

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002-4290**

**MINUTES
Board of Directors' Meeting
COG Board Room**

March 12, 2008

**BOARD MEMBERS, ALTERNATES AND PARTICIPANTS PRESENT AND NOT
PRESENT**

***SEE ATTACHED CHART FOR ATTENDANCE**

STAFF

**David J. Robertson, Executive Director
Lee Ruck, General Counsel
Nicole Hange, Clerk to the Board**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Michael Knapp called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. with a recitation of the pledge of allegiance.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 13 MINUTES

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adopt the minutes of the February meeting. There were two abstentions.

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next month COG and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission will co-host the US-European Conference of Metropolitan Regional Councils on a wide-range of policy issues affecting regions, including climate change and sustainable development. Several COG members have already registered for the April 9 – 12 conference, those who have yet to sign up should see David Robertson.

COG's Annual Foster Parent Gala will be held Saturday, May 17. The event honors foster families in the region for their outstanding service and dedication to the needy children in this area. Chairman Knapp strongly encouraged all members to attend.

The COG retreat has been scheduled to be held July 25-27 at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, Maryland. The retreat presents an opportunity for the COG Board and the leadership of TPB, MWAQC and policy committees to focus on achievements and plan for the year ahead. Past retreats have been catalysts for attention on Metro dedicated funding, the new Greater Washington 2050 initiative, and COG's Strategic Plan. This year, one of the tasks will be to review COG's governance structure to help advance continued work on issues like climate change and energy availability.

Chairman Knapp also welcomed Gaithersburg Mayor Sidney Katz as a newly appointed member to the COG Board.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

COG's Executive Director David Robertson stated that he met with David Remick of Workforce Organizations for Regional Collaboration (WORC) to discuss the COG Board's adopted focus on workforce education issues and areas for future collaboration and next steps.

Mr. Robertson also met with several of COG's new policy committee chairs focusing on committee activities and outcomes for 2008.

At a meeting with Freddie Mac, Mr. Robertson discussed funding support from that organization for COG to sponsor a regional housing foreclosure program and summit.

He also spoke at the 2nd Northeast Climate and Competitiveness Summit in Baltimore on COG's climate change activities.

Mr. Robertson stated that COG received a fair amount of media attention surrounding its adoption of a resolution supporting the strengthening and streamlining of graduated drivers licensing in the region. A proposed series of tolls "HOT Lanes" in Virginia also received attention. Regional forecasting data produced at COG was used in a report recently released by WMATA.

Both the Annual Report and a Best Practices Guide to Reducing Green Houses Gases were released today. The Annual Report as well as the Regional Directory, in its last stages of development, will be transmitted to the entire COG membership the first of next month.

Mr. Robertson announced the selection of a new Director of the Office of Technology Programs and Service. George Danilovics had been serving as the Interim Director and was unanimously recommended by the hiring panel.

COG kicked off its Street Smart Campaign March 7 urging the vigilance of both pedestrians and drivers. The campaign's motto this year is to "Cross like your life depends on it." Vice Chairman Penny Gross stressed the importance of this campaign noting that there is much work to be done, as a pedestrian was killed in her district just this morning. To augment this effort, COG will host a Traffic Safety Workshop at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, April 29. The goal of this workshop is to gather policy makers and working professionals from around the region to address the causes of pedestrian deaths and injuries, and come to collaborative solutions.

COG's General Counsel Lee Ruck provided a legislative update on several of the bills being tracked in the Virginia General Assembly which relate to the Board's adopted policy focus and priorities for 2008. Legislation affecting affordable housing and green building standards were either killed or carried over to 2009. Legislation was adopted creating a Commission on Energy and Climate Change as well as a Natural Resources Fund though no funding was appropriated for either bill. Mr. Ruck added that the bill which would have amended the Virginia proffer system to preclude monetary contributions to assist in underwriting traditional needs was continued over to 2009. The bill would reduce local government's capacity to provide or require affordable housing as part of the planning/zoning process.

Mr. Ruck also spoke to the Virginia Supreme Court's decision to rule unconstitutional the authority given to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to impose regional taxes and fees by the Virginia General Assembly and the profound impact it will have on this region's transportation network. Not only will this decision leave many regional projects without the funding necessary for implementation, but it jeopardizes the \$50 million annually in dedicated funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority capital improvements. The Virginia General Assembly has yet to address this issue, though there is speculation that a special session will be convened to deal with it. Virginia State Delegate Jim Scott echoed Mr. Ruck's concern and hopes that he and his colleagues will be able to develop and get approved a package to address the region's transportation needs.

