

# Local Government of the Future Subcommittee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

*Note: This document is ACIR staff notes written during this subcommittee meeting. It is a public document and has been provided to meeting participants for their review and revised in accordance with any comments received but is not approved minutes of the meeting.*

The agenda is available at:

<https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/13604>

The meeting recording is available at:

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ACIR/Meetings/2022/2022-09-27\\_ACIR\\_LGF\\_Audio.mp3](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ACIR/Meetings/2022/2022-09-27_ACIR_LGF_Audio.mp3)

**ACIR Members present:** John Filchak, Martin Heft, Jim O’Leary, Brendan Sharkey

**Other participants:** Leah Grenier, Meghan Portfolio, Margaret Wirtenberg, Pauline Yoder

**ACIR staff:** Bruce Wittchen

## 1. Call to order

Commission chair Sharkey called the meeting to order at 10:32.

## 2. Review of [8/23/2022 LGF notes](#) and [draft 9/9/2022 ACIR minutes](#), if helpful for discussion

There were no comments or questions about the minutes.

## 3. Local Government of the Future (LGF) Initiative

- Maximizing federal funds through COGs and RESCs
- Assessing effectiveness of certain local reporting requirements to the state
- Property Tax Restructuring
- ACIR Book Club

Commission chair Sharkey noted that Commission member Pickering could not attend but he expects to report on the federal funding topic at the next ACIR meeting.

There was a discussion of local reporting mandates and of assessing local impacts of a few such mandates and how the state uses them. This could also be a way to begin the process of looking back at mandates to see how actual impacts compare with what was predicted at passage. It was noted that it is necessary to consider the differing levels of capacity to handle such a task and there might be an opportunity for regional approaches. There is a cost-benefit relationship to consider, furthermore, with the town experiencing a cost and the state potentially receiving a benefit.

The group might divide reporting obligations between two buckets: one including reporting required due to municipal grants and another including everything else, which might not impose a similar need. It was noted that the [Town Aid Road](#) (TAR) reporting requirement is being increased to something more like what it was 20 years ago. The ACIR might consider contacting the [CT Conference of Municipalities](#) (CCM), the [CT Council of Small Towns](#) (COST), and municipal leaders or suggestions. There will be further discussion.

The last two bullets are connected and, because the 2023 legislative session is approaching, the Book Club is reviewing recommendations made by various entities in past reports and studies. The goal is to identify common threads and to bring them together into a set of recommendations by mid-late October.

Commission chair Sharkey noted that the recently reviewed reports included recommendations for increased ACIR staffing and OPM capacity and asked how to proceed. Commission member Heft said the budget process is underway. The ACIR might consider a separate budget like the state Water Planning Council is proposing through PURA. Perhaps the ACIR could do something like that. There was a discussion of options and a sequential approach was recommended. The ACIR can be the guiding entity but staffing would be an issue.

There was a discussion of possible participation by legislators, possibly as a joint meeting of committee leaders and the ACIR, as was done for the final review of the report by the [Task Force to Promote Municipal Shared Services](#). It was also recommended that municipal officials be included, but the involvement of them and legislators would probably be better as a stage between completing the book club discussions and writing ACIR recommendations. There also was a discussion of participation by staff of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, which has done work on this [see [Measuring Municipal Fiscal Disparities in Connecticut](#) and [From Urban Core to Wealthy Towns: Nonschool Fiscal Disparities across Connecticut Municipalities](#)].

#### 4. Future topics/research initiatives, if any

- Perspective Essay for [State and Local Government Review](#) – due 11/1 for 3/2023 issue

There was a discussion of the ACIR having other priorities and lacking the capacity to also complete the requested essay on the work and history of the ACIR. Bruce Wittchen contacted Prof. Zeemering, who had suggested the ACIR submit an essay, and was told it is a standing offer and the ACIR can do it for a future issue of the journal when the group has the capacity to take it on.

- Other

The ACIR also was contacted by a faculty member at Sul Ross State University in TX who asked if someone would be interested in meeting online with students of a graduate intergovernmental studies course. One of the suggested topics is the US ACIR and there was a brief discussion of that group, which no longer exists. Commission vice-chair Filchak is interested and anyone else who is interested should contact Bruce.

#### 5. Next meetings

Commission chair Sharkey read the dates of upcoming meetings:

9/28/2022	Book Club
10/7/2022	ACIR
10/25/2022	LGF Subcommittee

#### 6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:32.

*Notes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM*