

**State of Rhode Island
Department of Revenue**

Municipal Fiscal Stress Task Force

Task Force Meeting Minutes –December 17, 2009

1. Task Force Members – The following were present:

Committee –Mike Embury, Peter Chatellier, Susanne Greschner, Peder Schaefer, Bill Fazioli, Frank Champi, Diane Brennan (representing Mayor Avedisian), Normand Benoit, Dean Huff, Jim Thomas

Others – Laurie Brayton, Fred Sneesby, Steve Peoples, Jim Cenerini

Staff (DOR) –Jill Barrette, Evelyn Moreira, Rudy Falcone, James Savage

2. Discussion

Copies of the draft indicator report with the revisions as recommended by the task force were distributed.

Mike Embury expressed concern that financial circumstances had changed so much since the task force had begun its work including the most recent proposed state aid cuts that he questioned whether a report in January would achieve the desired results. Other members of the task force expressed their view that the report would be one tool in helping both municipalities and the Administration make better judgments especially if the report was updated on a regular basis. Peder Schaefer indicated that the financial position indicator data could probably be updated in March after all the June 30, 2009 audits are completed. The task force decided to proceed with a report by January 15. A request will be made to meet with the Governor after release of the report. Mike Embury will prepare an outline for the report to be discussed at the next meeting.

Susanne Greshner made some recommendations for improving the clarity of the tables in the report. Dean Huff expressed concern that municipalities that have done the right thing on pensions, post employment obligations, or maintenance of fund balance are going to be discriminated against in the rankings for doing good work. Concern was expressed at the lack of education data in the report. Diane Brennan expressed her concern that the current tables being reviewed did not include the raw data. Peder Schaefer indicated that the raw data would be included in the final report.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 5, 2010 at 9 AM.