Beacon Falls Board of Selectmen
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403

BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Public Hearing
July 14, 2014
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. **Call to Order/Pledge to the Flag**

   First Selectman Chris Bielik called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

   Members Present: First Selectman Chris Bielik, Selectman Peter Betkoski, and Selectman Dominick Sorrentino

   Others present: Joe Perrelli from Naugatuck Valley COG, Luke Marshall from Citizens News, and I member of the public

   C. Bielik introduced Joe Perrelli from the Naugatuck Valley COG and indicated that he is here to answer and questions that the public may have in regards to the Ordinance that will be voted on at tomorrow's Town Meeting. The town is looking to adopt the Ordinance that will formally create an Ordinance for the town of Beacon Falls to join with the new Naugatuck Valley COG.

2. **Public Hearing**

   Purpose of the Public Hearing is to hear and discuss the following proposed Ordinance of the Town of Beacon Falls:

   1. **An Ordinance Regarding the Adoption of Connecticut General Statutes Sections 4-124i through 4-124p, Inclusive, by the Town of Beacon Falls pertaining to creating and joining the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments.**

   J. Perrelli began by passing out a map of the cities and towns associated with the Naugatuck Valley COG. He began with the Naugatuck Valley COG was started as regional planning agency back in the 1960s. The Central Naugatuck Valley COG is thirteen towns. The towns of Shelton, Derby, Seymour, Ansonia, Bristol, and Plymouth decided to form a new Naugatuck Valley COG as a result of new State regulations.

C. Bielik corrected that the map shows the town Plymouth as Burlington on the map. J. Perrelli agreed that there is an error on the map and the town of Burlington on the map should be shown as Plymouth.

J. Perrelli noted that this means that the towns will coordinate with one another regarding land use planning, transportation planning, and economic development. The towns will help with the funding and planning, doing it as a COG.

P. Betkoski asked if everything will stay the same and J. Perrelli indicated that they will but with more emphasis on economic development and other regional services. C. Bielik indicated that one thing that will occur with this merger is that Bristol and Plymouth is making the move from Capital Region to us. We are merging one existing COG and one Council of Elected Officials. We are on the Council of Elected Officials and Valley COG is actually a COG by statutes. When the merger of the existing thirteen towns, the four towns of the Valley, and the two towns that want to join, we will be consolidating two Council of Government administrative staffs into one. When 60% of the proposed membership of a COG, according to state statutes, elects to join that COG than by statutes, it is allowed to stand up and become functionally. The new Naugatuck Valley COG went over that threshold last month. We are at our 60% and with the vote tomorrow, we will add our weight to that. The goal is for all the 19 towns in the new proposed COG to take the same action as we are tomorrow night and have that completed before the end of December. C. Bielik noted it seems that we are ahead of that schedule.

The new COG will have offices in the same located as the current location in Waterbury, which is centrally located. At a meeting a month ago, the owners of the building is willing to lease and expand the existing space as necessary to allow for the expansion.

J. Perrelli indicated that the committees are going to become more important here with moving forward from here. The executive directors can only go so far with it before giving more power to the CEOs to say where we want to go in the future. Now with the 60%, there will be more information for the committees to act on and put the pieces together as to how the new agency will look. Kurt Miller is the Chairman of the Valley COG and Ed Edelson is the Chairman of Central Naugatuck Valley COG.

C. Bielik asked if there were any questions from the public for J. Perrelli regarding tonight's discussion on the Ordinance.

MaryAnn Holloway, Dolly Drive, asked if belonging to this gives us any benefits. J. Perrelli responded that it gives a way for the towns to work together on issues with a single voice. C. Bielik also indicated that every municipality in Connecticut must belong to one of these organizations. Historically, we belonged to Central Naugatuck Valley. Six of the existing ones are being eliminated with the merger.

Beacon Falls needs to join some organization and we have the opportunity to leave the organization that they are trying to set up. We could potentially merge with South Central CT Region because we border with it in some way. Staying with the Valley towns and Prospect, our regional partner, it is more of a benefit than joining towns that don't know us or have similar issues as us.

M. Holloway noted that her concern is with something being important to us and not with the other towns, and what about grant monies. J. Perrelli indicated that there isn't a lot of conflicts in this COG. On the issue of grants, the towns seem to be in agreement with one another. He mentioned the Greenway Project.

J. Perrelli indicated that the national monies come in through the regions. C. Bielik also indicated that there is a racking and stacking of priorities. We submit our projects to the COG and they look them over. The sub-committees make a decision to which ones will be presented to the executive members. C. Bielik noted the award of grant money for the Senior Bus. There were 59 towns in the State of Connecticut that put in grant applications to get funding for Senior Buses. The COG helped the towns in the COG with the grant process and package.

3. **Adjournment**

With no further discussion, C. Bielik asked for a motion to adjourn tonight's meeting.

Motion to adjourn tonight's Board of Selectmen Public Hearing at 7:20 P.M.: **Betkoski/Sorrentino;** *no discussion;* **all ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Scirpo
Clerk, Board of Selectmen