

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239**

**MINUTES
Board of Directors' Meeting
COG Board Room
March 10, 2004**

BOARD MEMBERS, ALTERNATES AND PARTICIPANTS PRESENT AND NOT PRESENT

***SEE ATTACHED CHART FOR ATTENDANCE**

STAFF

**David J. Robertson, Executive Director
Lee Ruck, General Counsel
Stuart Freudberg, Director of Environmental Programs**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Mendelson called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2004

Motion was made and seconded to adopt the minutes of the February 11 meeting. Mayor Judith Davis requested that the minutes be amended to change the wording of her presentation on page 5 to read: "The MML is also concerned about fee increases and that the fund, like the highway user fund, will be raided in the future to balance the state budget."

Motion to adopt the minutes, with the amended language, carried unanimously.

3. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

a) WETA Homeland Security Series – February 24, 2004

Chair Mendelson reported that Executive Director Dave Robertson, Gerald Connolly, Doug Duncan and Anthony Williams took part in a televised town hall meeting on homeland security with Secretary Tom Ridge. Held at George Mason University, the meeting was filmed by WETA for the premiere of a

new show, "Target Washington: Sesno Reports", hosted by Frank Sesno.

b) "Wise Water Use" Campaign Update

Supervisor Penelope Gross updated the Board on the Wise Water Use campaign and various promotional events. She provided background and reported that the campaign has been actively utilizing the media, advertisements, public education for outreach.

On March 30th at 7:00 p.m., the campaign, in partnership with the Washington Capitals, will conduct a Wise Water Use Night promotion during the game. During April and May, COG will make Wise Water Use education presentations to elementary and middle school students throughout the Washington region. Additionally, on June 24th, in partnership with the Bowie Baysox, the campaign will promote Wise Water Use Night.

In July, campaign advertising will begin appearing in Metro stations and on buses and other transit systems in the region. On August 13th, in partnership with the Frederick Keys, Wise Water Use Night will be promoted during the game and items will be given away. Regional radio and theater ads are planned and will run through the summer. In partnership with Safeway, water saving tips and logos will appear on shopping bags and in-store radio spots.

Ms. Gross asked the Board to watch for these promotions throughout the year. Additionally, she asked that people flush their water lines as a precaution against lead contamination. She encouraged Board members to attend as many events as possible and to contact Jim Shell of COG with questions.

Commissioner John Lovell said he believes the Wise Water Use campaign is an excellent program and should be continued year-round whether or not there's a drought.

c) Spring Networking Reception – March 27, 2004

The annual spring Networking Buffet Dinner is scheduled for March 27th from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the City Club of Washington at Franklin Square.

COG held a special event on February 24th to introduce the Energy Services Performance Contracting Program, sponsored by Chevron Energy Solutions. This program provides local governments with the opportunity to use a self-funding method to upgrade equipment and facilities with no additional outlay. Mr. Mendelson added that he and Council Member Robert Dorsey attended. For more information, contact George Nichols of COG.

Chair Mendelson reminded the Board about the March 31st Electric Power Summit at the D.C. Council Chambers at One Judiciary Square from 1:00-4:30 p.m. On April 5th, COG will sponsor an Energy and Air Quality Conference. He asked the Board to encourage their staff to attend and to contact George Nichols for more information.

d) Presentation of plaque for Bruce Williams, former chair of the Environment and Public Works Directors Committee

Chair Mendelson presented an award to Mayor Pro Tem Bruce Williams for his service as chair of the former Environment and Public Works Directors Committee.

Commenting on the Wise Water Use presentation given by Ms. Gross, Board Member Jay Fisetta expressed concerns about drinking water and asked if people are being given information on flushing water that may be contaminated with lead while conserving water at the same time.

In response, Ms. Gross said that the Task Force has not met since the lead issue surfaced, but the issue should be on the agenda for the next Wise Water Use meeting. The campaign is concerned with all water uses, not just drinking. Lawn water and other outdoor uses are the largest kinds of use. Stuart Freudberg added that COG provides information on how to flush pipes and still conserve water on its web site.

Chair Mendelson briefly discussed the recent discovery of lead in drinking water in Washington, D.C. The problem appears to be the result of a change in the water treatment process at the Washington Aqueduct, which caused lead to leach out of lead pipes. About 23,000 homes in D.C. are served by old lead pipes.

Because the Aqueduct also supplies treated water to Arlington County and the City of Falls Church (which distributes water to about 15 percent of Fairfax County residents), further testing is ongoing in Arlington and Falls Church. The District has formed an interagency Task Force to work to define the problem and implement various solutions. Extensive water testing has taken place and blood testing is available.

A hearing was held on March 5, 2004, before the House Committee on Government Reform, chaired by Congressman Tom Davis. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the D.C. Council are investigating the problem, as well as the D.C. Water and Sewer Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Regionally, a conference call took place recently between water utilities, public health directors and public information officers to share information. The group has asked COG to develop a set of frequently asked questions on lead in water and prepare a map and table to assist people. This information is available on the web site.

Chair Mendelson asked colleagues in other affected communities to help assess how COG can assist elected officials to address the problem. A conference call is scheduled for Friday to discuss options.

Council Member Nancy Floreen said that COG has a role to get the facts straight for the region, and she complimented Chair Mendelson for making sure information is consistent. Council Member Carol Schwartz said she appreciates that COG has a regional role, but wanted to make sure COG knows what individual districts are doing.

Mr. Fissette supports the conference call idea. COG could help explain the technical aspect of soft lead contamination. Vice Mayor Marty Meserve added that Falls Church is continuing to test the water and so far has found no taps testing above EPA-recommended levels. The puzzle is figuring out how the same water is reading differently in different jurisdictions. Falls Church discovered that certain water fountains predominantly placed in schools may have defects that allow higher levels of lead to get in.

Council Member Redella Pepper expressed concerns about Alexandria and informed the Board that Alexandria's water is not contaminated with lead.

e) Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director highlighted activities as of March 2004 by other COG policy bodies, officials and staff.

4. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 11. A-C

Motion was made, seconded and carried unanimously to adopt the consent agenda:

A) Resolution Authorizing Funding Request to Prince Charitable Trusts in Support of COG's Washington Area Housing Partnership

Resolution R16-04 – Authorizes the Executive Director or his designee to submit a funding request to Prince Charitable Trusts to support COG's Washington Area Housing Partnership.

B) Resolution Authorizing UASI Grant Award

Resolution R17-04 – Authorizes the Executive Director or his designee to execute a grant award from the District of Columbia, Justice Grants Administration, for COG to provide homeland security planning, coordination and secretariat support.

C) Resolution In Support Of A Federal Grant To Recruit And Retain Foster Parents And To Provide Respite Services To The District Of Columbia's Foster Families

Resolution R18-04 – Authorizes the Executive Director or his designee to accept a grant of federal funds from District of Columbia to support a District focused foster family recruitment and retention program and to provide respite services to District foster families.

5. PRESENTATION ON THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD'S "TIME TO ACT" BROCHURE

Christopher Zimmerman, Chair of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB), briefed the Board on the TPB's funding shortfall. The TPB identified a total six-year need of \$25.4 billion, \$12.2 billion of which is funded and \$13.2 billion is currently unfunded.

At its meeting on February 18th, the TPB held a press conference to present its "Time to Act" brochure, which outlines transportation funding needs for the Washington region over the period 2005- 2010. The brochure was a collaborative effort involving the transportation agencies of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and local governments throughout the region.

Mr. Zimmerman said that this is a critical time for decision-making for the TPB. He called the Board's attention to the brochure, which highlights the most critical transportation needs. The brochure focuses on what has to happen now or the problem will be much worse in the next few years. What can we do with the funds we have? Mr. Zimmerman discussed the capacity of the trains; Metro just can't meet the demand and is trying to get the capacity to run eight-car trains. What's needed are more rail cars, upgrades for electrical power, guidance systems and maintenance, which requires several years lead time. Decisions will be made on federal, state and local levels. The transportation problems in the region will become critical if each level doesn't factor these needs into their budgets. The time to act is now.

Chair Mendelson suggested that the Board interact more with the policy committees this year and asked Mr. Zimmerman whether the funding shortfall involves controversial projects. Mr. Zimmerman said that he couldn't guarantee some of the projects aren't controversial, but for the most part, everyone agrees with what needs to be done.

Kelvin Robinson asked if there was a broader strategy to seek federal funding. Mr. Zimmerman said yes; the transportation improvements need to be done in partnership. Half of Metro riders are federal employees. Ms. Floreen said she liked the brochure but wondered if the dollar amounts are high enough. What is the follow-up plan? Mr. Zimmerman said that in the next couple of months, key decisions will be made. If the federal government doesn't come through with the money, that will determine what the localities can do. He said he'd follow-up with the Board throughout the year.

Ms. Davis asked Mr. Zimmerman why previous cars didn't seem to be working well. In response, he explained the differences between some of the new cars and how the problems are being addressed. Mr. Lovell added that the TPB is well-respected at the state level and in the region, and mentioned other big transportation projects of the past. There have been very few bold initiatives since then. COG's real significant work should blend together regions and government, and develop bold initiatives to solve some of the transportation problems.

Mr. Zimmerman stated that the TPB has formed a value pricing task force that will discuss toll lanes and new pricing methods. Mr. Fisetto asked about safety and security in the Metro system and whether there was a way to prevent one station problem from shutting down another, for example. Mr. Zimmerman said that the proposed improvements will help in that area.

6. DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING INITIATIVES FOR CHESAPEAKE BAY CLEAN-UP EFFORTS

Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee Chair Peter Shapiro updated the Board on Maryland legislation related to funding initiatives for wastewater treatment upgrades. He provided background information on the Maryland House and Senate bills. Based on the committee's analysis of the funding proposal, they recommended sending a letter of support for "reliable and permanent State funding source" for wastewater treatment plant upgrades in the COG region.

COG sent letters to Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich and Virginia Governor Mark Warner endorsing the proposal in principle. Mr. Shapiro briefly discussed activity on this issue in the Maryland House of Delegates. On February 20th, the Maryland House Ways and Means Committee held a briefing on HB 555. Delegate Anne Healey invited COG to participate in the briefing, but schedules didn't permit attendance. On March 10th, the Maryland House Environmental Matters Committee held a formal hearing on HB 555. With COG staff in attendance, various groups testified and took a position similar to COG's—supporting the concept of establishing a special fund to pay for upgrades.

Most groups in attendance also testified in support of specific amendments. Mr. Shapiro outlined a number of amendments being considered. He added that a fiscal policy note for the bill is available on request. A formal bill hearing is scheduled for March 11th at 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Gross reported on the recent CBPC meeting with Congressman Tom Davis that occurred on February 25th. Congressman Davis sponsored a bill to amend the Clean Water Act to provide over \$400 million for wastewater treatment plant upgrades in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Discussed at the meeting was a COG fact sheet of upgrade needs and estimated costs. As a follow-up, the Committee plans to work with the Water Resources Technical Committee to provide Congressman Davis with more detailed information on upgrade needs in the region.

Bay Committee members are also invited to a Congressional breakfast with the Chesapeake Bay Congressional Task Force on March 18th. Ms. Gross added that the announcement for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Blue Ribbon Finance Panel will be made on March 11th.

7. PRESENTATION OF "SMART GROWTH BEGINS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL" VIDEO

Joyce Woodson, Chair of the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (MDPC), briefed the Board on the video for "Smart Growth Begins at the Local Level." The video, which dates back about 4 years, is a multimedia educational tool to inform citizens, elected officials and developers of the importance of employing "Smart Growth" principles in making land use decisions in metropolitan Washington. In July 2003, the Board approved the final script for the video portion of the project. Since that time, the MDPC, COG staff and the project consultant have been working to complete the video. The Board was asked to provide comments to COG staff prior to the April COG Board meeting.

After the video, Ms. Floreen asked if the Board could approve it today. Chair Mendelson said approval is scheduled for the April 14th meeting to allow for further comments on the implementation plan. Ms. Woodson asked the Board to submit ideas and suggestions. At a future date, the video will be available on COG's web site and on CD-ROM.

8. 2ND QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT

Council Member Michael Knapp, COG's Secretary-Treasurer, briefed the Board on the 2nd Quarter Financial Report. COG's strong financial position is built on consistent fiscal discipline and operational efficiency. The cash balance as of December 31, 2003, was \$3,290,338 and the total General Reserve Fund is at \$4,308,674. COG's total revenue for the six-month period was \$11,433,253 and total expenses were \$10,748,496. Revenues exceed expenses by \$684,757. The current Work Program and Budget is \$22,155,539, compared to the original budget of \$22,194,490. The outlook to receive additional revenues during the rest of the fiscal year is positive.

9. COG'S STRATEGIC PLAN: STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

Mr. Williams, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, reported on status and next steps. He believes the Strategic Plan will be revised by October 2004, and provided a brief history of COG's Strategic Plan. The first Board-designated plan was adopted in November 1999, after almost of year of intense work and consultant support, a stakeholder survey, and a detailed introspective examination of COG, its role, programs and direction.

When the Plan was adopted, its life expectancy was 3 to 5 years. In the interim, it was to be regularly examined to be certain it was guiding COG's work and budget priorities. Since the plan was adopted 5 years ago, it has been effective in its mission. The organization is much stronger and has achieved greater recognition since then.

In 2002, the Board initiated a process to revise the 1999 plan in recognition of the dramatic changes in COG as well as in the region, but other matters delayed its revision. At last summer's retreat, COG spent time reviewing the plan and focusing on interrelated issues such as the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure. With the adoption of new Bylaws in December 2003, and Rules in January 2004, COG is now ready to update the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Williams suggested that the committee meet to prepare a draft by Stuart Freudberg, Lee Ruck and Dave Robertson. He anticipates a draft will be available in June 2004, for review at this summer's retreat. The plan will be linked with COG's FY 2006 Work Program and Budget and would set overall agency direction, while the work program would reflect the annual priorities and funding of COG. Mr. Williams added that he expects to present a final document for consideration and adoption in October 2004.

10. THE BOARD WAS REMINDED THAT THE NEXT BOARD MEETING WOULD BE APRIL 14, 2004

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.