Loudoun County Board Supervisor Lori Waters requested that COG staff track the proffer legislation after the session has adjourned because it will be offered again next year.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Supplemental Documents: Resolution R15-08 through R18-08

A. Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Receive and Expend Funding from the Environmental Protection Agency Support of the Anacostia Restoration Partnership

The Board adopted Resolution R15-08 authorizing the Executive Director, or his designee, to receive and expend up to \$100,000 in grant funding from the Environmental Protection Agency to provide contract and staff services in support of the Anacostia Restoration Partnership. The total cost of these services shall not exceed \$100,000. No COG matching funds will be required.

B. Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Submit a Grant Proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a Reforestation Demonstration Project

The Board adopted R16-08, authorizing the Executive Director, or his designee, to submit a proposal in an amount not to exceed \$120,482 for the purposes of demonstrating

improved reforestation survival techniques using biosolids compost from DC WASA. The project duration will be 2 years, 6 months from the receipt of funding. A \$30,020 COG match from budgeted FY 2009 & FY 2010 funds is requested.

C. Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Enter into an Agreement with Freddie Mac to Fund a Regional Housing Foreclosure Summit

The Board adopted R17-08 authorizing the Executive Director, or his designee, to enter into an agreement with Freddie Mac in an amount not to exceed \$175,000 for the purposes of supporting a three-point foreclosure partnership. The money will be used to develop a regional snapshot of the NCR's foreclosure problem, convene a regional foreclosure summit, and develop a non-profit best practices grant pool to address foreclosure prevention and intervention.

D. Appointment of Additional 2008 Policy Committee Vice Chair

A Vice Chair position in both the Human Services Policy Committee and the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee is currently vacant. Chairman Knapp recommended Falls Church City Councilmember Hal Lippman and District of Columbia Councilmember Mary Cheh, respectively, to fill those appointments for 2008.

ACTION: Upon motion made, and seconded, Resolutions R9-08 through R12-08 were unanimously adopted.

7. GREATER WASHINGTON 2050 KICK OFF AND ACTION PLAN

Supplemental Document: Greater Washington 2050 Newsletter

COG convened a very successful and well attended first meeting of the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition on February 21. Fairfax County Board Vice Chair and Chairman of the Coalition Sharon Bulova highlighted the outcomes of the meeting and anticipated next steps.

The inaugural meeting of the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition brought together members who were engaged and ready to work on an action agenda for the region. One realization drove the discussion – the need to engage young adults and people who don't typically participate in activities of this nature and seek new ways of reaching out to them and thinking about the future.

Ms. Bulova, along with Chairman Knapp, outlined a series of proposed activities, of which the following were broadly supported by the coalition: finding areas of agreement in planning the National Capital Region; new regional alternative growth scenarios that show that changes today can affect future outcomes; a new regional compact, perhaps modeled on the "Mile High Compact: adopted in the Denver region and aggressive measures of progress and implementation; and a communications plan that seeks the input of area residents, including the younger generations, and ensures that Greater Washington 2050 actions and initiatives have impact on individuals, families, communities and the region as a whole.

The next meeting will be held March 28 and will focus the creation and mission of a "communications/survey" task force. There will also be a briefing from local officials and staff on the experiences of other regions in their undertaking of similar initiatives; specifically how stakeholders can find convergence on broad regional goals and objectives, and how that agreement can translate into public support and government action.

8. APPROVAL OF CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Montgomery County Council Member and Chair of the Climate Change Steering Committee Nancy Floreen presented two recommendations from the Committee regarding federal climate change legislation and the proposed Wise County, Virginia Power Plant.

The US Congress is currently considering legislation requiring limits on greenhouse gas emissions including S 2191, "America's Climate Security Act," the Warner-Lieberman bill. The goal of the bill is to reduce greenhouse gases, and the risk of climate change, while protecting the economy and citizens. It also uses both regulatory and market mechanisms ("Cap and Trade"), providing industries with flexibility in determining how they will reduce emissions; basically it gives carbon an economic value.

Cap and Trade is not a new approach and has been used successfully to regulate other unwanted emissions. Ms. Floreen noted that though states receive 10% of the allowances, which can be used, sold or traded, local governments and regional entities do not directly receive any allowances or auction benefits from this bill. This presents a problem to this region and its localities and the types of programs already being implemented.

The Committee recommended the COG Board adopt the following principles in Resolution R13-08: supporting the general goals of federal legislation to limit greenhouse gas emissions; affirming the leadership of local governments and regions, and their inclusion in the development of policy proposals; calling for financial support for local and regional climate change activities; and affirming that federal policies should not pre-empt state/local policies.

