

Minutes
Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization
March 8, 2006

Attendance:

Chester:	Tom Marsh
Clinton:	Willie Fritz
Deep River:	Dick Smith
Essex:	Phil Miller
Killingworth:	
Lyme:	
Old Lyme:	
Old Saybrook:	Mike Pace
Westbrook:	
CT DOT:	Kasey Faraci
Estuary Transit District:	John Forbis
Guests:	ETD Director Jim Rode, ECSI Executive Director Mitzi Eilts, Betty Wagner
CRERPA Staff:	Linda Krause, Jean Davies, Wini Olson

I. The meeting of the Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization was called to order by Chairman Mike Pace at 9:40 AM in the conference space of the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency at 455 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook Ct 06475.

II. Minutes

Phil Miller moved that the minutes of the February 8, 2006 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved.

III. Public Comment Period

There was no public comment

IV. Federal and State Programs

A. Incident Management

A committee with a representative from each affected town is being created to assist in establishing routes for traffic diverted from Federal Highways within the region.

B. STIP Amendments

The STIP amendments were tabled.

C. Air Quality Conformity

The Federal Air Quality contracts require annual renewals. Jean Davies has reviewed the modeling that was prepared by the CT DOT. She found no local changes.

Kasey Faraci assured Chairman Pace that there is nothing new in the fine print.

Phil Miller moved that CREMPO endorse the Resolution of Conformity with the Clean Air Act as presented. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved.

D. Agreements and Contracts

Kasey Faraci explained that since the federal funding for 2005-2006 was received in two increments, this is a supplemental contract with DOT to enable the region to receive funding for the balance of the year. Phil Miller moved that the supplementary funds be accepted and that, in the absence of Secretary Timothy C. Griswold, Linda Krause be authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of CREMPO. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved. Dick Smith asked Kasey how Connecticut fared regarding transportation money in the most recent federal budget. She replied that the state will receive a bit more than forecast.

V. CREMPO Programs

A. Transportation Improvement Programs

Jean Davies explained that transportation funding is tied to specified time lines. She would like to invite CTDOT representative Mario Marrero to come to the April meeting to explain the program. A town must submit plans to the state within a specified time period to be included in the state obligated funding pool.

Chairman Pace expressed the frustration of having a project delayed when both private and municipal funds are ready to go but the anticipated state money is not yet available.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to invite Mr. Morerro to explain the “nuts and bolts” of the process.

B. Unified Planning Work Program

No proposed amendments were presented.

C. Workforce Planning

Chairman Pace asked that Bill Villano be requested to attend the April meeting of the LCVSLA.

D. Regional Transportation Plan

Jean Davies requested that a sub-committee be formed to concentrate on the Regional Transportation Plan that is scheduled to be re-adopted next year. This is part of a state-wide effort to have the time lines of all transportation regions conform to one another. The new version of the plan is extending to 2030.

E. Public Transportation Application

Jean Davies explained that the Public Transit Subcommittee, consisting of Tim Griswold, Willie Fritz and Tom Marsh met and recommended that the municipalities pool their resources and apply jointly for a grant to supply additional transportation to seniors and persons with disabilities.

It was agreed that a coordinated effort will be more efficient and can provide more service for the money. There is the extra incentive that the state awards extra points for coordinated efforts. After the town contributions are leveraged and matched by the state, the ETD will do the quarterly reporting and accept financial responsibility. All local transportation related donations to the Estuary Transit District, The Estuary Council of Seniors, VISTA, the Visiting Nurses Association etc. can be leveraged.

Jim Rode distributed updated estimates for 2007-2008 showing the maximum amount anticipated by each town. The Senior Resources grant application is being based on these figures. The “remaining available” column refers to areas where it is possible to expand an existing program. Jim hopes to add newer busses to the fleet, to add extra hours of service and to provide free fares for passengers with disabilities, similar to the consideration now given to seniors.

When asked why the figures are different for Lyme and Killingworth, Jim explained that the formula gives 50% consideration to the square miles of a town and 50% for the people served. Both towns are larger geographically and neither has a history of heavy demand.

Mitzi Eilts questioned the numbers on the sheet as distributed. She noted that she has requested more money than is reflected. Jim Rode explained that the numbers are from the 2005-2006 budgets as reported as actual expenditures by the towns. Jean explained that each town has to certify its contributions.

Linda Krause observed that Jim Rode is the Director of the Transit District. He is assisted in planning through the MPO’s Unified Planning Work Program which is assigned to Jean Davies. Mitzi and the ECS administers EMOTS only. John Forbis represents Old Lyme on the ETD Board. Questions concerning the ETD should be addressed to Jim.

Jim explained that the application is a working document. The ETD had one month to put it together.

Chairman Pace urged Jim to get the document together and submit it.

Jean noted that this program is NOT regionally coordinated. The ETD is dealing directly with each town. The ETD will market the program. She reminded each selectman that they must submit the certification of expenditures to the ETD on town letterhead.

VI. Other Business

A. Participation

Chairman Pace expressed concern about the consistent lack of participation from Lyme and Killingworth. He asked for suggestions to stimulate attendance from those particular towns. Each town has already been asked repeatedly to provide an alternate if the First Selectman is unable to attend.

B. Communication Systems

Chairman Pace announced that Old Saybrook is about to install a new communication system. He is sure that his town can successfully compete with Valley Shore for any town that is interested in changing services.

Respectfully submitted,

Winifred T. Olson, Clerk