CapCOG Board of Delegates

Hampden Township Recreation Center - Community Room

Monday, July 20, 2020 - 7:00 PM

M I N U T E S

**DELEGATES IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| Dillsburg Borough, Mark Ryder  Hampden Township, Al Bienstock; Nate Silcox  Highspire Borough, Mark Stonbraker  Hummelstown Borough, Dee  Vangavree  Lemoyne Borough, Sue Yenchko  Lower Allen Township, Rick Schin | Lower Paxton Township, Robin  Lindsey  Middle Paxton Township, Jim Fisher  Monroe Township, Carl Kuhl  New Cumberland Borough, Rob Kline  Royalton Borough, Terry Watts  Silver Spring Township, Harry Kotzmoyer | South Hanover Township, Stephen Cordaro  South Middleton Township, Cory  Adams  Upper Allen Township, Ken Martin  Wormleysburg Borough, Margie Stuski, Sue Stuart |

**MUNICIPALITIES NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| Annville Township  Camp Hill Borough  Carlisle Borough  Carroll Township  Conewago Township  Dauphin Borough  Derry Township  East Hanover Township  East Pennsboro Township  Fairview Township | Goldsboro Borough  Harrisburg City  Londonderry Township  Lower Swatara Township  Marysville Borough  Mechanicsburg Borough  Middletown Borough  Monaghan Township  North Middleton Township  Paxtang Borough | Penbrook Borough  Shiremanstown Borough  Steelton Borough  Susquehanna Township  Swatara Township  West Hanover Township |

**NON-VOTING IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| Senator Mike Regan, PA 31st Senatorial District  Vince DiFilippo, Cumberland County Commissioners | CapCOG STAFF  Gary Myers, Executive Director  Rhonda Campbell, Administrative Assistant |

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Cory Adams.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by roundtable introductions.

**Presentation**

Nate Silcox introduced Senator Mike Regan. Senator Regan was a US Marshal for 23 years serving across the country. He also served as Deputy Inspector General, PA Representative, and was elected to the PA Senate four years ago.

Senator Regan thanked the COG for inviting him to share updates on what is happening in the State and the Senate.

* First, let's talk about Covid 19 and how legislature is responding. It is an interesting observation to see that we are highly divided on party lines. We have a democrat Governor and a Republican majority in legislature.
* No one saw this coming and everyone was scrambling to formulate a plan. There was an effort initially to work together. I believe Governor Wolf would have been better served to form a bipartisan task force with community and business leaders, doctors from PA healthcare institutions, and legislators to address Covid 19 in PA.
* The General Assembly attempted to pass a number of bills. We were the only state in the country that shut down the construction, automobile, and real estate industries - 500,000 unemployment claims just from those three industries. One bill was to get those industries back open, The Governor vetoed the bill.
* PA had nearly 3 million unemployment claims; by far the most in the country. This immediately put us behind the 8-ball with the budget. We had a rainy day fund before Covid; now we are $7B in debit mostly due to loss of sales tax.
* No one is meant to be in charge for an extended period of time, regardless of party. Our constitution didn't cover a virus. It spoke to national disasters. So, now we have a bill to change emergency powers so that a governor would only have 21 days before he/she would have to get approval from the General Assembly to extend an emergency order. This would be a PA Constitutional amendment and has to pass two consecutive sessions. In May 2021, voters will have the chance to decide if this amendment becomes part of our Constitution.
* Republicans felt counties would have a better handle on what was going on within their county rather than the state government. We introduced a bill to allow counties to determine reopening. The Governor vetoed the bill.
* The next step was House Resolution 836 which overturned the Governors Emergency order. It passed the House and Senate with bipartisan support. In the House,13 democrats voted in favor and 2 Senate democrats voted in favor. The Governor challenged it in PA Supreme Court which sided with the Governor allowing his emergency orders and shut downs to remain in place.
* The restaurant/bar industry is extremely upset. There is some interest from federal law enforcement authorities regarding the closure of restaurants. From the national level, decisions made at state level that aren't backed up by data, there may be an issue. Data hasn't been shared with legislature to justify the closure of restaurants.
* In the middle of all this, came the George Floyd situation resulting in protests ignoring social distancing and guidelines placed by the Governor who, by participating in protests, violated his own rules. But the wheels of justice need to turn and the investigations need to be allowed to happen. It's important to remember a small percentage of our police officers are guilty of bad behavior. There are several bills in the house regarding police officers including: if a police officer is dismissed from one police force, that information will be made available to new departments to which he/she may apply . HB 1910 provides for mental health exams for PTSD, and police sensitivity training. SB 459 would require police departments to report any uses of force by police officers and SB1205 would make that a matter of public record.
* We need to support our police. We should look at providing medals for those who save others lives or do something exceptional; it's important to acknowledge their efforts.
* $3.9M in Federal CARES money. $2.5M was appropriated to small business and counties with the exception of Lebanon County which the Governor withheld due to Lebanon County reopening prior to the Governor's authorization.
* The Senate has prepared a Grants Guide for municipalities. Copies are available tonight.
* RADAR for police officers - I think it's a no brainer. It passed in senate overwhelmingly and is waiting for a final vote in house.
* Sunshine Act HB 1609 would allow for the posting of public meetings, agenda, at office location and on website and prohibit agencies from taking action on items not on agenda. Passed by House and is currently in the Senate I support this.
* 140,000 volunteer firefighters now. In the 1970's there were 300,000. There has been talk about paying firefighters, but to do that would be about $10B; it's cost prohibitive. We have expanded online training through State Fire Commissioners office. More conducive to individuals who are working other jobs to make it easier.
* Also providing a quarter of a million dollars in funding for recruitment/retention to State Fire Commissioner.
* $50M federal CARES dollars to EMS/Fire. The deadline to apply for these funds is October 7, 2020.
* Established first responder mental health and stress response program.

