

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

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

**October 8, 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**

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**1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10 MINUTES**

Motion was made, seconded, and carried to adopt the revised (attendance correction) minutes of the September meeting.

**3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

#### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The National Association of Regional Councils, the National Governors Association and COG have partnered to host a special one-day conference on September 17 for governors' representatives to provide them with an overview of the work of regional councils and MPOs and how they can complement state initiatives.

#### **5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Robertson represented COG and participated in the Greater Washington Board of Trade's Potomac Conference. COG's proposed *Climate Change Report and Recommendations* was reviewed by conference participants.

He also attended the kickoff reception of the Capitals Alliance conference hosted by the National Capital Planning Commission.

The National Association of Regional Councils held its Executive Directors Conference in Mackinac Island, Michigan this month where Mr. Robertson represented the National Capital Region. Participants stressed the need for them and the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations to speak with one voice on the transportation reauthorization legislation.

COG received a fair amount of media attention this month including its ridesharing program and the emergency preparedness update Fairfax County Board Chairman and Chair of the Emergency Preparedness Council Gerry Connolly presented at the September meeting.

Metro dedicated funding legislation has finally been adopted by the Congress. While a big step forward, the legislation is only an authorization which will require a coordinated effort to ensure the funds are actually appropriated. One step will be for the Virginia General Assembly to adopt legislation, similar to what Maryland and the District of Columbia have done, to comply with the federal bill's requirements for appropriation.

Staff has been working with a group of regional legislative liaisons as part of COG's effort to increase its outreach. A draft set of regional legislative priorities will be brought before the Board for adoption at its November meeting and will be used during outreach events in Richmond and Annapolis in early 2009. A congressional set of priorities will also be developed.

As the November general election approaches, COG's Elections Officials Committee has been working to get the word out on voter registration requirements and deadlines through free ads and public service announcements; COG also has a link on its website.

Due to the economic downturn the Pension Committee recently met to review the status of the plan. Currently, the portfolio remains in good standing, though staff will continue to aggressively monitor.

#### **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

Supplemental documents: Resolution R46-08 and R59-08.

##### **A. Resolution Approving COG's Policy and Program Priorities from the July 2008 Retreat**

The Board adopted Resolution R46-08 approving COG's policy and program outcomes from the July 2008 retreat. Due to an administrative error, Resolution R46-08 was not presented for the Board's

adoption during its September 10, 2008 meeting as docketed. The resolution endorses the comprehensive short and long term priorities identified by COG's leadership and requests that the appropriate policy boards and committees, as identified in the summary report, return to the Board for a briefing upon completion of their respective priorities.

## **B. Resolution Revising Resolution R43-08 to Reflect Updated Budget Estimates for COG to Receive and Expend Funds from the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority**

The Board adopted Resolution R59-08, revising Resolution R43-08 and authorizing the Executive Director to receive and expend funding from the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority in an amount not to exceed \$560,000 for the purpose of conducting water quality monitoring in the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers to assess pollution abatement actions. This resolution will also authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract with Virginia Tech's Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory in an amount not to exceed \$480,000 to provide COG with technical and scientific services in undertaking the implementation of water quality monitoring in the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers. No COG matching funds are required.

**ACTION: Upon motion made, and seconded, Resolutions R46-08 and R59-08 were unanimously approved and adopted.**

## **7. REGIONAL IMPACTS OF FINANCIAL AND CREDIT CRISIS**

### **A. Adoption of Resolution Supporting Continued Charitable Giving by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac**

Supplemental Documents: Resolution R57-08 (electronic)

Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae perform vital roles in the nation's housing markets and are also significant businesses and employers in the Washington area, together donating approximately \$47 million to area non-profits and community groups in 2007. Both Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae were placed under federal conservatorship in September to restructure the organizations and stabilize housing finance markets. Federal regulators are reviewing the charitable giving activities of Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae as part of their restructuring responsibilities. The Human Services Policy Committee met on September 25 and recommended that the COG Board of Directors convey its support for continued charitable giving by Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae as part of any federal restructuring of these organizations. Alexandria City Council Member Justin Wilson briefed the Board on the significant contributions of both organizations to this region and the resolution proposed by his Committee.

Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae are the top two charitable givers in the National Capital Region, having invested in nearly 400 local nonprofit organizations. Members are most familiar with Freddie Mac's sponsorship of the *Wednesday's Child* program and, along with COG, the Annual Foster Parent Gala. Freddie Mac also supported COG's Housing Foreclosure summit in June. Fannie Mae has annually contributed to COG's Affordable Housing Partnership.

While significant, the biggest issue facing the region is not funding to non profits; it is about the area's families that would suffer if Freddie and Fannie no longer invested in the region. Neither the federal government nor local and state governments can fill the void if Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae's investment in the region is lost.

Mr. Wilson stated that elected officials need to do everything they can to encourage federal regulators to allow Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae to remain active in our communities. For thousands of the region's families and service groups, there is no alternative source of support.

Mr. Robertson stated that COG has been part of a coalition of area organizations, including the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers, the Non-Profit Roundtable of Greater Washington and others urging that federal regulators not lose sight of the vital, positive community impact Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae charitable giving has had on thousands of families and many communities in the National Capital Region.

Upon motion for consideration of R57-08, several suggestions were made to amend the resolution, specifically, in the first whereas, to have the paragraph read "to maintain substantial charitable giving programs" instead of "maintain a charitable giving program."

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Upon motion made, and seconded, Resolution R57-08 was unanimously approved and adopted as amended.**

Arlington County Board Member Jay Fissette urged each member jurisdiction's governing body to adopt a similar resolution.

City of Alexandria Mayor Bill Euille stated that with challenges often come opportunity; non-profit and community organizations across the region should take this occasion to determine if there are new partnerships or collaborations that could be formed to make up for some of the funding that may not be coming from these two organizations.

#### **B. Briefing on Impact on Local Government Credit and Bonding**

Tightening credit, rising interest rates and uncertainty about national and global efforts to stabilize financial markets have begun to affect the ability of local governments, including those with otherwise strong bond ratings, to borrow money to support schools, road improvements and other municipal projects. Jackie Byers, Director of Research for the National Association of Counties, and JoAnne Carter, Managing Director at the PFM Group, briefed the Board on the impact on local governments nationally as well as in the Washington area and the options available to strengthen the ability of jurisdictions to responsively borrow to address public infrastructure needs.

Ms. Byers stated that municipal bond ratings have lowered significantly across the country. Increased interest rates have made bond issuance much more expensive such that municipal credit is not only unavailable in some places but undesirable. Locally, municipalities are experiencing unprecedented ratings volatility, even those with the AAA rating, which has resulted in true illiquidity in the municipal market. Many localities are currently unable to build planned infrastructure to meet their needs like new schools and roads.

Ms. Carter noted that the biggest casualty in this crisis has been the AAA rated municipalities; only two of the seven in this region have maintained their rate, though the outlook is that they too will be downgraded. The era of easy credit is gone and because interest rates have increased so significantly for both short and long term credit, the negative impacts will likely be felt for quite some time.

The recommendation for local governments is to protect and defend their current credit quality and to not seek financing unless absolutely necessary. They should try to be as flexible as possible in terms of debt structure and seeking out groups that may not have been involved before. Ms. Carter also suggested that governments know the financial profile, and risks associated, with their private partners; diversify their underwriting and lending relationships; and have a back up plan.

Vice Chairman Gross requested that a similar presentation or workshop be scheduled during the National Association of Counties legislative conference in February.

City of Falls Church Council Member Hal Lippman suggested the need for public education and outreach on the credit crisis. Mr. Robertson agreed and stated that he will work with COG's Office of Public Affairs to schedule news and/or radio interviews and he would look into the value of hosting a workshop.

## **8. BRIEFING ON INITIAL WASHINGTON REGION PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2010 CENSUS**

Every ten years, COG works closely with local governments in the Washington region and the U.S. Census Bureau to prepare for the decennial census. In addition to determining the apportionment of Congressional representation, U.S. Census data is also used to allocate nearly \$300 billion in federal funds to towns, cities and communities around the country. COG will soon begin its Census 2010 program to promote the Census, one key element of which will be the creation of a COG Regional Complete Count Committee. Fernando Armstrong, Regional Director of Philadelphia's Regional Census Office, and William Hatcher, Regional Director of Charlotte's Regional Census Office, briefed the Board on the working activities of the U.S. Census Bureau, its preparation for Census Day, April 1, 2010, and how COG can be an important partner in this initiative.

Mr. Armstrong stated that the diversity of this region will make the upcoming census a challenge. To address this challenge, the design of the census form has been changed, from a long form to a short form. The American Community Foundation will now be collecting its specific data every year, instead of every ten with the census. This will allow local governments access to demographic data on a more frequent basis.

Work is underway to identify locations for offices and personnel for the development of a comprehensive address verification operation in 2009. Hand-held computers will be employed to make the effort more time efficient.

Mr. Hatcher stated that the value of the census cannot be understated and elected officials must to what they can to encourage their residents to participate as openly and honestly as possible.

## **9. ENDORSEMENT OF greenSPACE LEARNING CENTER AND COG GREEN BUILDING POLICY UPDATE**

Supplemental Documents: greenSPACE Memo (electronic)  
Resolution R58-08 (electronic)  
Matrix of Green Building Activities (electronic)

In December, 2007, the Board adopted a regional green building policy that included recommendations for public and private green building standards. Joan Kelsch, a senior environmental planner for Arlington County and Chair of the Intergovernmental Green Building Group (IGBG), updated the Board on local government implementation of the regional green building policy and recent discussions concerning expanding the policy to include new single family residential buildings. A matrix was provided which highlighted the accomplishments of each jurisdiction.

Ms. Kelsch stated that education and training is vital for the successful implementation of green requirements mandated by local green building legislation. Local governments need assistance as the transition into green practices and policies which means that building professionals require guidance to meet the demand for green building and the opportunities in green collar jobs need to be identified and marketed.

Additionally, establishing an information clearing house to facilitate regional green building implementation is a central element of the regional green building policy. The IGBG recently reviewed and endorsed the proposed "greenSPACE" learning center that would help fill this void.

The greenSPACE learning center has been created to unite and leverage the expertise and resources of building professionals, governments, environmental groups, trade associations, economic development organizations and funders to lead the region to green development.

A motion was made to adopt Resolution R58-08 which supports ongoing green building efforts and allows the IGBG to explore formal participation greenSPACE.

Several members voiced their support of the project but cautioned that support does not mean an agreement to provide funding. The current economic downturn has local governments across the region cutting their budgets; any new effort will require funding from somewhere other than COG's member jurisdictions.

## **10. STATUS OF MUTUAL AID IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION**

Supplemental Documents: Mutual Aid Status Memo (Electronic)

During its November 2005 meeting, the Board adopted Resolution R44-05 supporting the execution of a National Capital Region mutual aid agreement. The agreement however, is not self-executing; for each responder function it authorizes development of an Operations Plan to be executed and implemented by the appropriate official within each jurisdiction. COG's General Counsel Lee Ruck reviewed the process of mutual aid in the NCR, including the current status of the NCR Mutual Aid Agreement (NCR-MAA) and the various Operations Plans governing the procedure for intergovernmental assistance by first responders.

All 21 member jurisdictions, with the exception of the City of Frederick, have executed the NCR-MAA. Both the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority have also executed the agreement, as have the Governors of Maryland and Virginia.

