



Lawrence B. Adams Executive Director
Community Development
Mary Ellen Blunt Transportation
Janet Pierce Regional Services and
Business Manager
Otto R. Lies Commission Chair

Approved by a vote of the Committee – July 10, 2013

**CMRPC Legislative Affairs Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 8, 2013**

Present: Leon Gaumont, Shaun Suhoski, Kristin Wood, Adam Gaudette, Sherry Patch,
(Quorum - yes)
Staff: Trish Settles
Absent: Tom Gregory, Kristen Garza

1. Call to order – 1:17pm

2. Review of the Minutes:

A motion was made by Leon, seconded by Sherry and four voted to approve (with one abstention from Shaun) the minutes of April 10, 2013.

3. Discussion of Request to the CMRPC Executive Committee –

In response to a letter sent by the Town of Dudley to the region’s town leaders, a motion was made by Sherry and seconded by Tom to request that the CMRPC Executive Committee send a letter to legislators of the region asking them to support legislation entitled the “Sustainable Education Funding Act” that would cap annual increases to public school funding at 2.5%.

Trish explained the decision of the Executive Committee (EC) as explained to her by Larry Adams. The EC was not comfortable sending the requested letter to legislators because they felt it was advocating. They want the LAC to draw the distinction between advocacy and lobbying and education. They also felt the topic was beyond the typical purview of a RPA. Larry also indicated that DOT is very concerned about even the appearance of advocacy or policy making and even discourages our membership in organizations that might do so.

There was a discussion that the LAC should deal with such matters on a case-by-case basis. For example, there was a perception that a similar request on a less controversial/less divisive issue such as Chapter 90 funding might be acceptable. Clearly a letter regarding Casino’s would be more divisive. Trish suggested that it might be appropriate to send a letter to the delegates asking for their support if first asking the EC to put it on the agenda of a CMRPC commission meeting for a formal vote. Trish will ask Charlie at MAPC how they are able to advocate for specific legislative agendas, with the Dudley request as a specific example. Kristin suggested that maybe if we phrased our request to the EC differently as a request to send a letter to build awareness (or educate) our delegates on a particular legislative topic, it might be received and acted on differently.

A letter to delegates and towns encouraging their support for DLTA or CIC was also discussed.

4. Spring Event

The Spring Event will take place on June 14th at CMRPC from 8-10am. We will be joined by Rep Anne Gobi of Spencer and Senator Jennifer Flanagan of Leominster. The intended audience for the “Mass Legislation 101” is municipal leaders.

Draft agenda

8:00 Meet and greet and networking

8:30 LAC Chair Shaun Suhoski, welcome and program overview and purpose

8:40 Rep. Anne Gobi, overview of how legislative process works in Massachusetts

9:10 Sen. Jennifer Flanagan, case studies, real world examples of the process

9:40 Questions and Answers

10:00 Wrap up

Kristin suggested that we also invite folks from MRPC and Sen. Flanagan’s communities.

Outreach – Trish will work with Janet to put in newsletters, email to delegates, town contacts, TA/TM, ES and to our legislators.

We will also look for handouts that summarize the process (citizen’s guide), especially if already in existence.

5. New businesses. There was some discussion of possible topics for the Fall event. Nothing was decided.

6. Next meeting date: July 10th 1pm at CMRPC, after the Managers Meeting

7. Meeting adjourned at 2:17pm.

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