

Connecticut River Valley Council of Elected Officials
January 25, 2006

Attendance: Please see attached list.

I. The meeting was called to order at noon in the private dining area in Vinnie's Fish House in Old Saybrook by Host Tim Griswold.

II. **Minutes**

Willie Fritz moved that the minutes of the December meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Brad Parker and unanimously approved.

III. **Legislators**

A. Representative Rob Simmons

Selectmen Griswold introduced Rep. Rob Simmons who stressed how important it is to work together.

Rep. Simmons noted that since 1994 "ear marks" have been allocated to specific districts. They are carved out of the state allocation. Rep. Simmons was pleased to note that every town in the region had received federal funding for a specific project except Killingworth – and urged Killingworth to designate a fundable project and "Call the office". Rep Simmons reminded the Selectmen not to feel guilty about using the money for local projects. Connecticut pays the highest amount per capita into the federal budget and gets the least amount in return of any state.

Rep. Simmons mentioned that the three bills that he introduced are proceeding well. The Eight Mile River Legislation is on track and is awaiting approval from each of the towns. The Long Island Sound Stewardship Act is nearing approval and will extend the current study for five more years. Route 11 should be completed by the end of this year.

Rep. Simmons intends to vote against the federal budget as it is being presented. He is upset about cuts in human service programs to benefit defense. He would suggest a 1.5% cut across the board. He is not in favor of cutting so-called entitlements.

In reference to his recent trip to Iraq, Rep. Simmons reported on the progress of the training of Iraqi police and armed forces. He was particularly impressed by a Connecticut Reserve unit that served as Embassy Security and the security unit for the green zone. They did such a good job that their tour was extended to sixteen months. Fortunately, there were no casualties.

Mike Pace asked Rep. Simmons about the need for special consideration for returning amputees. Rep. Simmons described the programs that are in place and added that the greatest challenges are presented by those who return with mental disabilities.

Brad Parker reported that East Haddam has endorsed the Eight Mile River Project. Salem will vote on February 6.

Phil Miller asked Rep. Simmons about money being cut from human service projects.

Peter Sipples asked about the Broadwater Project.

Rep. Simmons reported that when the project was first announced, he wrote to the Coast Guard requesting information on a long list of technical data. He has had no answer. He is opposed to the project and views it as an “unusual use of an unusual asset”. He suggested that if New York needs more power, it should “fire up” the Shoreham Nuclear Plant.

Rep. Linda Orange asked about the loss by the state of certain federal funds. Rep. Simmons made a list of suggestions including lifting the spending cap.

B. Senator Daily

Senator Daily congratulated members on their election.

She commented that Representative Simmons is the first Republican she has heard advocates lifting the cap. She noted that the Governor has recommended using the surplus to fund the teachers’ retirement fund. She (Senator Daily) would include both the teachers and state employees. This year we are experiencing higher than anticipated revenue.

Phil Miller asked that the manufacturer’s tax be reduced.

Senator Daily strongly urged him to COME TO THE HEARINGS.

Rep. Linda Orange mentioned the need for money for dispatch centers.

Phil Miller asked about the progress of the STEAP grants and the TAR funds.

Senator Daily assured him that the TAR funds should be secure for another two years.

Tony Bondi introduced his guest Selectman.

C. Rep. Linda Orange

Rep. Orange had no further comments.

IV. Chairman pro-tem Griswold called for round table introductions.

V. Committees

There is some uncertainty about the status of the committees.

Since eight of the seventeen members are new, CRERPA Director Linda Krause gave a brief history of the CRVCEO and explained what it is.

Tim Griswold asked for a list of Committees and suggested that they be critiqued at the next meeting.

VI. Election of Officers

Brad Parker explained the importance of the Council and explained that as one became more familiar with the job, the importance of the Council and of working together became more evident. He noted that he and Alan Bergren had asked for volunteers for the offices. Mike Pace and Phil Miller have both volunteered to chair the council. No one has come forth to serve as secretary. He noted that staff takes the minutes but certain documents do have to be signed from time to time. He asked to postpone election to the next meeting.

There was no objection. It was agreed by consensus to have Tim Griswold serve as Chairman pro-tem.

A list of members, addresses, Phone numbers, FAX numbers and Email addresses was distributed together with a list of meeting dates for 2006.

VII. Public Health

Chairman Pro-tem Griswold turned the floor over to Pamela Kilby-Fox who introduced Dr. Albert Geetter. Dr. Geetter said that his job is to look for trends that indicate the emergence of threats to public health. Dr. Geetter explained that the Strategic National Stock Pile is a collection of warehouses with medical supplies. He outlined how the distribution plan is set up. He noted that this plan is aimed at mitigation, not prevention.

Pam Kilby Fox announced that a drill is scheduled for April 19. It will be assumed that "something has happened". There will be a rehearsal of shipping supplies to the state by air or by truck. Distribution centers will be set up. Medical personnel will gather and rehearse the routine. 4000 volunteers are being sought to serve as patients. Ms. Fox stressed that the First Selectmen are the designated first Responders. They must ASK for help if it is needed. The handout gives the statutory references and directions for accessing a Community Leaders Distance Learning Course. If municipal staff is sent to participate in the rehearsal, the town can be reimbursed \$200 per eight hour day per person for their services.

Rick Fontana, Regional Emergency Preparedness Coordinator for the Milford Health Department stressed that Region II encompasses 940 square miles and three quarters of a million people. The region is bounded by Milford on the West and Old Saybrook on the East. Most of the municipalities have signed a MOU to help one another with medical emergencies. There may be grant opportunities for municipalities.

Diana Yusami of The Milford Health Department announced that recruitment is underway for 4000 volunteers to serve as patients.

Brad Parker announced that East Haddam has asked to leave Region 2 and be included in the Capitol Region with the rest of the Chatham Health District. Ms. Kilby-Fox assured him that his transfer has been approved for emergency planning purposes.

VII. Other Business

It was agreed that the February meeting will be held in East Haddam.

The meeting was adjourned and lunch was enjoyed.

Respectfully submitted,

Winifred T. Olson
Clerk