* A number of other bills being introduced to assist firefighters and EMS. We've been promised a fire week to run a lot of the bills related to firefighters and EMS.

**Questions**

Margie Stuski - You were wonderful when you transferred from U.S. Marshall to public office. You mentored the Crime Watch founder; you get in and help. Thank you. Last week, the Wormleysburg Borough Council had an issue arise regarding our police unable to use the booking center. We are asking for money and dedication to improve those processes. Immediately, we need to be able to fingerprint them so we don't release someone into the community who shouldn't be. Then, long term the question is how do we incorporate more video bookings, more video hearings?

* Regan - The money we can save by automating things can be impactful. Certainly, you can do video bookings. We should consider appropriating money for things like this. I didn't realize the booking center was shut down. The identity issue is a big thing. If you don't print the person and release them, you can have a community safety issue.

Sue Yenchko - Lemoyne - I think many municipalities have had issues with fireworks. The opening of the law has opened the doors to real problems.

* Senator Brown is introducing a bill that defines times when fireworks can be set off. I agree, our veterans with PTSD also suffer during these times. I don't think this was a well-thought out law, and now we are backtracking. Expect some changes.
* Yenchko - Is there any chance to rescind the law?
* Regan - More than likely it will be amended. It is difficult to pull the rug out from the business owners who set up businesses in brick and mortar buildings to provide for their families.
* Rick Schin - 150 ft distance away from structures isn't enough. These are professional type fireworks and they are too large for the limited distance. Sellers should have to educate the buyers. It is a danger issue that close to houses.
* Sue Stuart - I support the restriction of fireworks.

Sue Stuart - I am a member of the Board for the West Shore Chamber of Commerce. We have lost members because we are losing restaurants due to Governor Wolf. There are some restaurants who will not be able to come back.

* Regan - The virus is real. Through this process, we know who is most vulnerable. Focus should have been and should be on how to save lives and learn how to coexist with this virus. We can't keep going on this way. Our economy won't recover. The data is saying young kids aren't at risk; immuno-compromised or older individuals do have to take different precautions. Families have lost businesses, skyrocketing suicides, domestic abuse rising, seniors locked in while cases introduced into nursing homes, aggravated assaults are up, drug overdoses have tripled since Covid. We talked with UPMC officials, their opinion was that the results from being locked down were more dramatic than actual virus. We have to take care of those who are losing everything, can't get unemployment, etc.

Stuski -People going back to work are getting hours cut so they make less than if they didn't go back.

Stephen Cordaro - - Can we get information published on suicides to show the ramifications of shutting down the economy. Is that open to a class action lawsuit.

* Regan -There are two options -override of veto of HR836. Restaurant issue will push this along. The second is Impeachment. There is a resolution in the House to impeach. We are working hard but we are not being met half way.

Ken Martin -If you were the governor, what should have been done?

