

## **CCMC Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, August 6, 2020 9:30 AM**

**Followed by CCMC Committee and CCMC Instructors Meeting at 11:30 AM**

### **E-Meetings**

Meeting access was as follows:

Login information: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/596488317> or by Phone: United States: +1 (872) 240-3311

**Access Code:** 596-488-317

Note: The CCMC Committee, the CCMC Course Instructors, the Chair of the Connecticut Tax Collectors' Association, Inc. (CTx) Education Committee, and the CTx Executive Board officers were all invited to this meeting.

A quorum was present and the CCMC Committee meeting was called to order at 9:42 am by CCMC Committee Chairman John Rainaldi. Attending by teleconference were: Denise Talbot; David Kluczowski; Lisa Biagiarelli; and Jennifer Gauthier, Office of Policy and Management (OPM). The meeting was taking place two days after a severe tropical storm had disrupted utility service in much of the state, and it was acknowledged that some might have trouble attending even a virtual meeting, due to lack of internet or telephone service.

John noted that the minutes of the June 17, 2020 and June 25, 2020 meetings had been sent and made available prior to this meeting. Denise made a motion to waive the reading of both sets of minutes and to approve them. Lisa seconded. All were in favor.

The issue of the new proposed Recertification regulations was raised by Jennifer. She reported that the Legislative Regulation Review Committee is scheduled to meet on September 22, 2020 at which time these regulations were going to be reviewed, and that a decision date was scheduled to be returned no later than October 8, 2020. John inquired if this meeting was public, or if public input was invited, and Jennifer agreed to find out. Jennifer noted that the state is moving along quickly with this process and that the Committee will need to determine how we will implement the recertification process relatively soon.

John noted that the Committee has a spreadsheet detailing what we believe are all the current CCMC holders. This will be used as a starting point to determine how we, as a Committee, will structure the recertification program so that CCMC holders who will be requesting their recertification are staggered and not grouped to all recertify in any particular year. We have to begin somewhere, and it was suggested that those who achieved their designation earliest should "go first" to request recertification. Maureen Eaton of Union holds the record of having achieved her CCMC designation the earliest of any currently serving current tax collector. Her CCMC was awarded in 1980 and her certificate was signed by the late Governor Ella Grasso. There are a number of current tax collectors who achieved their CCMC designations later in the 1980s and that might be the group to begin recertification first. John said he

would send the spreadsheet to all the members of the Committee. Jennifer said we could each come to the next meeting with ideas on how to break up the group.

A discussion followed and numerous questions and issues were raised, including opening up the recertification process to every person who achieved a CCMC designation or only to active members; placing notices of the recertification requirements on various websites, including the CCMC, CTx, and OPM websites, and in newspapers; potentially having to notify individuals no longer employed by tax collectors' offices; and notifying municipalities in some other way. It was suggested determining what the CAAO did when the Connecticut assessors had to implement recertification. It was agreed we would have to address and resolve these issues in the near future.

It was noted that currently there are more CCMCs than CCMAAs because some individuals did not request recertification and their certification lapsed. John said, based on his experience with the CAAO, we as a committee should expect to spend a lot of time reviewing recertification applications; that this is a huge time commitment and we need to be prepared to assume it. He noted if an individual misses out on their recertification and their designation lapses, they will be required to re-take the comprehensive exam and that this creates problems and resentment and should be avoided if possible. He said we need to try to impress upon applicants that they will not want to lose their designation once achieved and he noted that it would be simpler and easier to recertify rather than to have to go through the certification process again.

It was suggested that one way of breaking the group into sections could be to split the group into thirds and have 1/3 have to submit their recertification applications by 2026; the next 1/3 by 2027; and the last 1/3 by 2028.

William Donlin joined the meeting at 10:04 AM. Patricia Moasio was unable to join due to lack of telephone or internet service. At 10:08 AM, Martin Heft, from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) joined the meeting.

William presented a verbal treasurer's report and noted that we have \$32,600 after having purchased the laptops that were discussed at the prior meetings. He said he is not getting many refund requests from students due to the cancelled spring classes. John Rainaldi noted he was reimbursed promptly by William for the purchases he made on the Committee's behalf. Lisa made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Denise seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The Committee discussed the continuation of virtual meetings. Denise noted she is not permitted by her town to go to physical meetings due to COVID 19 concerns. What will happen once the state of emergency in Connecticut is no longer in effect? The state of emergency is due to expire on September 9, 2020, unless the Governor extends it. The state is allowing virtual meetings now only due to COVID 19 but if the state of emergency is lifted and not extended, it would mean physical meetings would need to resume, unless the state makes some other allowance for virtual meetings. Public access to the meetings of state organizations and groups is the issue.

Martin clarified that except for the waiver created by the state of emergency due to COVID 19, we are not permitted to have only virtual meetings; however, the state's legal team is reviewing this. When the state of emergency ends, everything reverts back to existing statutes and regulations, unless there is either a legislative change or some other new executive directive to permit virtual meetings to continue

in the future. Unless the legal team says otherwise, as of September 9, 2020, we revert back to the original physical meeting requirements. There could be a call-in option for those meetings but it could not be the main method of conducting the meeting. John asked Martin if he thought the executive order would be extended and Martin indicated he was not sure. Martin said there might be a special September legislative session and this issue might be addressed by the General Assembly along with other issues such as the 2020 election.

