



**LOWER CONNECTICUT VALLEY
SELECTMEN'S ASSOCIATION
Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization**

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Wednesday, September 8, 2004

8:30 a.m.

At

ESTUARY SENIOR CENTER
212 Main Street
Old Saybrook, CT

Agenda

Estuary MPO

- (1) Call to Order**
- (2) Approval of Minutes of August 11, 2004**
- (3) Public Comment Period (Opportunity for public input and comment on existing or future transportation topics)**
- (4) New Business –**
 - a. Any STIP amendments received after agenda mailing.**
- (5) Other Business/Correspondence**

Special Needs

Estuary MPO meetings occur regularly on the second Wednesday of each month at 8:30AM. Closed audio loops and/or a sign language interpreter will be made available upon request; the former upon two weeks notice and the latter, secured via the Connecticut Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, with a minimum of three weeks notice. Foreign language translation is provided upon request with two weeks notice for translation of minutes or meeting attendance.

Will insert Spanish/ Chinese Translation

**Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization
September 8, 2004
Minutes**

Attendance:

Chester:	Martin Heft
Clinton:	James McCusker
Deep River:	Dick Smith
Essex:	Phil Miller
Killingworth:	David Denvir
Lyme:	Bill Koch
Old Lyme:	Tim Griswold
Old Saybrook:	Mike Pace
Westbrook:	Tony Palermo
DOT:	Richard Corona
Staff:	Jean Davies, Amy Cabaniss, J.H.Torrance Downes, Wini Olson
Guests:	Mitzi Eilts, Director of the Estuary Council of Seniors, Nancy Clark, President of the Estuary Council of Seniors, Betty Wagner, representing Congressman Rob Simmons, Mike Bzdyra, CRRA, Thomas Gaffey, CRRA.

I. The meeting of the Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization was called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman Mike Pace in Room B at the Estuary Council of Seniors on Main Street in Old Saybrook, CT.

II. Minutes

Tony Palermo moved that the minutes of the August 8, 2004 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Martin Heft. Phil Miller asked that a discussion of CRRA be added under Old Business.

Chairman Pace suggested that Mr. Miller restate his request when the group reconvenes as the Lower Connecticut Valley Selectman's Association. The motion was approved with Jim McCusker abstaining from the vote because he was not present in August.

III. Comments from the public.

Jim Rode, Executive Director of the Estuary Transit District, reported that the busses have been repainted with the "9 Town Transit" logo. The ETD is in the process of installing bus stop signs.

Jim Rode announced that bus service has been initiated in Old Lyme between the hours of 10 AM and 2 PM. Schedules are available.

Chairman Pace asked if the Bus Stop signs could be placed on existing poles. Old Saybrook is trying to reduce the proliferation of signs. The ETD will use existing poles whenever possible.

IV. New Business

A. STIP

Jean Davies announced that the STIP amendments involve Federal Funds with matches. No specific projects are in this region.

Rich Corona noted that the Federal funds will go directly to DOT.

Martin Heft asked why the MPO has to vote on projects that are not in the region.

Jean explained that statewide projects and general maintenance in state parks is included in the STIP.

The MPO agreed to support the STIP. There were no abstentions.

There being no other business to conduct, the MPO meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy C. Griswold, Secretary

Lower Connecticut River Valley Selectmen's Association
September 8, 2004
Minutes

I. Chairman Pace called the meeting to order immediately after the close of the CREMPO meeting. The same people were in attendance.

Phil Miller moved that CRRA be discussed under item (4). The Motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved.

II. Minutes

Martin Heft moved that the minutes of the August 8 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved.

III. New Business

A. Judges of Probate

Chairman Pace reported that he had done some independent research on the financial status of individual probate courts in the State of Connecticut. Only two courts are losing money. He noted that, at the August meeting, he had asked for business models and financial statements from the courts in the region. He has received no answers. He asked the staff to write to the judges. Chairman Pace noted that combined courts would involve additional personnel and a reduction in services.

David Denvir reported that he, Bart Russell of COST and others went to the offices of the Probate Administrator. They were informed that revenues to the courts are growing but expenses are outgrowing the income. The cost for 2008 is projected to be \$31,000,000. No information was available to substantiate the projection.

Bill Koch reminded members that the existing Probate System is funded entirely by user fees at no cost to the tax payers. The state recently took \$15,000,000 from the Probate reserve.

Tim Griswold asked why the information is not available through FOI. He asked for an analysis of "where we are now".

It was agreed that the group would wait and respond to the October 1 report of the Administrator.

B. EMS Study

Tony Palermo reported that he received the preliminary report yesterday. Many participants in the system still have not replied to the questionnaire. Copies of the preliminary report will be sent to the members of the sub-committee. Consultant Robert Ziegler has agreed to meet with the committee and go over the preliminary report.

At Middlesex, it is business as usual.

C. CRRA Contract

Phil Miller initiated the discussion by offering to give the members some background information. He has been investigating the Essex facility vs. the other CRRA facilities in the state. No other contract involves tipping fees. In all other cases, the land is owned by CRRA. In this region, the land is owned by Essex. A surcharge pays \$30,000 annually to the Town of Essex and provides \$28,000 for a recycling coordinator. He asked why the region employs a recycling coordinator.

Chairman Pace introduced Mike Bzdyra and Tom Gaffey of CRRA who gave a brief history of the original contract. It was noted that the Estuary contract has been in place since 1993.

Tom Gaffey explained that recycling was mandated in the 1980s. At that time DEP was awarding grants. CRRA retrofitted the plants in Hartford and Stratford to include recycling.

When the Estuary Region contract was negotiated in 1993, state policy included a local coordinator to promote recycling and educate the public. He noted that Middletown also has an excellent recycling coordinator. Mr. Gaffey stated that, as the grants ran out, some of the coordinator positions were eliminated in other parts of the state the negative impact on the communities and the level of recycling was significant.

Phil Miller understood that a grant had run out here and the towns assumed the responsibility for the coordinator.

Mr. Gaffey explained that that is not the case. Grants were available in the 1980s but were no longer available when the original Estuary contract was executed in 1993. That agreement included a surcharge to pay for the Recycling Coordinator.

Chairman Pace commented that the coordinator spearheaded the construction of the Household Hazardous Waste facility and persisted for years.

Although the facility was paid for by grants, it was explained that the grants that were acquired and administered by the coordinator.

Chairman Pace explained that CRRA does not charge the communities for accepting recyclable materials. They cost CRRA \$35 a ton to dispose of. recycling is a direct benefit to towns. The benefits are social, managerial and cost effective.

Phil noted that it is a matter of principal and asked if there is a consensus of opinion.

David Denvir assured him that there is and offered to make a motion.

Bill Koch noted that Lyme does not send their recyclable materials to CRRA but still voluntarily contributes to the fund.

Phil mentioned that Essex receives \$30,000 annually as a host benefit but is not exempted from the surcharge and therefore pays \$3000 into the fund, leaving a net of only \$27,000.

Dick Smith asked how much tonnage the Town of Essex takes to the transfer station. Phil did not know. Dick mentioned that the tip fee is paid by the private haulers.

Tim Griswold asked Phil what the Town of Essex does to earn the host fee. How is it used?

Chairman Pace noted that Essex enjoys extremely low trucking fees. He understands that Essex pays \$50 per pull. All other towns pay in excess of \$100 per pull.

Tom Chaffee agreed that trucking fees are a major part of the expense for most towns. He reaffirmed that Essex is the only town in the state that receives a host town benefit.

Tim asked why the amount is \$30,000 and suggested that it be recalculated as a benefit in lieu of taxes.

Phil asserted that he had only sought clarification

Mike Bzdyra reminded the Selectmen that he had previously sent a cover letter that answered all of the questions that have been raised today.

Tom Chaffee explained that the questions CRRA received in writing from Carol Speer were not specific. Phone calls did not clarify the issue. Carol asked what CRRA does for recycling in other areas.

Chairman Pace reminded Selectman Miller that as Chair of CRRA, he lives right next door. It would have been easy to ask questions directly.

David Denvir moved that the LCVSA approve the expenditure of \$28,000 for the recycling coordinator and approve the release of said funds, thereby reaffirming the commitment of eight of the communities. If Essex fails to sign the contract within two weeks, the host community fee should be recalculated. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith.

