

MORE Commission

4/20/15

Present: Rep. Godfrey, Rep. Arconti, Ray Rossomando, Julia Pemberton, Sen. Formica, Michael Maniscalco, Ron Thomas, Mark Lyon, Rep. Ryan, John Filchak, Lisa Pellegrini, Vaurek, Fillmore McPherson, Don Stein, Leo Paul, Betsey Gara, Rep. Zoni, McKay, Steve Webner, Matthew Broman, Ben Wenograd, Lyle Wray, Mary Glassman, Lisa Heavner.

Presenter: Mr. Clark

Rep. Kevin Ryan Convened the Meeting and explained the changes to the Agenda. He then asked for approval of last week's minutes.

Rep. Ryan made a motion to pass the minutes and the minutes were accepted. Rep. Ryan then introduced Mr. Clark, the current director of the Institute of Municipal and Regional Policy.

Mr. Clark gave a presentation on the Institute of Municipal and Regional Policy at CCSU.

The Institute of Municipal and Regional Policy brings together CCSU Faculty and students as well as experts in the field to solve municipal issues. Mr. Clark worked to expand on legal work in the University setting. He expressed that in the criminal justice field; a lot of issues arose from reactions to anomalies instead of with a clear mind which was what he focused on. In 2007, the Criminal Justice department worked with this institute to collaborate on issues. From there the Study for Crime and Justice would go to the Office of Municipal and Regional Policy but there was no funding for it. They are currently in the process of expanding. The Board of Trustees/Regents passed resolutions to create institutes and they have been expanding their scope ever since.

A list of the projects and initiatives that they have been working on was distributed. Rep. Ryan indicated that after they go through the list there may be more questions. Mr. Clark expressed that the initiatives may not align directly with the committee's goals but the institute is in a good position to assist with projects.

Mr. Clark explained that the main benefit from this institute is the many resources at a university that can help policy makers gather information and make decisions. Every University has a variety of disciplines which employ people with varied expertise and resources that can be utilized. There are also many students who are eager to learn and want to work on tangible projects.

The institute also works with the many universities within the system such as Southern. But they also work with those outside of the system for more information such as Yale, Quinnipiac and Trinity.

One of the largest research projects concerned the racial profiling prohibition act which was enacted in 1999. One report was done and then no information was gathered until the incidents in East Haven led people to question whether the objectives of the act were being achieved. Now we have gone from a system that was collecting information in boxes to a working system; all police stations now sending in data, over 15 million pieces of data were analyzed in the past year.

Ken Barone added that there are 92 municipal police stations and 106 different police agencies now reporting data. He also stated that there are 28 different vendors that law enforcement can use for the collection for data. Everyone trying to accomplish the same goal but using different vendors cause

frustration. If they were to come together as a region to develop a system for the same vendor, they would increase efficiencies within the network. The issue is that there is some initial investment on the law enforcement side of the act and some police forces don't have the funds to do that.

Mr. Clark also spoke about youth violence prevention program which mainly demonstrates social service program level issues. Often times the state does one thing and the municipality does another but they both have the same goal. He gave the example of the state prisoner rehabilitation program. These changes would maximize services for the outcomes and increase funds left for infrastructure and transportation.

Mr. Clark also expressed that universities are seen as regional stewards. They have a huge knowledge base that is not often tapped into. People usually go to big private organizations/private entities who will do the work but at a large cost. Universities will do the work at a fraction of the cost just to help the communities because students have an awareness of the municipalities.

Rep. Ryan asked why groups don't use all of the resources that are available on the state and local level. He also asked about working the PEW state programs onto a local level. However, IMRP has not had that conversation with them at this time.

Ray Rossmando mentioned that schools asked to do a lot that goes beyond test scores. There have been examples of community schools in New York and Texas which is a one stop place for students to find everything they require such as social work, school, and resources. It is cost effective and would improve the school. Mr. Clark answered that children of incarcerated parents initiative looks at what the needs of the students are. They found that the education system touches everyone. They did find a few downsides to the program with that the education system knowing everyone's stories which could cause the individuals to be further stigmatized. Mr. Clark further states that it is a worthwhile plan and that the four state colleges in Connecticut have a major of teaching so it is a great resource for educational purposes.

Ron Thomas asked if the committee wants the institute to do research, would the committee have to provide funding. Mr. Clark responds that the beginning stages of research can be done without funding such as students and faculty helping due to a passion for topic. Further, they can look into grants for certain research areas.

Betsy Gara asked if there is a board of directors, at CCSE, to help determine funding or priorities. Mr. Clark responded that he works in the Office of Institutional Advancement which operates under the Vice President of the University. The initial advisory board but wasn't a perfect fit for the Institute so they now have separate advisory boards for the individual projects.

Leo. Paul wondered if they had ever interacted with the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. Mr. Clark said that they have never worked with them before but are definitely open to it.

John Filchack asked if they were approached about a region specific issue if they would be willing to assist. Mr. Clark assures that they would be willing to help with projects and resources that are a best fit. He also states that funding is always helpful but not always necessary.

Rep. Ryan asked for clarification that Mr. Clark has ever worked with ACIR. While working for the Appropriations committee Mr. Clark had heard of them but never worked with them.

Mr. Clark's presentation is completed.

Rep. Ryan explained that he had received a letter from the Office of Policy and Management.

Mr. Paul requested that Gian-Carl Casa, undersecretary for legislative affairs for OPM, come and respond to comments made concerning the letter concerning the resident state trooper program. Examples giving that he says that the states provide funding for some communities and it should be taken and happy with it. He says that comparing what they get from the state and funding proportions is inappropriate. Rep. Ryan states that they may see him after the budget process.

Betsey Gara mentioned spending countless hours to achieve efficiencies but the letter says "why don't you just start your own local police stations" which is why everyone is here to seek ways to consolidate. She feels that the directive runs counter to our efforts.

Rep. Ryan stated that the towns he represents were are looking at consolidating police departments but have not pursued it at this point.

Lisa Pellegrini said that the resident state trooper program is the best program in the state of Connecticut. All 169 towns have already written their budget so this can hurt the small towns and lead to termination of state troopers.

Rep. Ryan asked if the sub-committee want more information about Health Care. The question was asked on how to bring competitive rates into the education projects. There were concerns that in using the state health care program, the municipality would lose local control. There is a regional health care cooperative with Coalition EastConn, Putnam, and Plainville, which helps save money as a municipal entity as a model. Many municipalities have taken up high deductible plans which are not accepted by the state. There have also been many requests of formal quotes and informal observations which found that the state plan is significantly more expensive than current plan.

MERSA put many municipalities in tough situations which causes workers to fear getting stuck in a significantly challenging financial situations and not being able to get out.

Ben Wenograd said he understands the municipality's fears about state control but the issue of a sizable portion of money in savings is larger. He would welcome the opportunity to hear more about savings and insurance. It was also stated that the current systems are stacked against small groups.

Rep. Ryan states that a work group sheet will be passed around next week.

Rep. Ryan will be meeting with leaders of the work groups to have recommendations for the next session for legislation to enact the goals.

The meetings will be back to the regular meetings on Tuesday. Next week there will be a presentation on blight.

Mary Glassman states that there will be a working group presentation on May 5th about the Nutmeg network and she will send out a time and location.

Leo Paul states that regional policing workgroup in this room after this meeting and the Mandates workgroup in room 2600 at 12pm.

Fillemore McPherson asked about a definite time for regular meetings. Rep. Ryan states that it will depend on session times but will give advance notice.

The sub-committee concluded its meeting at 11:50 am.