Ms. Floreen requested that a provision be added to the resolution affirming the need to provide financial assistance to low income groups and other vulnerable populations to cushion the hardship that may result from climate change legislation and to support employment transition activities and "green collar" job training.

City of Greenbelt Mayor Judith Davis suggested that COG consult with the National League of Cities which is focusing on this very issue.

Montgomery County Council Member Roger Berliner stated that he is working closely with Maryland Senator Ben Cardin to amend the federal legislation such that it provides better support to localities.

ACTION: Upon motion made, and seconded, Resolution R13-08 was unanimously adopted as amended.

Arlington County Board Member Jay Fissette requested that COG staff return to the Board in April with a resolution requesting Congress to appropriate funding for the legislation authorizing Energy Efficiency Block Grants.

Falls Church City Council Member and Chair of the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) David Snyder discussed the controversy surrounding a proposed coal-fired power plant in southwest Virginia. Originally brought to MWAQC's attention by Fairfax County Board Chair Gerry Connolly the proposed plant in Wise County could have a significantly negative impact on this region's air quality.

There are three major concerns associated with this development: there was no analysis of alternatives to a coal-fired power plant conducted, such as renewable energy or conservation; the additional emissions of carbon dioxide from the proposed power plant would significantly offset the actions of this region to reduce green house gas emissions by 10%; and transported air pollution is a major challenge for this region and makes it increasingly more difficult to reach federal air quality health standards.

If the Wise facility is built, even with the offset from the Bremono plant being converted to natural gas, roughly half of the region's emission reduction goal will be offset.

Mr. Snyder requested that the Board adopt Resolution R14-08 which asserts the referenced concerns and that a comment letter be sent to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality cautioning the issuance of a permit for construction.

Mr. Berliner requested that the resolution be amended to add the following statement in the resolved clause: "Urge that prior to issuance of an air quality permit, a thorough analysis of alternatives be carried out including the potential for substitution of renewable energy and/or energy conservation as options for meeting the energy demands in lieu of the proposed coal-fired facility."

Virginia State Delegate Jim Scott also suggested adding the following language "Strongly supports the conversion of the Bremono power station from coal to natural gas" to the resolved clause.

Mr. Fisetta requested that the resolution more clearly state the concerns of air quality and green house gas emissions proposing the following in the whereas clause "Expresses strong concerns with the greenhouse gas and air quality impacts on the Washington area of the proposed coal-fired power plant."

ACTION: Upon motion made, and seconded, Resolution R14-08 was unanimously adopted as amended.

9. PRESENTATION ON DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REGIONAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Vincent Gray Chairman of the District of Columbia City Council and Dan Tangherlini, the City Administrator, briefed the Board on priority regional issues pending or being considered by the D.C. Council as well as state-level coordination by the District with Maryland and Virginia.

Mr. Gray gave a short history of the economic state of the District, noting that it has maintained a balanced budget for the last ten years and has even built up a surplus. He noted however, that just as its neighbors, City officials are projecting a tightening of the economy as revenues from income and recordation taxes decrease.

Mr. Gray highlighted several programs/initiatives in the areas of education, environment health, and public safety. The Council is currently exploring options for universal pre-K, improving the delivery of special education services through a reform initiative, accelerating the implementation of the City's green building standards, increasing "border" relationships as crime reduction tool, having an enhanced role in Anacostia clean-up and universal health insurance coverage. The Council is also looking to strengthen protections for payday loan recipients through a Payday Loan Consumer Protection Act; the City already

has a cap on interest rates for such loans at 24%. He also highlighted the ongoing effort to support Congressional voting rights and statehood.

Mr. Tangherlini echoed the Administration's support for many of the Council's initiatives adding that improving DC schools continues to be a top priority. Mr. Tangherlini stated that a major focus of the Administration is not only to develop new affordable housing units, but also to preserve the existing stock. He added that the key to the continued success of the District is to maintain and enhance its financial stability, specifically through its small businesses.

10. POTOMAC PRIMARY LESSONS LEARNED AND PREPARATION FOR THE NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION

COG has long supported an Elections Officials Committee as part of its work program. The Committee fosters collaboration and the sharing of best practices on voter education, election policies and procedures, and vote tabulation and reporting. Committee representatives discussed lessons learned from the February 12 Potomac Primary and preparations underway for the November 4 general election.