Phil Miller commented that the proposal actually contained two motions. After discussion that lead to the assurance that the contract allows for an annual recalculation of the host community benefit, Sel. Denvir rescinded his motion and replaced it with a motion to approve the expenditure of \$28,000 for the recycling coordinator and approve the release of said funds. The amended motion was approved and seconded by Dick Smith.

Chairman Pace suggested that the host community fee should be reviewed annually as specified in the contract. Tim Griswold asked Amy when the rate has to set and reaffirmed his request for a justification for the amount. Since the fee usually is set in April or May, Chairman Pace suggested that the Association review it in November when both CRRA and the municipalities are assessing their budgets.

Bill Koch asked why Lyme and Old Lyme pay the surcharge when they send their recycled materials to other vendors.

Amy explained that they participate in the HHW collections and receive educational assistance, publicity, outreach and other amenities.

Tom Chaffee reminded them of the electronics that would otherwise be part of the trash. The Essex electronics collections are the most successful of any in the state.

Tim Griswold asked if they can be more frequent. Tom Chaffee assured him that CRRA would do spring and fall collections if requested.

Amy announced that space in the HHW facility had been dedicated to electronics.

Tony Palermo asked why the collection is being held on a holiday.

Amy explained that it was set for September 18 but CRRA was over committed on that day.

A vote was called for and the motion was unanimously approved.

Amy Cabaniss asked that each member sign Exhibit B on page 35 of their copy of the contract.

David Denvir moved that Linda B. Krause be authorized to sign on behalf of Association on page 9 of the contract. The motion was seconded by Tony Palermo and unanimously approved.

Chairman Pace reminded members to cross out May and replace it with September 2004.

Phil Miller asked if the Town of Essex could bring a collection of old, obsolete computers to the household collection. Tom Chaffee will take it to the CRRA board for consideration.

Mike Bzdyra explained that CRRA pays by the pound for the recycling. A half dozen computers from Essex would not make a huge difference but extending the same courtesy to the City of Hartford would be incredible.

D. Reports

Chairman Pace asked Betty Wagner for a report from Congressman Simmons. Betty mentioned that she had copies of the handouts that she distributed at the CRVCEO luncheon and a list of upcoming grant opportunities.

Betty mentioned that Congressman Simmons has contacted the FCC about computer SPAM. A Memorandum of Understanding has been formulated with Australia and the UK. To learn more go to SPAM@UCC.GOV

E. HHW

Tim Griswold reviewed the payment sheet for HHW. He noted that the charge is \$37 per car with a minimum charge for less than 100 cars. By factoring in the new charge, the cost rises to an alarming \$59 per car. Amy assured him that the price remains at \$37 per household. A household is calculated as 20 pounds or 20 gallons. Miniscule amounts are not counted as a household. This summer the region has not met the minimum amounts of waste agreed upon. There are often as few as 85 cars on a Saturday morning.. the contract requires a minimum of 100. The set up fee of \$800, security and an OPEC fee are reflected as part of the Operations and Management expense.

Tim asked if there should be fewer collections. It is anticipated that Spring and Fall cleaning seasons will produce more waste. School is one of the best opportunities to educate families.

Chairman Pace asked if it would be advisable to allow another community to use the facility. The contract allows that only after the first five years.

Dick Smith offered thanks to Amy for a lot of work that is not seen.

F. CRERPA

1. Web Page

Jean Davies announced that the redesigned CRERPA Web Page is up and running at CRERPA.ORG. She asked everyone to check it out.

2. Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

Jean reminded members that CRERPA is helping to prepare Hazard Mitigation plans for each of the member towns. The plan for Essex is complete and has been submitted. The national reviewers were pleased with the product. It now needs to go to public hearing. Hazard Mitigation plans must be approved locally by the Selectmen, the Planning Commission or another locally designated authority.

Chairman Pace announced that the newly opened Old Saybrook Town Hall includes an Emergency Management Center, fully equipped with fiber optic communications that can serve the town or even the region.

Adjournment.

Martin Heft moved that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy C. Griswold
Secretary