

CENTRE REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
GENERAL FORUM
May 22, 2017

Chairman Thomas E. Daubert called the regular May 22, 2017 meeting of the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) to order at 7:03 PM in the Forum Room of the Centre Region COG Building.

Members present: Meses. Dauler, Engeman and Lafer and Messrs. Brown and Daubert, State College Borough; Ms. Stilson and Messrs. Bernier, Francke, and Fragola, College Township; Meses. Dininni, Graef and Whitaker and Messrs. Buckland and Miller, Ferguson Township; Ms. Del Corso and Mr. Stevenson, Halfmoon Township; Messrs. Graham, Hameister, Harden, Lord and Wilson, Harris Township; Messrs. Downsborough, Luck, Wise, and Treviño, Patton Township.

Others present: Messrs. Fountaine, State College Borough Manager; May, Centre Regional Planning Agency Director; Pribulka, Ferguson Township Manager; Schneider, Centre Region Code Agency Director; Steff, COG Executive Director; Zilla, Centre Regional Planning Agency Principal Transportation Planner; Asendorf, COG Finance Assistant; Kauffman; COG Emergency Management Coordinator; Erickson, Patton Township Manager; Brumbaugh, College Township Manager; Moore, Penn State University Vice President for Government and Community Relations; Gibbons, Concord Public Financial Advisors; Damgaard, COG Bond Counsel; Williams, COG Counsel; Parfitt, Patton Township resident; Kisslak, State College Borough resident and Stone, State College Borough resident and Meses. Farkas, Harris Township Manager; Salokangas, Centre Region Parks and Recreation (CRPR) Agency Director; Stamm, COG Office Manager and Recording Secretary; Watt, Bailiwick News; Alloway, Schlow Library Director; Kemock, CRPR Recreation Services Manager; Quay, CRPR intern; Frank, CRPR intern; Whitman, Patton Township resident; Young, Penn State University Director of Local Government and Community Relations; and Rafacz, Centre Daily Times.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were none.

MINUTES

Ms. Whitaker noted that there is a typo in Ms. Graef's name on page two that should be amended.

A motion was made by Mr. Hameister and seconded by Mr. Stevenson that the minutes of the April 24, 2017 General Forum meeting be approved as amended. The motion was unanimously approved.

GENERAL FORUM RESOLUTION 2017-2 RECOMMENDATION TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION AUTHORITY TO MODIFY THE REGIONAL PARKS LOAN

Mr. Daubert asked the General Forum's discussion be limited to the question to whether the General Forum agreed that the terms for the regional parks loan should be modified.

Mr. Graham began the discussion by reviewing the three options to the parks loan and the motion brought forward by the joint Finance Committee, Parks Capital Committee and Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority meeting.

Mr. Steff indicated the purpose of Resolution 2017-2 is to recommend to the CRPR Authority the terms for the refinance parks loan be modified. He reviewed the proposed changes of the Bond and Loan Agreement are to:

- extend the draw down date for the loan from June 1, 2017 to June 1, 2020.
- reduce the interest rate from 2.8% to 2.59%.
- deposit an additional \$167,798 into the Fulton Money Market account.

Mr. Steff clarified that the Resolution does not require the municipalities to contribute any additional funding to the project and that the purpose of the original loan was to provide financing for Oak Hall Regional Park and Whitehall Road Regional Park. He stated there is still \$4.8 million to be spent for improvements to the Whitehall Road Regional Park. Mr. Steff also cited that the Resolution before the General Forum is advisory to the CRPR Authority and the authority will be holding a special meeting on Wednesday, May 24 to consider the General Forum's Resolution and take action with the Fulton Bank loan.

Mr. Chris Gibbons, of Concord Public Financial Advisors, stated this would be the fifth amendment to this loan. He advised that the offer from Fulton Bank was extremely fair with a very competitive interest rate.

Mr. Jens Damgaard, Bond Council, clarified that the Resolution is a recommendation from the General Forum to the CRPR Authority to enter into a modification agreement for the loan. He also stated that the Guarantee Agreement from 2011 for the loan is not being changed. In that agreement were maximum amounts to be paid to the bank. Since then the loan has been reduced three times making the original interest rates and payments well below what was agreed upon. As long as those payments are at or below what was agreed, the Guarantee Agreement does not need to be revised.