Linda Lindberg Registrar of Voters for Arlington County presented an overview of the Committee and the history and evolution of the elections process. There have been tremendous legislative changes to the elections process over the years, including mandates on the timing and implementation of new technologies. The Committee has provided a forum for regional elections officials to come together and share the experiences and best practices ongoing in their individual jurisdictions. Regionally, voter identification and provisional ballots are inconsistent, as are hours of operation and voting date; what is consistent across the region however, is voter education and awareness. During presidential election years, the three jurisdictions work together on public services announcements and regional awareness programs to ensure optimal participation during the November general election.

Alice Miller Executive Director of the Board of Elections and Ethics for the District of Columbia provided an overview on the technological modifications mandated on the elections process and the strains they have placed on local governments and the development of voter guidelines.

Sara Harris the Deputy Executive Director for the Montgomery County Elections Board spoke to the importance of voter education and urged Board members to be diligent in reminding constituents to ensure they are registered to vote and that the information is current. She also noted that citizens should develop a voting plan, including knowing where they will vote and the hours of operation, and to apply for absentee voting early. Ms. Harris noted the importance of adequate funding by jurisdictions for the election season, including the purchase of the appropriate number and type of ballots and providing voter information in a variety of languages. She added that volunteers are key to ensuring a smooth and efficient election day.

Vice Chair Gross suggested a partnership of the Elections Officials Committee with the Public Information Officials Committee to more effectively raise awareness and education to "get the vote out."

11. PROPOSED FY 2009 FEDERAL BUDGET

Supplemental Documents: Staff Analysis of the Proposed FY 2009 Federal Budget

Time constraints did not permit this item to be reported on; however a staff analysis of the President's proposed budget was included in the handouts and Board members may contact COG's General Counsel Lee Ruck with any questions.

12. MEMBER TIME

No issues were addressed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10pm.

THE NEXT BOARD MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2008

**ATTENDANCE: MARCH 12, 2008
BOARD OF DIRECTORS/ALTERNATES 2008**

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Y/N</u>	<u>Alternate</u>	<u>Y/N</u>
District of Columbia				
Executive	Hon. Adrian Fenty	N		
	Mr. Dan Tangherlini	Y		
Council	Hon. Vincent Gray	Y	Hon. Carol Schwartz	N
	Hon. Kwame Brown	Y	Hon. Phil Mendelson	Y
Maryland				
Bowie	Hon. G. Frederick Robinson	N		
College Park	Hon. Robert Catlin	Y		
City of Frederick	Hon. William Holtzinger	N	Hon. Alan Imhoff	N
Frederick County	Hon. David Gray	N	Hon. Jan Gardner	N
Gaithersburg	Hon. Sidney Katz	Y		
Greenbelt	Hon. Judith "J" F. Davis	Y	Hon. Rodney Roberts	N
Montgomery County				
Executive	Hon. Isiah Leggett	N	Mr. Tim Firestine	N
Council	Hon. Roger Berliner	Y		
	Hon. Michael Knapp	Y		
Prince George's County				
Executive	Hon. Jack B. Johnson	N	Dr. Jacqueline Brown	N
Council	Hon. Camille A. Exum	N		
	Hon. Tony Knotts	Y		
Rockville	Hon. Susan Hoffmann	N	Hon. John Britton	Y
Takoma Park	Hon. Bruce Williams	Y	Hon. Terry Seamens	N
Maryland General Assembly	Hon. Benjamin Barnes	N		
Virginia				
Alexandria	Hon. William Euille	Y	Hon. Redella Pepper	N
Arlington County	Hon. Jay Fissette	Y	Hon. Walter Tejada	N
City of Fairfax	Hon. Gary Rasmussen	Y	Hon. Jeffrey Greenfield	N
Fairfax County	Hon. Gerald E. Connolly	N	Hon. Sharon Bulova	N
	Hon. Penelope A. Gross	Y	Hon. Michael Frey	N
	Hon. John Foust	N	Hon. Patrick Herrity	N
Falls Church	Hon. Robin Gardner	N	Hon. Hal Lippman	Y
Loudoun County	Hon. Lori Waters	Y		
Manassas	Hon. Douglas Waldron	N		
Manassas Park	Hon. Frank Jones	N		
Prince William County	Hon. Wally Covington III	Y		
	Hon. Frank Principi	N		

Virginia General Assembly	Hon. James M. Scott	Y		
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Other Participants
Sara Harris, Deputy Executive Director Montgomery County Board of Elections
Linda Lindberg, Registrar of Voters Arlington County
Alice Miller, Executive Director Board of Elections and Ethics District of Columbia
Supervisor Sharon Bulova, Fairfax County Board
Councilmember Nancy Floreen, Montgomery County Board
Councilmember Dave Snyder, Falls Church City Council