; and c.) COG role or lack thereof on tax abatement denial appeals.

Whately Road Action

Linda reported that Bob Dean spoke with Atty. MacNicol who said that the February 9th EC meeting cancellation due to weather effectively ended the original public hearing that the committee has continued since October, 2015. She said the EC will need to schedule a new view and public hearing when Whately is ready to move forward, which is now. Brian Domina indicates that he met with abutting property owners recently to sign documents relative to a friendly taking by the Town. The property owners are on board, he says, and the town remains committed to the project. He anticipates final action by the BOS and recording of the purchase by April’s end. Bob believes the relocation plan will be ready for the EC to sign in May.

The Committee agreed to proceed with a view and hearing for the next EC meeting on May 11. The view will occur at 5:00 p.m. at the intersection of Egypt Road and Routes 5&10, followed by a public hearing at Whately Town Hall at 4 Sandy Lane at 5:30 p.m. Following the public hearing the EC will conduct the rest of their regularly scheduled business there. FRCOG staff will send out locus map to tell the group where they will be meeting, and the meeting will be posted soon.

FERC relicensing confidentiality agreement

Firstlight is asking anyone who wants to be part of relicensing settlement negotiations to sign a confidentiality agreement. Since the FRCOG has been engaged in erosion control efforts on the river for 25 years, staff should have a seat at the negotiating table. Linda pointed out that the FRCOG can't agree to full confidentiality, as government agencies are bound by public record law. Linda and Peggy have spoken with Donna MacNicol who advises that staff attend the next settlement meeting on April 25 and clarify that we are bound by public records law. The committee asked how they would be kept informed of the negotiation process and discussed whether it made sense for members to sign the agreement. Linda said she would contact Donna MacNicol with the question and get back to them.

COG role or lack thereof on tax abatement denial appeals

Staff recently received an email asking if EC has any responsibility for tax appellate denial appeals. Jay said he felt not, as any task that can be overseen by the state we would pass on to them. Linda said Atty. MacNicol agrees. Bill reported that we do, however, handle dog appeals.

3. Reaccepting new OPEB language and consideration of moving OPEB funds to state's trust fund.

The state recently amended the law regarding the establishment of OPEB trusts. Our auditor recommends that we reauthorize our trust under the amended language. As a result, staff is working on several items. The first was for the Finance Committee to meet with the state's pension SRBTF representative and consider a move from Vanguard to SRBTF. That occurred and it is the Finance Committee's recommendation. Second is to ask the Council to reauthorize the OPEB Trust Fund and the third will be to come back to the Executive Committee, at their June meeting, with a trust agreement.

4. Committee appointments

The EC examined and briefly discussed Mike Slowinski's résumé. **Jay D. moved appointment of Mike Slowinski of 28 Adamsville Road, Colrain to the Franklin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board for the vacant 5-year term. Kevin F. seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.**

An EC member is needed for the Transportation Planning Organization which typically meets every 4th Tuesday at noon. Bill Perlman and Bill Martin are already on the committee (Bill Martin as the Mayor of Greenfield). Kevin Fox volunteered.

5. Testimony on marijuana legislation

Steve Kulik recently held a workshop at FRCOG to hear from local officials regarding new marijuana legislation concerns and to discuss the ins and outs of the law. Using the questions which arose at that forum, FRCOG staff crafted letter to the joint committee working on policy (*see handout*).

6. HR1499 – legislation requiring a percentage of Registry fees to go to counties and COGs

Legislation created by Plymouth County would require the state to give a portion of fees collected at the Registry of Deeds to still existing counties and Councils of Governments. The bill doesn't increase fees, it only changes the percentage the state gets to keep. This would slightly reduce the state's general fund, but would not effect how the registry is financed. The EC can send a letter of support or disapproval or not comment at all.

Bill M. asked why the money shouldn't go to towns and cities. Linda said the justification for it going to counties is that the counties run the registries of deeds. Jay P. suggested staying away from anything that makes FRCOG look like old county government. Members agreed, and consensus was reached to remain mute on the subject.

7. Decision to forgive Community Development Corporation (CDC) loan on National Bank Building

The CDC, Mayor Martin and Linda have been working on having 3 outstanding loans, awarded years ago to the CDC for the redevelopment of the National Bank Building, forgiven. The CDC's Bank building redevelopment effort had 3 outstanding loans: 1 Brownfields with FRCOG, 1 Greenfield Savings Loan, and 1 MA Development loan. The hope has been to have all 3 forgiven so that the Greenfield Redevelopment Authority could take the building from the CDC debt-free and try to bring the building back into use. While we lose \$43 thousand to reinvest in the county, having that building in active use is good for our regions economy, said Linda. The loan forgiveness did not need to be ratified by the EC. Permission came from the EPA but Linda wanted the EC to know of the action.

8. Action on FCECS

Bill briefed the EC on two FCECS projects underway: upgrading the system by replacing the GPS units which are failing, and also replacing some antennas to reduce the amount of overlap from tower to tower. These replacements should keep the system going for a couple of years.

He reported that the oversight committee's discussion about what to do if the system dies, continues. The oversight committee's subcommittee has had early conversations with EOPSS and state police about moving to their 800 MHz system — a scenario in which we'd have to replace radios, but not infrastructure. They are seeking answers to questions about coverage; cost and financial responsibility; how to make the transition to 800 MHz, discipline by discipline; and how to meet mutual aid needs using different radios. Their questions were drafted in a letter sent to Mike Salzmann, who acts as liaison to the state for the 800 system roll-out. The committee is also borrowing 12 Motorola radios to test/verify the limits of an 800 system and to see what channels and frequencies can be used.

Linda has written a letter to the EOPSS explaining the FCECS and asking to be a part of a pilot system. We have not received formal letter back, but Mike Salzmann is telling us next steps. Staff hopes this will be a good solid path forward for towns. The EC discussed the chances of local resistance to this idea and how to market the possible change. Linda noted that at a recent meeting county police chiefs seemed supportive, which is a good first step.

9. Updates and announcements

The Workforce Development Skills Council has just formed. Unlike other parts of the state, our region — Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin Counties — still needs strong manufacturing workforce development. A recent Boston newspaper article opined that city and country folk are mostly the same politically, educationally, and financially, and share very similar life experiences. Linda and others wrote an editorial letter refuting this idea.

In another matter, Linda reported that the FRCOG staff has been talking about how to improve safety and security in offices upstairs. She shared some of the strategies being considered.

10. Business Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance

Bill Perlman described a bill recently introduced in the legislature which would make Massachusetts a “sanctuary state.” That means, among other things, that law enforcement cannot question someone’s immigration status when stopping them, or use it for the purpose of determining bail. It does not tie hands of law enforcement for criminal investigation, he said, but the police wouldn’t be able to use immigration status unless it was specific to the crime. Bill opined that the bill is well-written, benefits sanctuary cities, and puts the responsibility on state. The downside risk is the President has indicated there will be cuts in funding for those who offer sanctuary. Bill said he’d like to discuss EC endorsement at some point in the future. The Senate won’t act on it unless there are more than 200 communities designated as sanctuary cities.

The next meeting will be held May 11 at the juncture of Egypt Rd and 5&10 in Whately.

Jim B. moved adjournment. Jay seconded the motion. The meeting closed at 7:03 p.m.

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda
- 2/23/17 minutes
- Letter from FCRHDA requesting Board Appointment of Michael Slowinski
- Michael Slowinski’s résumé
- Letter from Linda Dunlavy to the Joint Committee on Marijuana Policy, *Implementation of Recreational Marijuana Legislation: Questions, Comments, and Impacts on Municipalities*, dated April 10, 2017.