A motion was made by Mr. Graham and seconded by Ms. Lafer that the General Forum, as recommended by the Finance Committee and Parks Capital Committee, adopt Resolution 2017-2 asking the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority to modify the regional parks loan with Fulton Bank in accordance with its May 1, 2017 proposal. Futhermore, this action is approved with the stipulation that if construction contracts

are not executed within a period of time not to exceed one year then the CRPR Authority shall discuss the project with the General Forum prior to proceeding.

Ms. Dininni commented that all information previously provided to other municipalities should be discussed at this time, not narrowing the discussion to only the motion. Mr. Daubert responded that the discussion is limited to address the motion before the General Forum. Ms. Dininni then questioned the priority use of rights given to organizations for use of the park and the limited amenities at the park. Ms. Dininni stated that there are significantly fewer park amenities than planned and when asking if options would be discussed in the municipalities, she was told yes. Mr. Daubert responded that this discussion is only pertaining to the motion to modify the loan, not the details of the park plans.

David Stone, a State College Borough resident, stated that regarding the recent court decision there is still uncertainty of how the appeals course will proceed. If the developer does not move forward there may be a shortfall of over one million dollars that should be given back to the tax payers as opposed to adding it onto the budget for the park itself.

Katherine Watt, of Bailiwick News, stated that she has been following this process since last summer and the shutting down of discussion by the chair is a travesty of representational democratic process.

Jay Kislack, a State College Borough resident, coaches youth football in the region. He stated there are fewer fields for organizations to play and this park is needed. The additional fields are great opportunities for the community and especially the youth to participate in a growing number of different sports. He also mentioned that his organization fundraises through concessions to contribute as needed.

Ms. Lafer stated that this renegotiation at a lower interest rate makes extremely good sense. The community seems to want this park and financially it does not have any direct impact at the moment. She also reminded that the wording in this motion allows for review again in one year if the project has not progressed.

Mr. Luck questioned how the costs of this loan modification are being paid. Mr. Steff responded that the costs are being paid from the Regional Parks budget and no municipal money is involved in the loan modification. Mr. Steff also stated the money being spent for the consultants were authorized by the CRPR Authority and is also paid through the Regional Parks budget.

A motion was made by Mr. Luck and seconded by Mr. Lord to amend the original motion to state that all expenses associated with modifying the loan are covered by the loan proceeds themselves. The amended motion passed; 19 yeas, 4 nays (Mr. Buckland and Ms. Dininni of Ferguson Township and Mr. Brown and Ms. Engeman of State College Borough) with Ms. DelCorso and Mr. Stevenson of Halfmoon Township abstaining.

Mr. Brown questioned what the amounts of money spent was for since the loan was originally executed in 2011. Mr. Steff reported that 3.2 million dollars has been spent on Oak Hall Regional Park as well as fees for engineering costs towards Whitehall Road Regional Park. The agreement specified the loan is for those two parks but without a specific breakdown. The loan started at 8 million dollars and currently has a balance of approximately 4.8 million to spend.

Ms. Dininni questioned what the CRPR Authority is endorsed to do by a vote to refinance the loan. Mr. Daubert responded that the Resolution expresses the General Forum's support for amending the loan. Ms. Dininni also questioned when the General Forum will then be updated on the project. Mr. Steff responded that a monthly update on the project is expected verbally or in the monthly Activity Report.

PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP TO STEERING COMMITTEE FOR PREPARING A PARKS AND RECREATION REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Daubert explained that at the last meeting it was decided to appoint this committee with each municipality, including Halfmoon Township, as well as the CRPR Authority having one representative. There have been two changes asked by the authority; for the CRPR Authority to have two representatives as well as add the CRPR Director as a full member with voting rights. The Executive Committee recommended unanimously that each group only have one representative on the Steering Committee. Due to the recommendation from DCNR that one member hold a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional certification with at least three years' experience, the Executive Committee recommends the CRPR Director be a voting member of the committee.

Ms. Dininni questioned having an even or uneven number of votes on a committee. She also cautioned that having a staff member as a voting member may blur lines between the elected official's representation and the function of staff. The committee comprised of appointed elected officials should be honored and the staff member's opinion will still be valued in the same manner. Ms. Dininni also stated that this motion did not come from the Executive Committee but rather from the CRPR Authority and the Steering Committee should be left as it was originally appointed. Mr. Daubert responded that there is no rule to have an even or odd amount of members to a committee and there will be a vote on the motion.

