

Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations

Friday, August 2, 2024

Agenda: <https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/24163>

A recording is available at: <http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=23407>

Members present: John Filchak (Vice Chair), Bridget Fox, Sam Gold, Martin Heft, Laura Hoydick, Karl Kilduff, Keith Norton, James O’Leary, Jan Perruccio, Francis Pickering, Troy Raccuia, Lon Seidman, Brendan Sharkey, Steve Stephanou, Ron Thomas

Members not present: Carl Amento, Steve Cassano, Tom Gaudett, Matt Hart, Eric Protulis, Katie Stargardter, Ethan Van Ness

Other participants: Megan Andrews, Laura Francis, John Harkins, Greg Lowery, Harrison Nantz

OPM staff: Bruce Wittchen

Vacancies: Designee of the House Minority Leader
Nominated by COST: Municipal official: Town of <10,000
Nominated by COST: Municipal official: Town of 10,000 – 20,000

1. Call to order, overview of meeting procedures, agenda review/additions

Commission chair Filchak began the meeting at 10:35, noting the lack of a quorum at that time, and proceeded to Item 3. He said he had learned yesterday that the governor appointed him as chair and it is a great honor. He thanked Governor Lamont for that and Commission member Sharkey for nominating him.

3. Membership Updates

A quorum not yet being present when the meeting was called to order, the group proceeded to Item 3. Commission member Heft congratulated Commission chair Filchak and noted that the Governor had not yet appointed a vice chair. He said the governor has also appointed two new members to fill vacancies. Eric Portulis is replacing Jeffrey Kitching as public member appointed by the governor. The governor also appointed Jan Perruccio, who was nominated by the CT Assoc. of Public Schools Superintendents, in succession to Maureen Brummett, both terms to end July 31st of 2026. He noted that both were informed yesterday and might not have been able to attend today. Commission chair Filchak welcomed both.

2. Approve draft minutes of [6/7/2024 meeting](#)

Additional members having joined the meeting, the group returned to this item and a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Update: [2024-25 Work Group Program](#) (also see [Work Group Ground Rules](#))

- a. Municipal Workforce Development Subcommittee (Matt Hart and Ron Thomas, co-chairs)
- b. Special Education, Education Governance, & Workforce Development Subcommittee (Jan Perruccio and Lon Seidman, co-chairs)

Commission member Seidman provided a brief introduction and said the group looks forward to its upcoming in-person meeting. He highlighted the three aspects of this subcommittee’s assignment – Special Education, Education Governance, and Workforce Development – and added that the group is

especially interested in low-hanging fruit identified in the [2020 Task Force Report](#). Commission chair Filchak noted that he is updating the report with some legislative changes.

Commission member Perruccio provided an overview of group's homework, which they want to complete by September. They intend to have a draft list of governance recommendations, building off the work done for previous reports, and they will also learn which recommendations were implemented, whether by legislation or other mechanisms, which were not implemented, and why. Next week's meeting will be at the office of the CT Education Association (CEA) and the following meeting will be 9/10 at the CT Assoc. of Public School Superintendents (CAPPS). The tri-chairs of the [Task Force to Study Special Education Services and Funding](#) are join the September meeting to help identify any common ground so the groups are working together rather than separately. Commission member Perruccio also mentioned that the subcommittee will also tap into educator prep programs.

5. ACIR regular reports

- a. 2024 legislative sessions mandates report (due Nov. and might be distributed before meeting)
- b. 2023-24 ACIR Annual report (no due date)

Bruce Wittchen provided an overview of this year's session mandates report and some background regarding how the ACIR reviews mandates, noting that the ACIR's report is not due until November. He said he provided the list of mandates he identified to CCM and COST and highlighted that, in its response, CCM had noted that it supported one of the provisions Bruce had identified as a mandate. CCM said the required memorandum of understanding between a school district and nonprofit provider would be beneficial, but the unfunded requirement to establish that arrangement is considered a mandate. The current reporting framework does not account for the potential benefit of a state requirement, only for the potential cost. Commission member Perruccio asked which mandate that was and Bruce said he believes it is the mandate in [PA 24-45](#) (see Sec. 23).

Bruce said he intends to distribute the draft report to members next week, with a goal of having it approved in September, but there is no rush because the report is not due until November. There is time for significant change if people have ideas that can improve the report. Commission chair Filchak mentioned past discussions of doing deep dives into a few mandates to compare actual impacts to what was predicted in the heat of a legislative session. Commission member Thomas said CCM would be happy to look into a few mandates in more detail and come up with some something for the ACIR to consider.

Commission member O'Leary noted the ACIR had attempted this many years ago and recommended choosing mandates that have been in effect a few years, not the most recent ones, so there will be better data. Commission chair Filchak mentioned that the impact of a legislative mandate requiring an agency to adopt regulations can be delayed by the regulation adoption process. Bruce Wittchen outlined some possible approaches, highlighting that some mandates will impact one category of municipalities more than another, based on staffing, governance, or other factors. The goal of such a study is to identify what impacts can be and who will be affected.

Commission chair Filchak provided an example based on the [22-town animal control program](#) operated by the Northeastern CT Council of Governments (NECCOG). He said the state Dept. of Agriculture has updated its regulations and the General Assembly has passed laws to increase standards for kennels. All are well intentioned and probably needed to protect the animals, but upgrades can require total renovation of facilities with no financial assistance to do so. Commission member Thomas said such a review would be a real service to the state and Commission chair Filchak noted that it could open avenues for shared or regional services, especially for the state's small and medium-size communities.

6. Potential future topics

- a. Expected 9/2024: Municipal shared services: Sec. 127 of [PA 24-151](#) and Recommendation #15 on pg 22 of [2020 Task Force Report](#)
- b. [CT DRS 2023 Tax Incidence Report](#) (issued 2/14/2024)
- c. Other

Commission chair Filchak recommended using the ACIR's meeting time to assist the subcommittees, such as by bringing in speakers everyone should hear. The DRS tax incidence report is important but other work trumps that. He noted that Sec. 127 of [PA 24-151](#) is relevant to the subcommittee's work. We will coordinate with the subcommittee co-chairs to keep moving towards interim reports in December. He asked for any other thoughts and Commission member O'Leary recommended maintaining some focus on the property tax and commission chair Filchak said the ACIR's other work influences that, such as its mandates work, and the property tax is front and center when looking at how to meet the needs of municipalities. It is one of the overriding issues in the work of the subcommittees. Commission member Stephanou said this is a good road map for the group and agreed that the work being done will lead back to the property tax.

7. **Upcoming meetings:**

There was no additional business and Commission chair Filchak noted the dates of upcoming meetings and that a speaker might be invited to do a presentation at the September ACIR meeting.

- August 6, 2024, 9:00 am ACIR education working group
- August 15, 2024, 9:00 am ACIR municipal working group
- September 6, 2024, 10:30 am Full ACIR

5. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:10.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM