

MINUTES OF THE 5/1/17
SCCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
SCCOG Office, Norwich, CT

Present: Ron McDaniel, Marian Galbraith, Art Shilosky, Mark Oefinger
Staff: James Butler, Kate Rattan
Other: Dan Steward (Waterford)

Chairman McDaniel opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

1. TAP Project Updates

The Executive Director and Kate Rattan reported on the status of the New London application for the Williams Street sidewalk/pedestrian improvement project. The on-call engineer for CTDOT estimates that the project will cost about \$2.3 Million, almost three times New London's estimate of \$762,000. SCCOG staff attended a site meeting which they had requested, with City staff, Connecticut College representatives, and the on-call engineer for CTDOT to discuss how the project could be re-scoped to reduce this cost. The Executive Director reminded the Executive Committee that the SCCOG is only scheduled to receive about \$1.177 Million over a six-year period, and that the SCCOG was hopeful that its funds not used by New London could be applied to the Ledyard application for the Tri-Town Trail. CTDOT has asked that they be provided with any re-scope and new cost estimate, along with a letter from the SCCOG stating that it supports this change. Staff has informed CTDOT that it cannot do so until such time that New London provides the final plan/estimate for the re-scoped project, and only after the SCCOG approves of this at their May 24th meeting.

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG, after it is received and vetted by staff, the acceptance of and recommendation to CTDOT of New London's re-scoped Williams Street pedestrian improvement project for TAP funding (Oefinger, Shilosky). So voted unanimously.

2. LOTCIP Projects Update

The Executive Director and Ms. Rattan provided information about the three remaining and not yet endorsed LOTCIP applications, all of which the SCCOG had asked for more information on. The Executive Director reminded that the SCCOG had available during this past solicitation approximately \$7.6 Million, and had at their last meeting recommended to CTDOT the funding of three projects (Poquonnock Road in City of Groton; Dunham Street in Norwich; Halls Hill Road in Colchester) totaling \$4.2988 Million, leaving SCCOG a balance of \$3.297 Million. The SCCOG did confirm that CTDOT views the Waterford Cross Road project to be a road reconstruction, not pavement rehab, project. The staff also determined that CTDOT will want to see New London perform a queue analysis before agreeing to fund the Jefferson Avenue reconstruction project. Finally, CTDOT will not require that Sprague relocate all utility poles to allow construction of a straight sidewalk, but did inform SCCOG staff that it has the right to do so. The Executive Committee discussed this information, and asked staff to discuss the straightening of the sidewalk with Sprague. The Executive Committee did discuss with staff that moving the Waterford Cross Road project forward, having an estimated cost of \$3.645 Million

will exceed the remaining SCCOG balance of LOTCIP funds. However, CTDOT has informed SCCOG staff that it will allow the SCCOG to commit funding to projects using anticipated future LOTCIP funds. Mr. Steward addressed the importance of the Cross Road project and said he was concerned that the SCCOG's current LOTCIP funding might disappear if not soon applied to a project.

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG that the Waterford Cross Road project (\$3,645,400) be recommended to CTDOT for LOTCIP funding (Oefinger, Galbraith). So voted unanimously.

3. Section 402 Safety Program Grant Application

The Executive Director explained that staff had submitted an application to CTDOT's Highway Safety office for \$68,680 in safety program funds. This grant program was made known to staff after the last Executive Committee meeting, and the deadline for application was before this meeting, so staff made application contingent upon the approval of the Executive Committee. Ms. Rattan stated that this program provides funds for safety initiatives, and staff has submitted an application that will certify instructors and provide bicycle safety training to youth in the region. It will also allow the purchase of bicycles, which will be housed by and become the property of the participating municipalities. The 25% required match will be provided by local staff time spent running the program in the participating towns.

MOTION: To authorize staff to have submitted a Section 402 Program Grant application to CTDOT for \$68,680 in funding for a bicycle safety training program (Oefinger, Galbraith).

4. Possible TOD Grant Applications

The Executive Director explained that OPM had provided notice of the 2017 Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development grant program. Applications are due June 23rd, and funding is available in amounts of \$10,000 - \$2,000,000. SCCOG staff has developed two ideas for possible SCCOG applications: one to develop a Regional Bike Pedestrian Plan (\$250,000), and a second to assist SEAT in implementing recommendations from the COA including marketing, branding, customer access (website), and establishment of the recommended bus stop system with signs and shelters (\$1,470,000).

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG authorization to submit to OPM two Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development grant applications, one in the amount of \$250,000 to develop a Regional Bike Pedestrian Plan, and one in the amount of \$1,470,000 to Implement the SEAT Bus Study Recommendations (Oefinger, Galbraith). So voted unanimously.

5. Response to Auditor RFP

The Executive Director explained that only one response was received to the SCCOG's RFP for audit services. This was from Henry, Raymond, & Thompson, LLC, which has an office in Hamden. They proposed a first year fee of \$18,000, which is more than double the \$8,600 fee the SCCOG paid their Auditor, Al Rusilowicz, this past year. Henry, Raymond, & Thompson then

propose fees for the following four years increasing to \$20,500 in FY 2021. They are currently the Auditors for the Western CT Council of Governments (West COG).

The Executive Committee discussed the fee proposed by the submitting firm, and the fact that it was significantly higher than the fee that the SCCOG had paid its previous auditor. They also discussed the fact that no other firm submitted, and thought that might be due to the fact that the RFP was made public during tax return preparation season. They suggested that staff contact a local firm that has successfully prepared local public agency/non-profit audits in the region to ask why they had not submitted, asking if they would still be willing to do so.

MOTION: To direct staff to contact a local firm inviting them to submit a proposal, and if they are willing to do so, to then negotiate a possible contract with that firm after check of references, and to check the reference of West COG concerning the submitting firm, and to report this information back to the Executive Committee (Galbraith, Shilosky). So voted unanimously.

6. FY 2015 TIP/STIP Amendments

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG the approval of the proposed FY 2105 TIP/STIP amendments (Galbraith, Oefinger). So voted unanimously.

7. Other

The Executive Director distributed copies of a proposed housing needs analysis for the region that SCCOG staff is preparing for the Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance (SECHA).

The Executive Director summarized the draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for 2017-2019, and explained how the figures will now be revised to reflect the reduced state match that he had previously informed the Committee about.

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG the adoption of Unified Planning Work Program for 1 July 2017 – 30 June 2019, with the revisions to the PL fund figures to reflect a reduced state match (Oefinger, Galbraith). So voted unanimously.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James S. Butler, Executive Director