

**Approved by a vote of the Committee - April 5, 2012**

**CMRPC Legislative Affairs Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

February 9, 2012

**Present:** Adam Gaudette, Shaun Suhoski, Kristin Wood, Kristen Garza  
**Staff:** Lawrence Adams, Trish Settles  
**Absent:** Peter Krawczyk  
**Guest:** Leon Gaumond

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- Welcome and Introductions:** This is the first meeting of the newly established CMRPC Legislative Affairs Committee. A general round of introductions was completed with everyone present, each person stating their name, position and reason for being on the committee.
- Review Mission/Charge:** Trish reviewed the committees charge as developed by the CMRPC Executive Committee:

*Legislative Affairs Committee Charge*

- The Legislative Affairs Committee is composed of five members: three members either delegates or alternates of the commission and two members from municipalities, all appointed by the Commission Chairman for one-year terms.*
  - The Committee shall monitor actions of the Legislature as they pertain to concerns of the CMRPC and shall convene semi annually, as appropriate, with municipal officials and the central Massachusetts legislative caucus for the purpose of seeking and providing relevant information of interest.*
  - The Committee will work in concert with the parallel bodies of the Commission as well as work closely with and advise MARPA in its dealings with the Legislature.*
- Identify Committee Priorities:** Larry Adams spoke about the need to advance the interest of the municipalities in the region foremost and also the need to advance the interest of CMRPC. One priority is to develop subregional linkages. Larry indicated that through the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agency (MARPA) staff at Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) provide support for government affairs for all of the RPAs collectively.

Historically CMRPC has paid close attention to and been a voice on Beacon Hill for the need for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) among other legislative activities. In addition to

MARPA, several related organizations develop a regular set of legislative priorities. Leon mentioned that Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) has a published set. MARPA formulates its priorities, at times can be instrumental in actual development of legislation, and seeks bill sponsors, etc. The committee agreed that generally we will use the MARPA staff for guidance and refrain from duplicating any of their efforts. We might, however attempt to raise issues for our region to the MARPA staff and let them strategize how to effectively push for them on Beacon Hill. Trish will meet with the MARPA staff to develop a working relationship, and to understand their process for the development of their priorities.

The committee seemed in agreement that most bills may see across the board support from communities. However, given the differences in our communities with regard to such issues as housing and Chapter 40B, casinos, infrastructure improvements, that there are likely to be times when bills will be supported by some communities and opposed by others. We will seek to work most on those bills with broad regional support.

The issues that may likely be a focus of our legislative priorities, pending further exploration, are related to the following topics:

- Transportation funding
- Stormwater permitting
- Energy
- Access to the grid
- Chapter 90 funding
- Economic Development
- Removal of unfunded mandates

CMRPC has in the past hosted breakfast events for our constituent communities to meet face to face with our regions legislative caucus. The last one was held in May of 2011 and was well attended. The committee will consider when such an event or events might be held again. There were thoughts about when they are most likely to affect the legislation or the budget. Kristin Wood will speak with staff from Senator Brewer's office regarding their thoughts. Kristin Garza will send us her notes from CMRPC's May 2011 Legislative Breakfast.

The committee felt a simple survey to municipal government (Administrators, Managers, Boards of Selectmen, etc.) should be done to gauge our region's top legislative priorities. Shaun Suhoski will work with Trish to draft the survey language.

4. **Selection of officers:** This item was tabled earlier in the meeting so that everyone had a better sense of the committee direction and member responsibilities before making commitments. Adam Gaudette indicated a willingness to serve as vice chair. Kristen Garza will consider being

chair, but her job has changed and she is uncertain of her new responsibilities and time availability. We will revisit this again at the next meeting.

5. **Set Meeting Schedule:** The next meeting will be in early to mid April. Trish will email members with regard to preferred dates and availability in the coming weeks.
6. **Announcements / Upcoming Meetings:** There were no announcements or discussion of related upcoming meetings.
7. A request for continued thoughts on Legislative Affairs Committee activities and priorities.

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