The COG Attorneys Committee has worked with the Police Chiefs, Fire Chiefs, Public Works Directors, Emergency Managers, and the Public Health Officers committees to begin the process of operation plan development. The police operations plan was approved in May 2008 and is out for signature; the Cities of Falls Church, Manassas Park, Bowie, Frederick Gaithersburg, Rockville and Frederick County and the Town of Bladensburg have not yet signed. The debris management operation plan is also out for signature; the City of Alexandria, the District of Columbia and the Counties of Montgomery, Prince George's, Arlington and Loudoun have not yet signed.

The Fire Chiefs Committee is in the process of finalizing its plan and should be ready for execution by the end of the year. The Emergency Managers have drafted a blanket operation plan to cover local responders not covered in a separate plan; this should be ready for execution in early 2009. The Waste Water Utilities are currently working with the COG Attorneys on its draft plan.

## **11. MEMBER TIME**

City of Greenbelt Mayor J Davis stated that the National League of Cities will be presenting its first Green Cities Conference and Expo April 19-27, 2009 in Portland, Oregon.

Prince George's County Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Jacqueline Brown stated the importance of checking in on the elderly during this economic crisis as many of them may be struggling and unable or unwilling to reach out for help.

City of Takoma Park Mayor Bruce Williams announced that his jurisdiction recently piloted a "Walking School Bus" where school children walk to school together on the same route the bus

would take. He said this is not only a good opportunity for physical activity and increased alertness in the morning but a cost saving measure for the city.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

**THE NEXT BOARD MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2008**

**ATTENDANCE: OCTOBER 8, 2008  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS/ALTERNATES 2008**

<u>Jurisdiction</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Y/N</u>	<u>Alternate</u>	<u>Y/N</u>
<b>District of Columbia</b>				
<b>Executive</b>	Hon. Adrian Fenty	N		
	Mr. Dan Tangherlini	Y		
<b>Council</b>	Hon. Vincent Gray	N	Hon. Carol Schwartz	N
	Hon. Kwame Brown	N	Hon. Phil Mendelson	Y
<b>Maryland</b>				
Bowie	Hon. G. Frederick Robinson	N		
College Park	Hon. Robert Catlin	Y		
City of Frederick	Hon. William Holtzinger	N	Hon. Alan Imhoff	Y
Frederick County	Hon. David Gray	Y	Hon. Jan Gardner	N
Gaithersburg	Hon. Sidney Katz	N	Hon. Henry Marraffa	Y
Greenbelt	Hon. Judith "J" F. Davis	Y	Hon. Rodney Roberts	N
Montgomery County				
<b>Executive</b>	Hon. Isiah Leggett	N	Mr. Tim Firestine	N
<b>Council</b>	Hon. Roger Berliner	Y		
	Hon. Michael Knapp	Y		
Prince George's County				
<b>Executive</b>	Hon. Jack B. Johnson	N	Dr. Jacqueline Brown	Y
<b>Council</b>	Hon. Camille A. Exum	N	Hon. Tom Dernoga	N
	Hon. Tony Knotts	N		
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		
<b>Virginia</b>				
Alexandria	Hon. William Euille	Y	Hon. Redella Pepper	N
Arlington County	Hon. Jay Fissette	Y	Hon. Walter Tejada	N
City of Fairfax	Hon. Dan Drummond	N	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	Y	Hon. Patrick Herrity	N
Falls Church	Hon. Robin Gardner	N	Hon. Hal Lippman	Y
Loudoun County	Hon. Lori Waters	Y		
Manassas	Hon. Harry J. Parrish II	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		

**Other Participants**

Council Member Justin Wilson, City  
of Alexandria

Jackie Byers, National Association  
of Counties

JoAnne Carter, The PFM Group

Fernando Armstrong, Philadelphia  
Regional Census Office

William Hatcher, Charlotte Regional  
Census Office

Joan Kelsch, Senior Environmental  
Planner, Arlington County