

MINUTES OF THE 6/20/18 MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
SCCOG OFFICE, NORWICH, CT

PRESENT: Council Representatives: Glenn Pianka, Bozrah; Mark Nickerson, East Lyme; Todd Babbitt, Griswold; Alan Geer, Jewett City; Tom Sparkman, Lisbon; Ron McDaniel, Montville; Michael Passero, New London; Mike Urgo, North Stonington; Bob Congdon, Preston; Kevin Lyden, Salem; Cathy Osten, Sprague; Jeff Callahan, Borough of Stonington; Rob Simmons, Town of Stonington; Dan Steward, Waterford. Council Alternates: John Burt, Town of Groton. Military Liaison: Captain Paul Whitescarver, Adam Wright, US Naval SUBASE; LT Tony Gregg, USCGA. Tribal Liaison: Robert Hayward, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan. Other: Mike Carroll, Al Fritzsche, Rose Greenway, SEAT; Wendy Bury, SE CT Cultural Coalition; Ayanti Grant, Congressman Courtney's office; Emily Boushee, Senator Murphy's office; Ellen Graham, Senator Blumenthal's office; Grayson Wright, CTDOT; Deb Monahan, TVCCA; Merrill Gerber, Preston; Catherine Young, CT Airport Authority; Randy Collins, CCM; Tom Kasprzak, Eversource; one reporter.

1. Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Pledge of Allegiance: The Chairman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Act on Minutes 5/16/18:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 5/16/18 (Steward, McDaniel). So voted unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report:

MOTION: To approve the June Treasurer's Report (Sparkman, Steward). So voted unanimously.

6. Public Comment:

None.

7. Communications:

The Executive Director noted there was a communication from the SE CT Cultural Coalition contained in the agenda packet, and said he had also put at every member's place a letter from the Town of Groton EDC concerning the elimination of the carpentry program at Grasso Tech, and information concerning

the Sustainable CT program. He stated that Ms. Colleen Dollard was now working as a Sustainable CT intern at the SCCOG for the summer.

Mr. McDaniel stated that while the carpentry program had been eliminated at Grasso Tech, there still was a carpentry program at Norwich Tech.

8. Committee and Liaison Reports

A. Executive Committee

1. FY 2017-2018 Budget Adjustments

The Executive Director presented a series of proposed amendments to the budget ending June 30, 2018. He said due to the fact that this budget is adopted 18 months before the end of the fiscal year, this is something the SCCOG needs to do at the end of almost every fiscal year. He said some of the most significant changes were due to numerous grant funds not contemplated at the time of budget adoption, allowing for expenditure on consultants affecting the Professional Services line item. He noted that the primary reason for the SCCOG now having to use Reserve funding to balance the budget was due to OPM's reduction of the Regional Services Grant by 25%, resulting in the loss of almost \$60,000 to the SCCOG. The proposed amended budget would use \$17,383 from Reserve; the original budget would have returned more than \$190,000 to Reserve. He stated that the Executive Committee recommended in favor of these budget amendments.

MOTION: To adopt the proposed FY 2017-2018 budget adjustments recommended by staff (Lyden, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

2. Resolution No. 18-6, For Endorsement of Targets for Various Performance Measures Established by CTDOT

The Executive Director noted this resolution, required by CTDOT in order to comply with the new FAST Act, is related to other recent SCCOG actions concerning the adoption of performance measures.

MOTION: To approve Resolution No. 18-6, For Endorsement of Targets for Various Performance Measures Established by CTDOT (Sparkman, McDaniel). So voted unanimously.

3. JLUS Implementation Grant Application Amendment

The Executive Director reported on the amendment to the JLUS Implementation Grant application to address housing and transportation impacts resulting from the

EB ramp-up which CT OMA Executive Director Bob Ross had suggested at a recent SCCOG meeting. SCCOG staff has worked closely with DOD OEA staff on the amendment, and we have received early indications that this will be approved. He stated that the full SCCOG needs to authorize the submission of this grant application amendment for it to be formally submitted.

