

Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations

Friday, August 5, 2022

An audio recording is available at: <http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=19926>

Members present: Carl Amento, Maureen Brummett, Sen. Stephen Cassano, John Elsesser, Matt Hart, Martin Heft, Karl Kilduff, Keith Norton, James O’Leary, Francis Pickering, Troy Raccuia, Lon Seidman, Brendan Sharkey (Chair), Ron Thomas, Mike Walsh

Members not present: Kyle Abercrombie, Luke Bronin, John Filchak, Greg Florio, Sam Gold, Brian Greenleaf, Harrison Nantz, Neil O’Leary

Other participants: Laura Francis, John Harkins, Brian O’Connor, Richard Porth, Margaret Wirtenberg

Member vacancies: Nominated by COST: Municipal official: Town of <10,000 population
Nominated by CCM: Municipal official: Town of 20,000 – 60,000 population

OPM staff: Bruce Wittchen

1. Call to order and overview of telemeeting procedures

Commission chair Sharkey called the meeting to order at 10:34 without a quorum of member yet.

2. Approval of the [minutes of the July 8, 2022 meeting](#)

A quorum was not present initially so the group proceeded to Items 3 & 4, but returned to Item 2 afterwards with a quorum present. At that time, a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the July meeting and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Membership update, if any

Bruce Wittchen and Martin Heft said the Governor’s office is considering nominations of two new members and is considering naming a new vice-chair.

4. ACIR regular reports

- ACIR Session Mandates Report (due November 15)

Bruce Wittchen said he circulated the 1st draft of the session mandates report to members this week and has already received some suggestions. He noted that the report is not due until November so there is an opportunity to consider changes in the ACIR’s mandates reported. He said he has begun work on the mandates compendium supplement that is due in early 2023. He explained the difference between a compendium supplement and a full compendium and said the next full compendium is due in 2024, which would be a good time for any major change in mandates reporting.

5. CT Local Government of the Future initiative ([notes of 7/26 subcommittee meeting](#))

- a. Current topics

Commission chair Sharkey provided an overview of the initiative and mentioned the interest of Commissioner Boughton of the [Dept. of Revenue Services](#). He noted Commission member Pickering’s interest in the federal revenue topic that is part of this initiative and that a Western CT Council of Governments (WestCOG) intern is working on that topic. Commission member

Pickering said the intern should be able to provide a presentation to the full ACIR at its next meeting and circulate it to the subcommittee first.

Commission chair Sharkey said another topic under consideration is state reporting requirements on municipalities. He said he will speak with Bruce Wittchen about surveying municipalities and added that what he has in mind is a simple questionnaire to get input regarding which reporting they have trouble with and related questions.

Commission chair Sharkey said property tax reform is the 3rd topic being looked at and described DRS Commissioner Boughton's interest. The focus is on significant reform and he believes Comm. Boughton is thinking about this topic in the same way we are. He added that he believes that whoever is elected Governor in November might look for such change.

Commission chair Sharkey said Comm. Boughton told him that Wall St. accounting firms sometimes volunteer the services of junior accountants for DRS projects such as this. Commission chair Sharkey also mentioned possible support from the [Federal Reserve Bank of Boston](#) (FRBB) and the [Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#) and noted that a small meeting Commission member Thomas had arranged with FRBB staff had to be postponed. He added that he had promised to compile a 2-3 page summary of previous reports but he has not completed that yet.

Commission member Pickering suggested a brainstorming session to get everything on the table and Commission chair Sharkey said the summary he promised will do that. Commission member Pickering asked about new concepts and Commission chair Sharkey said this should be discussed further at the next subcommittee meeting.

Commission member Hart suggested that FRBB, Lincoln Institute, and CCM serve as advisors for the work of the Wall St. accountants mentioned by Commission chair Sharkey. Commission member Thomas said CCM will be happy to be involved and noted CCM's past reports on this topic. Commission chair Sharkey recommended moving forward, noting the length of time likely required to get the FRBB and Lincoln Institute involved.

Commission member Cassano recommended scheduling a joint meeting with legislative leaders so they are aware of what the CIR has in mind. Commission chair Sharkey said the ACIR should first put together a framework with Comm. Boughton and then schedule the meeting. Commission member Elsesser pointed out that CCM was unable to reach consensus regarding its own work in this area and wants to wait until after November's election to proceed. There was a discussion of access to CCM's underlying data.

Jim O'Leary recommending including the COGs in this effort so COGs and their municipal leaders can be involved, not just legislative leaders. Commission chair Sharkey asked if he recommends that because significant reform needs more engagement by COGs and RESCs. Commission member O'Leary said that is a consideration, but he believes we might hear different views on reform by the COGs and their members. We should get their thoughts as this moves along. Commission member Pickering said the COGs are a natural conduit; we can hear from nine COGs, not 169 towns. Margaret Wirtenberg agreed about the need for local input. Commission chair Sharkey agreed and said much work needs to be done. He will provide his summary of reports and speak with Comm. Boughton.

- b. UConn & UGA studies and [Institute for Municipal & Regional Policy](#)

Commission chair Sharkey noted that Lyle Wray was unable to attend and there was no update.

- c. Update: ACIR representation on [Task Force To Study Title 7 Of The General Statutes](#)

There was a discussion of the Special Act's requirement for the minority leader of the senate to appoint an ACIR member and of Commission member Filchak's interest. Commission member Cassano said he will speak with the minority leader about this and Commission member Hart said he also is willing to represent the ACIR. Commission member Heft noted that other positions on the task force could also be filled by ACIR members and Commission member Sharkey invited any others who might be interested to let him know.

6. Other Old Business

Commission chair Sharkey asked Commission member Heft about the [Regional Performance Incentive Program](#) and Commission member Haft said OPM is reviewing applications now and said \$5 million is available. There were discussions of how the availability of grants was publicized and that there is not a hard deadline for applying.

7. New business or any other municipal, regional, or state matters for ACIR consideration

There was no further business.

8. Additional public comments if any

There were no additional public comments.

9. Next meeting

Upcoming meetings will be.

- Tuesday, August 23, 2022, 10:30 am Subcommittee
- Friday, September 9, 2022, 10:30 am Full ACIR

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:24.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM