

**Connecticut River Valley Council of Elected Officials**  
**Minutes**  
**May 24, 2006**

**Attendance: Please see attached.**

**I.** Chairman Phil Miller called the meeting to order at noon in a conference room at the Kreible Gallery of the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme. The lunch and meeting followed a private viewing of the gallery arranged by host Tim Griswold. Chairman Miller called for round table introductions.

**II Minutes**

Brad Parker moved that the minutes of the April 27, 2006 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Tim Griswold and unanimously approved.

**III. Guest**

Chairman Miller welcomed Secretary of State Susan Byciewicz, who announced that she would have definitive answers about voting machine changes by June. In the mean time, she explained the situation within the requirements of the advertised proposal. The federal government has banned the lever machines used throughout Connecticut by requiring a paper audit trail. All polling places must be fully assessable for people with disabilities, including the blind.

Connecticut previously solicited for new machines. No vendor was able to fully comply with the requirements. There have been even fewer responses to the current RFP. Connecticut is a small market that only needs 3300 HAVA compliant machines.

The other New England states are using optical scanners, similar to the one successfully used in Old Lyme. Each polling place would need only two scanners supplemented by a touch tone telephone system for the blind.

Secretary Byciewicz is reluctant to require the use of the new technology this year unless the purchase can be made early enough to allow public education and training sessions for election officials prior to the election. Training will be provided by Congressional District.

Secretary Byciewicz assured members that the state will provide machines for all towns. She later explained that each town will receive an allocation.

Selectman Jon Brayshaw asked whether a Town Hall that is used as a polling place may remain open for business. Might it be considered a violation of the 75 foot law if related matters were discussed in another part of the building? Secretary Byciewicz took his card and will get back to him. Several other towns, including Essex and Chester stay open during elections.

Mr. Brayshaw also asked about the legality of setting up a kiosk where voters who oppose a referendum could leave written opinions about how to improve the proposal. In discussion, it was agreed that such exit polls, typically held by members of Boards of Education, should be held 75 feet from the polls.

**IV. Business**

- A. Legislative Committee Report  
There was no committee activity.

B. Reports from Legislators

Rep. James Spallone reported that more money will be coming to the towns through energy assistance, TAR grants and Special Education funds. The elimination of the manufacturers' equipment tax will be spread over a five year period. The 2.3 billion dollars dedicated to transportation will include Shoreline East improvements. He was pleased that a reporter shield bill had passed along with repairs to the campaign finance bill. He reported that energy, gas prices and eminent domain must still be faced by the next session.

When asked about the progress of STEAP, Rep. Spallone reported that the May bond session, which might have dealt with STEAP, was cancelled. The commission should meet on June 1. Regarding Open Space, he noted that the \$30 fee is filling up the coffers for farmland preservation.

V. Old Business

A. Workforce Development

Bill Villano, Director of the South Central Workforce Investment Board explained that the Board consists of seven elected officials, five of whom left office last November, including all three members that represent Middlesex County.

Mr. Villano was pleased that Tom Marsh and Willie Fritz have agreed to be part of the board. One more member is needed, preferably from one of the northern towns. Brad Parker volunteered to serve and was heartily endorsed.

Mr. Villano noted that transportation is a major problem for workers.

Chairman Miller mentioned that Mr. Villano is working with the Chambers. Mr. Villano replied that he works primarily with the Greater New Haven, Meriden and Middlesex chambers.

A. Meeting Dates

The June meeting will be held in Deep River. July will be East Hampton.

B. Attendance Issues

Concern was expressed about consistently missing members, particularly Westbrook and Killingworth. Brad Parker wondered if a memo explaining the value of the group might help. It was agreed that members who find it difficult to attend should be encouraged to delegate the privilege to another board member. Jon Brayshaw mentioned that as "a new kid on the block", he felt overwhelmed and found it difficult to leave the office. Brad Parker noted that he was very recently in the same position and that this group was a large part of what helped him get through that first year. He enthusiastically enumerated many of the ways that he has found the group to be an asset.

Jim McLaughlin invited the CRVCEO to meet in Durham this fall. Mr. Brayshaw suggested that August meeting be in Middlefield.

C. Meeting Topics

Tom Marsh suggested that the group invite speakers to explain the details of grants including STEAP and LOSIP. Sources to be considered are Under Secretary David LeVasseur of OPM, Senator Daily who is on the Bond Commission, Sel. Jenny Contois of Colchester, who Brad considers "the Grant Queen of COST, Larry Wagner from the Small Cities program and the CCM staff.

Tom Marsh asked if CRVCEO could jointly create a calendar of events including the legislative schedule, budget time, grant deadlines and other scheduled demands.

Linda Krause suggested inviting members SCCOG to a joint meeting to discuss what that group is doing.

Further consideration of housing issues was suggested.

Brad explained how helpful it was to address the EMT issue together and how much East Haddam has benefited from joining the Capitol Region Purchasing Council.

D. Budget Survey

Brad Parker asked for an informal survey of whether budgets had passed, how much they had changed and what affect they had on the mil rate. Each member gave an oral report. The conversation evolved into a discussion of budget strategies and bond ratings.

Jim McLaughlin moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Jon Brayshaw. The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wini Olson, Staff