

Council of Governments – Overview and Key Characteristics

**Prepared by: SWRPA Staff
November 2013**



Statutory Background - COG Requirement

- On or before January 1, 2015, each regional planning agency must become a Council of Governments to continue to receive state funds;
- At least 60% of municipalities within a planning region must approve such ordinance for a COG to be recognized by the State of Connecticut;
- Local legislative bodies must approve a municipal ordinance to vote and receive funding.



Representation

Council of Governments

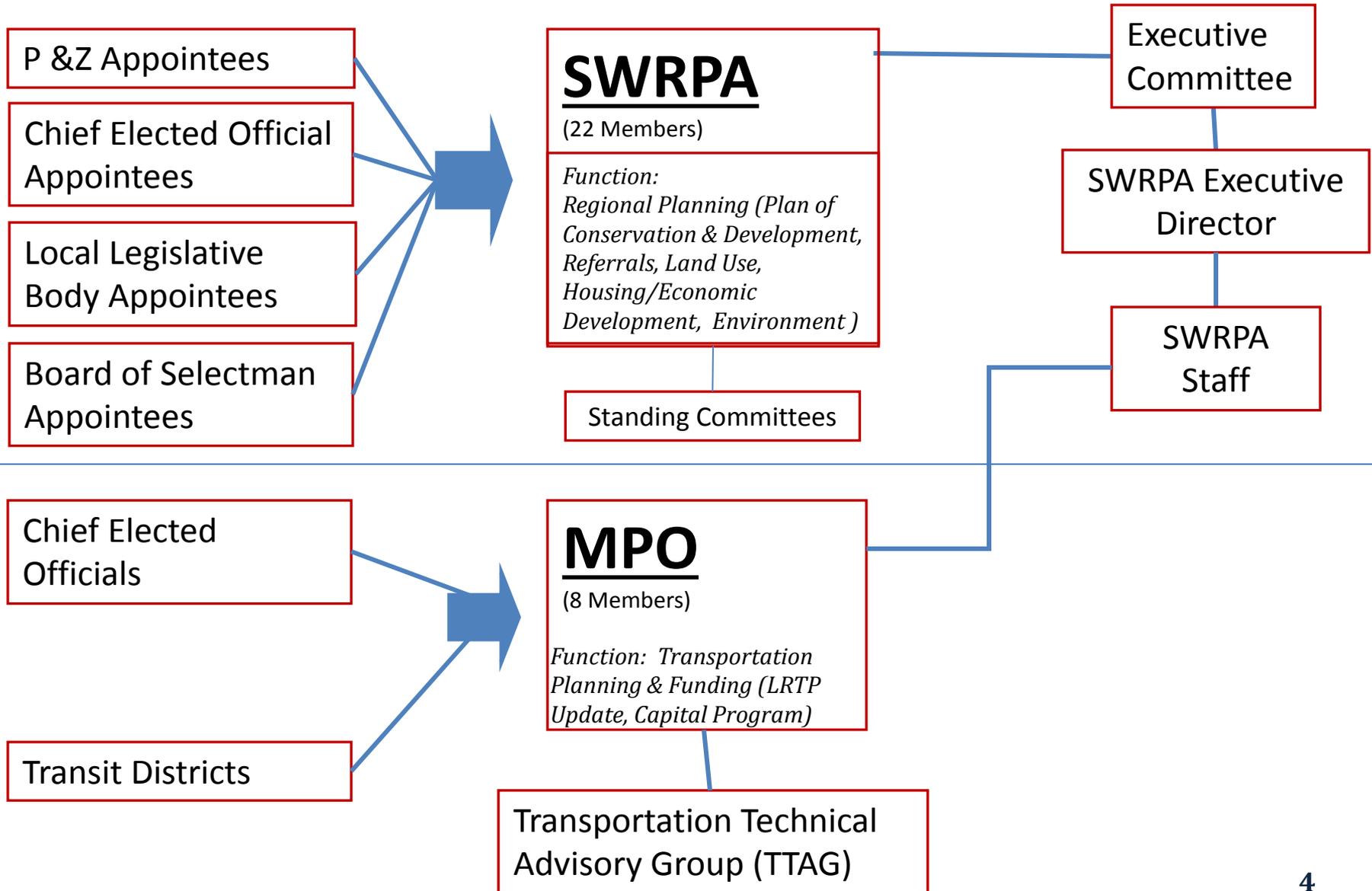
- Comprised of municipal Chief Elected Officials serving as representatives – 1 vote per representative;
- Regional planning commission (RPC) carries out planning duties and responsibilities in cooperation with the municipal Chief Elected Officials;
- Opportunities for volunteer participation on a variety of regional issues.

Regional Planning Commission

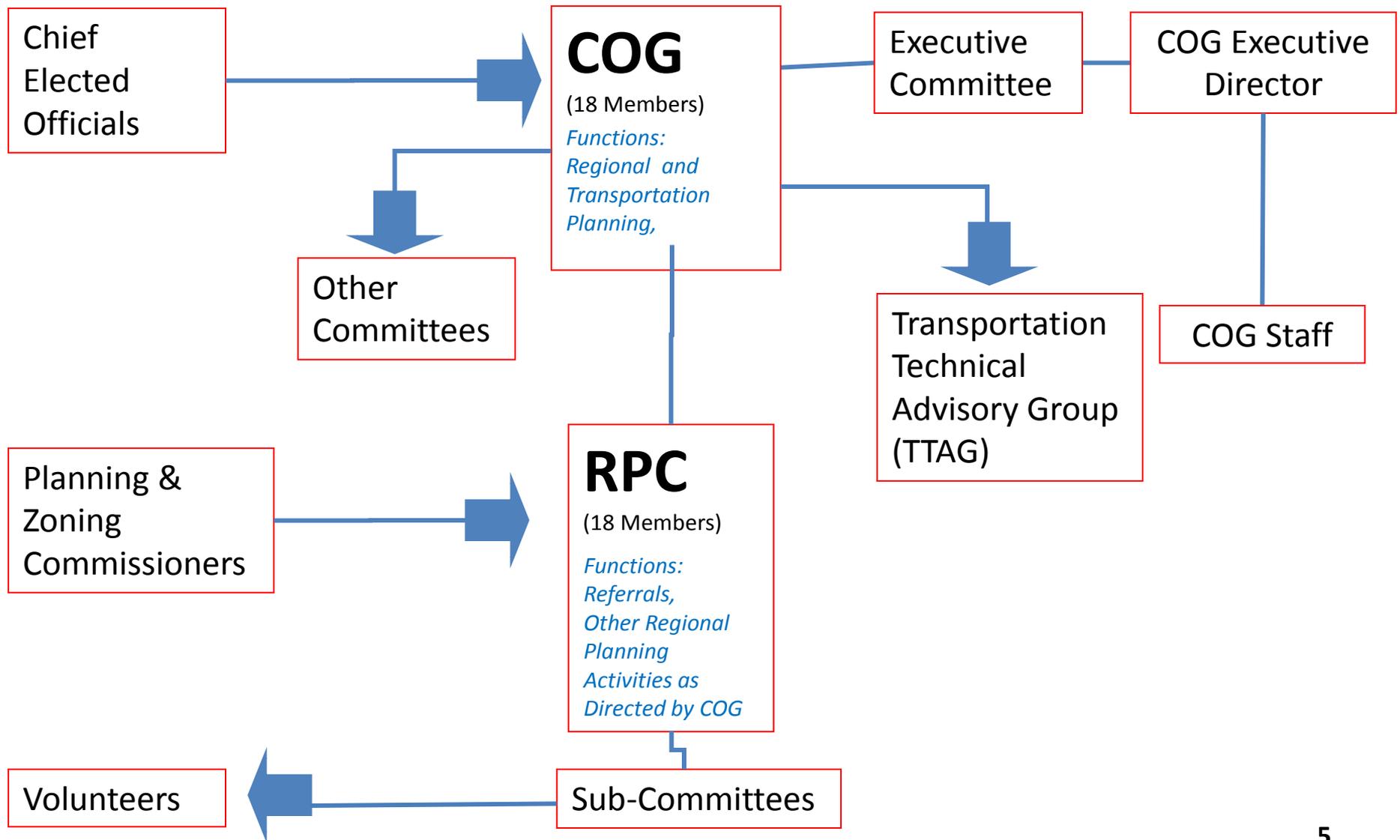
- One RPC representative per COG municipality with one vote each;
- State statute requires that an RPC representative be a member of and appointed by their municipal planning commission, with the concurrence of the local municipality's appointing authority.



Current Organizational Structure - SWRPA



Proposed Organizational Structure – Western CT COG



Will the COG be a taxing authority?

No...

Connecticut state statutes currently do not provide a COG any authority to levy taxes;



Will there be a way for current SWRPA representatives to participate?

Yes...

The Regional Planning Commission may create any sub-committee it deems appropriate; volunteer members may be appointed by the RPC to such committees.



Will local planning and zoning commissions have a diminished role in the COG?

No...

Since RPC membership is to be comprised only of P&Z commission members, there are no seats at the table for appointees from other legislative bodies.



Will the COG appoint members to the RPC?

No... state statute requires that:

- The RPC will be comprised of local P&Z members.
- Local P&Z commissions appoint its members to the RPC.
- The local appointing authority must provide concurrence for RPC appointments.



Will a proposed COG impact “Home Rule”?

No...

- The COG does not and will not have any authority over local decision making processes.
- On a regional basis, a COG has the same referral responsibilities as a regional planning organization such as SWRPA.

