

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 8th 2014
(Commerce RI, Narragansett Room)

In attendance: Janet Coit, DEM, Council Chair
Jamia McDonald, EMA, Council Vice-Chair
Kevin Flynn, DOA/Planning
Jim Boyd (for Grover Fugate), CRMC
Michael Fine, DOH
Steven Hartford, DOA
Michael Lewis, DOT
Shauna Beland (for Marcel Valois) Commerce RI
Marion Gold, OER

Director Coit opened the meeting at approximately 2:05 PM. On behalf of the Council, she thanked Commerce RI for hosting this month's meeting and invited Steven Hartford (DOA) to provide a few remarks as he joined the Council for the first time.

The first order of business was the minutes from the September 11, 2014 meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made and unanimously approved.

Director Coit turned to the Calendar of Events and reminded members that the Council's December meeting date was changed (to the 17th) because of the Baird Sea Grant Science Symposium occurring on December 10th. She explained that seating at the Symposium will be limited and that target audience is the business community, and asked everybody to help get business people to attend. Jim Boyd (CRMC) encouraged those in the room to consider attending the "free" event the evening prior to the 10th to hear John Englander speak.

Director Coit then turned to conversation to the next Council meeting on November 12th and proposed to dedicate that meeting to Action Plan progress updates. She ask members to have staff coordinate with Jan Reitsma (Governor's Office) to gather the updates in advance of November 12th and referenced the recent Governor's letter to agency leads in the same context.

Director Coit then asked Director Fine and Julia Gold from the Department of Health to brief the Council on the recent draft "RI Climate Change and Health Resiliency Report". Julia Gold provided an overview and highlighted some of the pilot projects: Lyme Disease Campaign, Senior Resiliency Project, and Heat Risks. Director Coit inquired about the possibility of extending the deadline for comments/feedback, and the deadline was extended to Oct. 17th. Robert Vanderslice (DOH) noted that the report should be considered a living document that the Department intends to update in the future as needs and issues arise. The presentation was followed by discussion among Council members about key aspects of the report.

Jan Reitsma (Governor's Office) provided several updates to the Council, including the work of the interagency working group on vulnerability assessments and the challenges it is experiencing in attempting to "piggy-back" on a the federal "all hazards" assessment. Discussion followed about the

possibility of engaging a consultant to assist with the task, and grant opportunities. Jan also updated the Council on the work of the Communications Workgroup and the opportunity to apply for a technical assistance grant from RhodeMap RI to help get the web site work done. The Council approved a motion authorizing the Chair to submit such an application (and other ones that may be appropriate and available in the context of the Economic Development Plan, for which the Council is one of the “implementing entities.”) Kevin Flynn recused himself from the vote. Jan Reitsma then brought before the Council a letter from the Coalition for Transportation Choices urging action on an item in the Unified Transportation Planning Work Plan relating to reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled by state employees. It was decided that Allison Rogers from DOA should prepare a response.

Director Coit noted that she and the Governor’s Office were still seeking names for appointments to the EC4 Advisory Board. A copy of the statutory language creating the Advisory Board was included in the Council’s handouts.

Director Coit briefed the Council that she was attempting to get a handle on RIDEM’s involvement in numerous regional organizations and on-going conversations about climate change, and that she had asked her staff to begin pulling together a matrix summarizing the climate change work of each regional group.

Council members briefly discussed the upcoming National Disaster Resilience Competition, CRMC’s SLAMM Maps (on CRMC’s agenda for Nov. 25th for adoption) and the expected requirement by FEMA that states examine the impacts of global warming on their communities as a condition for receiving federal disaster preparedness funding (per draft guidelines released by the agency in early October).

Director Coit opened up the floor for public comment.

Ames Colt (RI BRWC) spoke about the soon to be released Annual Report of the monitoring collaborative and the budget shortfalls identified therein (approximately \$2.1 million).

Amy Rice (Governor’s Office) offered comments on the Council’s web presence.

Tom Uva (NBC) commented on the need for more widespread regional mutual aid for wastewater treatment facilities.

Robert Malin (Sierra Club) offered comments on the earlier presentation on climate change and health resiliency. He offered his opinion that residents may not read the Providence Journal on a regular basis nor stay tuned to larger conversations occurring around them about climate change, but they are acutely in-tune with how weather and climate impacts their daily lives and activities.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 PM.