

DRAFT MINUTES
H V C E O

SPECIAL MEETING OF JULY 17, 2003
AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL

Chairman Herbert Rosenthal of Newtown
Vice Chairman Martin Foncello of Brookfield; Secretary-Treasurer Natalie Ketcham of Redding

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES IN ATTENDANCE

Bethel.....First Selectman Judy Novachek
Bridgewater.....First Selectman William Stuart, Alternate Robert Brown
Brookfield.....Absent
Danbury.....Mayor Mark Boughton
New Fairfield.....First Selectman Peggy Katkocin
New Milford.....Mayor Robert Gambino
Newtown.....Herbert Rosenthal, Chairman
Redding.....First Selectman Natalie Ketcham
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi, Alternate Peter Yanity
Sherman.....First Selectman Arthur von Plachecki

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Richard Schreiner of HART, Holly Burbank of Metropool, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Jack Deering of Bethel, James Bellano of HVEDP, Robert Palmer of HRRRA, Candy Acquanita and Jonathan Chew of HVCEO.

CALL TO ORDER

The special meeting on related regional agency financing was called to order by Chairman Herb Rosenthal at 10:05 A.M. Chairman Rosenthal thanked members for the courtesy shown to his father, former HVCEO member Jack Rosenthal, who served as his alternate at the 6/20/2003 meeting.

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF 6/20/2003

On a motion made by Bob Gambino and seconded by Art von Plachecki, the minutes of the meeting of 6/20/2003 were unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 6/2003

On a motion made by Art von Plachecki and seconded by Bob Gambino, the financial statement for 6/2003 was unanimously approved.

FUNDING OF HVCEO, HVEDP AND HRRRA

Herb Rosenthal opened the discussion. He noted that HVCEO, HVEDP and HRRRA were all planning their FY2004 budgets separately, that the decisions on all three affect the municipalities, and that the three budgets are interrelated as they share

staff services in the same office and thus have impacts upon each other.

Jon Chew was asked to report on HVCEO finances first. He started by reviewing the adopted budget for FY2004. He noted that HVCEO provides \$50,000 to HVEDP annually, this year a combination of cash (\$35,164) and federal program (Citizen Corps) reimbursement (\$14,836).

Also, as that HVEDP is experiencing emergency financial conditions, should HVCEO receive a \$45,000 planning grant from CT OPM for FY2004 an additional \$14,836 of the \$45,000 has been earmarked for HVEDP. Thus HVCEO support for HVEDP for FY2004 will range from a firm \$50,000 up to a possible \$64,836, out of the total of \$128,000 needed.

Continuing, it was noted that in the case that HVEDP leaves the HVCEO office and locates at the Danbury Chamber, then the HVEDP share of fixed office costs must be borne by HVCEO and HRRRA, an expense which neither has planned for. HVCEO and HVEDP directors agree that this gap is valued at \$10,000.

Thus if HVEDP leaves the HVCEO office, HVCEO support for HVEDP in FY2004 must be revised downward to a minimum of \$40,000, on up to a possible \$54,836. The handout accompanying the presentation noted that the revision if applied would be prorated from the point during the fiscal year that HVEDP leaves the HVCEO office.

Continuing his remarks, Jon Chew stated that if HRRRA went out of business during FY2004, HVCEO has no leverage mechanism as above to adjust for the impact to its shared fixed costs, as HVCEO does not make an annual cash contribution to HRRRA.

While HRRRA is participating in a HVCEO terrorism response grant for \$30,000, there is no cash savings to HVCEO if this is cut. If HRRRA meets its demise then the impact upon HVCEO for FY2004 would be a negative \$14,078, again prorated over the year if HRRRA ceases mid-year. Where HVCEO would obtain this sum is problematic. There was then discussion by members of these points.

HVEDP Director Jim Bellano then reviewed HVEDP's finances. The loss of the annual \$50,000 from the Housatonic Valley Tourism Commission towards his minimum budget of \$128,000 must be made up elsewhere, he said.

An action under consideration is to move into the office of the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce, where synergy for economic development work would be positive. The hope is that this location would help to obtain financial support from the private sector, now lacking. Also, the Chamber would provide about \$10,000 of staff overhead support, without requesting reimbursement from HVEDP, thus making up for the \$10,000 lost from moving from HVCEO.

There was then a discussion of the merits of this move, in terms of the independence of HVEDP and public perceptions of such a co-location. Mr. Bellano cited the fact that there are currently five HVCEO members serving on the HVEDP board of directors, and that this should help alleviate any concerns about the organization being too Danbury focused at the expense of the other towns in the Region.

The consensus was there are advantages and disadvantages of moving to the Chamber office. The members agreed to endorse whatever strategy Director Bellano and HVEDP agreed would keep HVEDP financially viable.

Mr. Bellano noted that current funds committed will only carry HVEDP into October of 2004.

It was noted that there will also be a layoff from the HVCEO staff, Administrative Assistant Marilyn Wajert who is assigned to HVEDP, in order to stretch available FY2004 funds as far as possible.

Members commented that economic development is very important to the area, that the services provided by HVEDP are valuable and should continue.

Bob Palmer then reviewed FY2004 funding for HRRRA. Current funds committed will carry HRRRA into December of 2004, a little longer than HVEDP. The usual source of annual operating income, fees per ton of waste collected, are being withheld this year and further negotiation or legal action will be needed to free them.

Members commented that HRRRA services are vital to each municipality to prevent expensive liabilities and to keep the complex municipal contractual arrangements operating smoothly. Jon Chew stated that Brookfield First Selectman Marty Foncello could not attend today, but that he stated over the phone his view to the other members that HRRRA is vital and that he is willing to fund it.

There was then discussion of each municipality funding a part of the HRRRA operating budget until the usual per ton fees can be secured via negotiations or legal action, after which the municipal costs can be reimbursed from the fees that were delayed.

OLD BUSINESS, NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 A.M.