

Adams County Council of Governments
March 12, 2009 8:30 a.m.
Adams County Emergency Services Center
Meeting minutes

Welcome

Barb Underwood, Cumberland Township Supervisor, welcomed everyone to the meeting and briefly explained the COG concept and the activities of the steering committee. She introduced Adams County Commissioner George Weikert, who has agreed to chair the COG during its start-up.

George Weikert stated that the two informational meetings held by the steering committee in December and January indicated a strong interest in forming a COG. The Adams County Commissioners share that interest, and will support the COG by providing the services of its solicitor for review of start-up documents at no charge. They will also provide up-front funding for items such as insurance and advertising, to be reimbursed by the COG once its dues structure is established. Weikert praised the COG concept as an opportunity for cooperation, communication and cost effective government.

Roll Call of Attendance (see attached attendance sheet for names of representatives)

Attending:

Abbottstown Borough
Arendtsville Borough
Biglerville Borough
Carroll Valley Borough
Cumberland Township
Franklin Township
Germany Township
Gettysburg Borough
Hamilton Township
Hamiltonban Township
Highland Township

Huntington Township
Littlestown Borough
Mt. Joy Township
Mt. Pleasant Township
Oxford Township
Straban Township
Conewago Valley School District
Fairfield Area School District
Gettysburg Area School District
Upper Adams School District

Absent:

Bendersville Borough
Berwick Township
Bonneauville Borough
Butler Township
Conewago Township
East Berlin Borough
Fairfield Borough
Freedom Township
Latimore Township
Liberty Township

McSherrystown Borough
Menallen Township
New Oxford Borough
Reading Township
Tyrone Township
Union Township
York Springs Borough
Bermudian Springs School District
Littlestown Area School District

Proposed by-laws

A draft set of by-laws, modeled after the Franklin County COG, was distributed prior to the meeting. Weikert said he would appoint a by-laws committee, and asked meeting attendees to identify any issues they want to have the by-laws committee consider. The following issues were identified:

- # of meetings – change from monthly to bi-monthly as a minimum. The Cog can easily meet monthly, as is anticipated in the first year, without having to amend the by-laws if it chooses to go to bi-monthly meetings later on.
- Voting members – should each member designate a voting member and alternate in writing? Who is eligible to vote – can a COG member designate a non-elected official to vote on its behalf? School district reps will probably not be elected officials. How will the COG recognize an alternate or proxy?
- Officers of the COG – limit to one office-holder per member. Should member representatives who serve on other associations be eligible to serve as officers? The concern is that the Township and Borough Associations might become too powerful if they also held the COG offices. On the other hand, this would be a hardship for school districts because their reps also serve on the Lincoln Intermediate Unit.
- Membership – who is eligible? Should there be associate memberships for organizations like ACVESA?
- Funds – need language governing the investment of funds.
- Purposes – add purpose to section 2 on reducing costs.
- Quorums and attendance – Should there be attendance requirements? Consider setting the quorum at less than 50%, because it could be hard to meet the 50% requirement if there are many COG members.

Appointment of Committees

The following people volunteered to serve on committees:

By-laws – Dave Wheeler, Littlestown Borough; Stephanie Eggers, Hamilton Township; Bill McMasters, Oxford Township; Brad Hunt, Gettysburg Area School District; Sandy Spence, Franklin Township.

Ordinance & Resolution – Flo Ford, Cumberland Township; Dave Hazlett, Carroll Valley Borough; Mark Sewell, Fairfield Area School District.

Budget & Insurance – Barb Underwood, Cumberland Township; Bob Gordon, Hamiltonban Township; Sharon Hamm, Straban Township.

Schedule and location of future meetings

Weikert proposed the 4th Thursday of each month at 8:30 a.m. for 2009 meetings, except November and December which will be on the 3rd Thursday to avoid conflict with holidays. Gettysburg Area School District offered to host the next few meetings in its school board meeting room. Meetings should last no more than 90 minutes.

Contact information for members

Members were asked to complete a contact sheet and send it to Barb Underwood at Cumberland Township. The Township has agreed to provide clerical support for the first year. For now, members will receive one mailed copy of all correspondence, and up to 12 email copies.

COG member responsibilities

Judy Chambers, Penn State Extension, reviewed the responsibilities of COG member representatives, and emphasized the need to have representatives make sure that all elected officials and appropriate staff in their municipality or school district are informed about COG activities and receive copies of all COG correspondence. (The easiest way to do this is to add their email addresses to the contact sheet). She suggested that each member add a COG report as a regular agenda item for their monthly meeting.

Discussion: programs and opportunities for the COG

The following ideas were suggested as potential COG activities:

- Surplus equipment auction
- Sharing public works equipment and labor
- Joint bid for paving and other materials
- Joint bid for computer software and security
- Joint evaluation of issues of emergency services funding and coordination
- Joint compost and/or recycling facilities
- Pooled group for health insurance, pension and other employee benefits
- Sharing compensation information
- Method for information-sharing in general
- Education for COG members
- Bundled push-to-talk phone services
- Sharing facilities such as meeting rooms and storage

Dave Hazlett, Carroll Valley Borough volunteered to work on the information-sharing concept. Flo Ford, Cumberland Township, volunteered to work on the idea of bundled push-to-talk phone services.

Review of proposed timeline and assignments for next meeting

Weikert asked for reports from the By-laws Committee and the Ordinance and Resolution Committee for the next meeting. Chambers said she would send out meeting minutes to all attendees. She will also send minutes and all of the handouts from this meeting (agenda, contact sheet, roll call sheet, proposed timeline, proposed calendar) to those municipalities and school districts not in attendance.

Public Comment

None.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday April 23, 8:30 a.m., Gettysburg Area School District Administration Building, 900 Biglerville Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Minutes submitted by,

Judy Chambers
Penn State Extension