* Regan - I would have immediately created a bipartisan task force to get information on what is best way to proceed. If you get buy-in from both sides, if we would have had medical institutions involved along with chambers, NFIB, providing input I think the focus would have been on saving both lives and livelihoods. We would have tried to find a compromise. Ohio followed CDC guidelines and had lower Covid cases than PA. Their result was much better than our result. The Governor went to Carnegie Mellon to get studies; leaders in hospitals were saying modeling was flawed but the Governor wouldn't utilize our experts in infectious disease.

Cory Adams thanks Senator Regan for his presentation.

**Consent Agenda**

The February 2020 Minutes and June 2020 Treasurer's report were presented. Rhonda Campbell shared two corrections to the February 2020 Minutes (correction on attributions on two comments). Stuski - motioned; Ryder seconded. Unanimously approved.

**Executive Director's Reports**

* Gary Myers asked the Board to keep John Kuntzleman in their thoughts and prayers; always very loyal to CapCOG and PACOG. Kuntzleman has been hospitalized for a while.
* Auction - We were worried we wouldn't have an auction. Through the help of South Middleton Township, Adams came through offering Leaman Park as a location. We had same number of participants as last year. Income was greater this year and overall income was almost the same. Myers also thanked Campbell for her efforts to bring the auction to fruition.
* Our 2019 Financial Review was completed; it is actually a net financial statement; COG is doing well, no findings. Martin motioned to accept the Financial Review. Stuski seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.
* The 2020 Picnic and golf tournament will be at Armitage Golf Course. The Tournament and Picnic will be held with some restrictions as required by the Governor. The date is September 21. We did sponsorships earlier in year so we have already 8,025 in sponsorships. Campbell will reach out to add to that total.
* CapCOG submitted a SAFER Grant Application in the amount of $2,839,000 to FEMA in May. E are awaiting results. We received letters of endorsement from local, state, and federal elected officials.
* The Annual Salt requests will go out to members in late August, early September.
* The COG office has been open both on site and via telecommuting. We will move to our new offices in August/September. A lot of smaller municipalities have reached out to Myers over the last few months for guidance and support. It's an honor to work at COG.

**County Reports**

Cumberland County - Commissioner DiFilippo shared updates. Reports were emailed to all Cumberland County members.

* Bridge report -Four are under construction, Orrs Bridge; Kunkle Bridge, Wolf Bridge, Sample Bridge on schedule. All four will be done at this time next year.
* On July 16 , the County opened Renew Cumberland $23M CARES grant money. Grant application closes 7/30; it is for municipalities to cover costs related PPE, alterations to buildings, IT improvements, etc.
* Central Booking -County prison, Central Booking is open but not for all violations. Only for felony 3 and above and domestic abuse.
  + Stuski - The problem with that is our officers don't know if they are Felony 3 or domestic since they won't tell the police officers. We can't tell public we are just giving summons and sending criminals back into the community.
* Carl Ruhl - Asked about MS4 documents and the upcoming 70% reduction in nitrates. - DiFilippo said he would follow up.

There were no reports from Dauphin or York Counties.

**Legislative Update**

Silcox - Grants Guides are available. $50m fire and EMS grants; deadline is August 7 is deadline. If your fire companies received a regular grant last year, it is at least eligible for that amount. Basically, the maximum in previous years $14,000, this year it is just short of $20,000. There will be a fire/EMS grant booklet identifying all federal and state grants in September.

**Public Safety Committee**

SAFER Grant was submitted; Silcox thanked Myers for his work on this. A total of 19 fire companies are part of the grant application. Jerry Ozog has been guiding us. Jerry Brant wrote the grant proposal. Once we get the grant, we'll hire a program administrator. Myers shared that the salary for the Administrator will be up to $45,000/year and they will be an independent contractor.

**UCC Appeals**

Terry Watts provided an update. There is one appeal pending; currently in recess. The UCC Board will convene July 28. This will be the third month hearing this appeal. It involves a Contractor who put in two commercial swimming pools without permits and inspections during Covid. The Contractor believed a permit issues for other work covered the pools. Municipally denied them occupancy. The question is how do you do inspection on work already completed. Final report next month hopefully.

**Good of the Order**

Myers asked the Delegates if we should have an August meeting. Normally we do not, but with Covid-19, we haven't been able to meet regularly. COG will survey members to see if we should meet in August.

Watts made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Ryder seconded. Unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda Campbell