A motion was made by Mr. Luck and seconded Ms. Graef that the General Forum, as recommended by the Executive Committee, modify its March 27, 2017 action to establish a Steering Committee for the development of a Parks and Recreation Regional Comprehensive Plan as to give the Parks and Recreation Director full voting rights. The motion passed with 23 yeas, 2 nays (Mr. Buckland and Ms. Dininni of Ferguson Township).

RENEWAL OF CODE SERVICES CONTRACT WITH BELLEFONTE BOROUGH

Mr. Steff summarized that in 2014 the General Forum voted to enter into a Code Services Agreement with the Borough of Bellefonte. That contract expires in June, 2017. The Bellefonte Borough solicited for proposals. The Centre Region Code Administration (CRCA) submitted a proposal of which the Bellefonte Borough has accepted. A new agreement has been drafted to extend code services to Bellefonte Borough until January, 2021, has been reviewed by the Public Safety Committee, and was included in the agenda packet for this meeting.

Mr. Wise added that the agreement will benefit both the CRCA and Bellefonte Borough.

A motion was made by Mr. Wise and seconded by Ms. Dininni that the General Forum, as recommended by the Public Safety Committee, authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract between the Centre Region COG and the Borough of Bellefonte for code administration services for a period beginning July 1, 2017 and ending on January 1, 2021 unless otherwise extended in accordance with the terms of the contract. The motion passed unanimously.

MAY 2017 ACTIVITY REPORT

Mr. Steff announced the redesign of the Activity Report and encouraged comments and suggestions. He also mentioned the updated, revised meeting calendar at each person's seat this evening.

UNIVERSITY REPORT

Mr. Moore introduced Charima Young, the newly hired Director of Local Government and Community Relations, joining Penn State University from Atlanta, GA. She will be taking over for Mr. Moore beginning next month.

Mr. Buckland questioned the status of proposals raised by PSU President Barron. One proposal for the University to fund a regional planning process for public input, the other for the use of land in agricultural production. Mr. Moore responded that the regional visioning exercise has been on hold while awaiting Ms. Young's employment start. He expressed the president's interest and as a broad response, believes it will definitely kick off sometime within this calendar year. He also stated that he had not heard about the use of agricultural land but will inquire and respond accordingly.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee – Mr. Daubert reported that at its May, 2017 meeting, the Executive Committee discussed the General Forum agenda topics.

Public Safety Committee – Mr. Wise reported on the discussion of hazmat response in the Centre Region.

Finance Committee – Mr. Graham reported that there was nothing new to report.

Human Resources Committee – Mr. Wilson reported that discussion on personnel changes proposed for 2018 and the COLA were main topics for the May 3, 2017 meeting. He also followed up on a personnel policy change and suggested a consultant to update the policy handbook that has not been updated since 1985.

Public Services & Environmental Committee – Mr. Hameister reported on the UAJA discussion for sewer to the athletic field maintenance facility, discussions regarding Kinber Study and Mr. May's personnel proposals were all topics at the May 4, 2017 meeting.

Transportation and Land Use (TLU) Committee – Mr. Daubert reported that this committee did not meet.

Parks Capital Committee – Ms. Stilson commented there was nothing not already covered to report.

Centre Region Planning Commission (CRPC)/Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO) – Mr. May reported that UAJA has completed the Act 537 Special Study and will be distributed to the General Forum in June to begin the 60 day public comment period. He also reported about an event at Millbrook Marsh.

Ms. Dininni questioned the revisions to be made to the Act 537 Plan. Mr. May responded that he would contact the Executive Director of the UAJA for details but the section in question is now not being built so a revision may not be required.

Emergency Management Council – Mr. Kauffman reported on the recent May storm and the impact it placed on Harris Township as well as the planning involved for upcoming community events.

Mr. Graham added that it was wonderful to see all the municipalities contribute and help Harris Township with the storm clean-up.

Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority Board/Centre Region Parks and Recreation Agency – Ms. Salokangas commented there was nothing not already covered to report.

Schlow Centre Region Library – Ms. Alloway reported on the two upcoming, large events honoring Schlow's 60th anniversary in this community. She also reported about the privacy policy passed by the Library Board.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Daubert reminded that next month's General Forum is scheduled for June 26, 2017 at the Active Adult Center. Mr. Steff reminded that the Recycling Luncheon is approaching on June 6, 2017. Mr. Buckland encouraged others to watch the WPSU short film, "Managing Risk in a Changing Climate".

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the May 22, 2017 meeting of the COG General Forum was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Stamm
Recording Secretary