Under new business, Lisa brought up the issue of the Course 3 offering for the fall session. There were only 2 students presently signed up for this course and she and her co instructor Dorian Owens were concerned about lack of enrollment. The course was due to start in one week, on August 13. The decision to hold this course earlier than the others was intended to potentially allow students to take both courses 3 and 4 this session without having to attend classes four nights a week when both were being held. However, the dates might have been too early because people complained that they were on vacation when the class was starting in mid-August.

The Committee discussed changing the dates, or not having the class offered at all. Other ideas were discussed including trying to advertise the class to more potential students including people who had not previously taken Course 1 and / or Course 2, or to assessors who need continuing education credits for their own recertification since CAAO did not offer any classes in June 2020 due to COVID 19. Jennifer said she would take the Course Outline to a meeting she has next week with the CCMA and request CCMA recertification credit for our Course 3. We agreed to discuss this in more detail once the instructors called in at the 11:00 AM meeting.

Dave asked some questions about Microsoft Teams and the mechanics of using either that platform or GoToMeeting for breakout sessions. John said he would send or re-send information to all of the course instructors about GoToMeetings – specifically, how to access it, and tutorials for it. Jennifer said with GoToMeeting, the “room” or classroom is available all the time; that individuals can log in at a specific time as a group to attend a “meeting,” but the “room” is there all the time. She said course meetings/classes do not all have to be done as separate individual meetings on that platform.

John said he would send the Course 3 information out on the CAAO hotline and help disseminate the information to the Connecticut assessing community after the CCMA has had the opportunity to review the course and determine if recertification credits are available.

There was no other old or new business. Denise made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:47 AM., seconded by Lisa. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Biagiarelli, Secretary

## CCMC Committee and CCMC Instructors Meeting

Thursday, August 6, 2020 11:30 AM – meeting #2 of 2

### E-Meeting

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The group reconvened at 11:05 AM and the second meeting was called to order by Chairman, John Rainaldi. Attending by teleconference were: Denise Talbot from the CCMC Committee; David Kluczowski as a Committee member and as an instructor; William Donlin as a Committee member and as an instructor; Lisa Biagiarelli as a Committee member and as an instructor. The OPM representatives from the prior meeting were not in attendance at this meeting. Attending by teleconference as instructors were Carla Hamel, Dorian Owens, and Stacey Yarbrough. There were no attendees from the CTx Board.

Numerous instructors as well as CCMC Committee members were unable to attend due to power outages and lack of internet or phone service.

Chairman John Rainaldi indicated that he had sent a spreadsheet detailing the enrollment for the fall 2020 session to date, and a document of proposed student guidelines. Course 1 had 10 enrolled; Course 2 had 13 enrolled; Course 3 had 2 enrolled; Course 4 had 9 enrolled. John noted we did not post a deadline for enrollment at the time the schedule was posted. There were a few refund requests from students but not many.

The mechanics of holding online classes was discussed. John advised instructors making purchases of software or other materials such as Office 365, Microsoft Teams licenses, or antivirus products, to keep their invoices for reimbursement. He noted that all instructors would have to set up GoToMeeting and let their students know when they were responsible for logging in to class. John cannot be responsible for setting up the classroom/ classrooms for the session. He will send the instructors log in credentials so the instructors can do this independently. John noted that all of the laptops and chromebooks had been delivered and that the instructors were satisfied with them.

Lisa said she would do a trial run in GoToMeeting. John suggested instructors take care when setting up their times because GoToMeeting defaults to the Pacific time zone and must be changed.

The group discussed ideas to try to increase the enrollment of Course 3. There are only two students enrolled and Lisa and Dorian expressed concern about trying to teach a class with two students. One option included offering Course 3 to students who were not able to enroll in Course 1 or Course 2, and allowing those students to enroll in Course 3 for this session only. Usually you have to take 1 and 2 first, before 3 or 4. Another option was to offer the course to CCMA personnel who needed continuing

education units this year for their own recertification and who are having an issue because CAAO did not hold classes this past June due to COVID 19.

The schedule for Course 3 will be changed and instead of beginning on August 13 it will begin two weeks later, on August 27, to allow more people to be notified and potentially register. Lisa will send the new schedule as a word document to John after this meeting.

Lisa noted that having individuals in the class without the benefit of having courses 1 and 2 under their belts will likely make teaching the course 3 material somewhat more difficult.

Carla asked if students were allowed to record the classes and John indicated they were not.

John noted there may be issues with instructors sharing video material during the class session and until we come up with some method of doing this in GoToMeeting, the students will be asked to view the videos prior to the class session so they can be discussed during class. Instructors will be responsible for providing students with links to the videos they want them to view.

Google Docs was discussed and some ideas and suggestions were made. It was noted that the instructors are going to need some guidance in setting up their GoToMeeting classes. Lisa Biagiarelli suggested that Jennifer Gauthier and Lisa Madden have done it in the past and may be able to offer help. Stacey Yarbrough said her town's I.T. director is helpful, and suggested anyone who needs help can reach out to him. William Donlin noted some instructors do not have access to a "municipal" I.T. department as some towns outsource this function. If the work is not municipal specific, the employee cannot access the I.T. assistance.

John said he was working on the updates to the student guidelines to reflect the online learning environment. Some changes will include shorter class sessions; instructions for appropriate backgrounds, appearance, and behaviors such as drinking, smoking, etc. Once he was finished with the revisions, he will send them out to the group for comments. The group agreed we would hope to get them out quickly, so students and instructors could prepare.

There was no other business to discuss. Lisa made a motion to adjourn at 11:55 AM. Denise seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Biagiarelli, Secretary