MOTION: To authorize an amendment to the JLUS Implementation Grant application (Lyden, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

4. SCCOG Appointment to REPT Steering Committee

MOTION: To appoint Groton Town Police Chief/EMD L. J. Fusaro to the DEMHS Region 4 Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) Steering Committee to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Joe Sastre (Congdon, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

5. Request to Rejoin CT Tourism Coalition Board of Directors

The Executive Director referred to a request from Rob Simmons to the SCCOG to renew its membership on the CT Tourism Coalition Board of Directors at \$1,500 annually. He said the Executive Committee had discussed this request and recommended against. Mr. Simmons noted the importance of the tourism industry to municipalities in southeastern Connecticut, and cited the good work that the CT Tourism Coalition had done over the past year. The Executive Director stated he agreed with Mr. Simmons but that he had recommended against rejoining to the Executive Committee, because of the advocacy nature of the Coalition, and the fact that no other COG is on their Board of Directors. Mr. McDaniel stated the COG has received other requests like this to join groups but has not done so. Mr. Simmons said if it is the SCCOG's decision not to renew its membership on the Board, then the motion doing so should be to table as opposed to deny so as to indicate that the SCCOG has no opposition to the work of the Tourism Coalition and simply is choosing not to renew its membership.

MOTION: To table action on the request that the SCCOG renew its membership on the CT Tourism Coalition Board of Directors at \$1,500 annually (Simmons, Urgo). So voted unanimously.

6. Other

The Executive Director provided background on the NOFA received for Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) transportation discretionary grants program. This program replaces the TIGER grant program, and is intended for large-scale, regionally significant transportation projects costing between \$5M and \$25M. Staff had developed a potential recommended project, which would be the build-out of the SEAT Bus Study expansion plan "C". The project would have an estimated to cost

\$10.12M in capital costs, but would require a 20% local match, which for this project would be more than \$2M. He said that staff has contacted CTDOT to see if they might provide the match and have been informed that CTDOT cannot participate at this time, but that the Commissioner and the Chief of the Bureau of Policy and Planning would like to meet with SCCOG and SEAT staff at some point to discuss future expansion of the SEAT system.

The Executive Director reported on his May 23rd meeting at the SCCOG office with the region's municipal assessors to discuss the potential for jointly bidding revaluation services. He said he planned to continue to follow-up with assessors in the near future.

The Executive Director said he presented the Executive Committee with a white paper recommending the formation of a task force to study the impact that non-profits have on SCCOG member municipalities' tax base. The Executive Committee discussed this and have requested an organizational meeting be held with the CEOs of several SCCOG municipalities and SCCOG staff, for the purpose of refining what will be studied, who will be invited to be on the task force, and a schedule for this project.

The Executive Director reported on staff's communications with CTDOT concerning the scheduled closure of the pedestrian pathway due to construction on the Gold Star Bridge this summer for possibly eight weeks this summer, and plans for mitigation that will provide alternative ways for pedestrians and cyclists to travel back and forth between New London and Groton. He will keep the SCCOG informed as to what CTDOT agrees to provide.

B. Legislative Committee/Legislative Update – no report.

C. Tribal Liaison Representatives

Mr. Hayward noting the passing of Foxwoods CEO Felix Rappaport and said that Tribal Chairman Rodney Butler asked him to inform the SCCOG CEOs they would be invited to a memorial service for Mr. Rappaport. Mr. Hayward stated that Floyd Chaney has been named the new MPTN Fire Chief, and that Alice Munyon has been appointed interim Chief of Staff.

D. Military Command Representative

LT Gregg thanked those SCCOG CEOs who attended the Coast Guard Academy's graduation.

E. Congressional Office Report

Ms. Grant from Congressman Courtney's office, Ms. Boushee from Senator Murphy's office, and Ms. Thomas from Senator Blumenthal's office all reported on the status of the National Defense Authorization Act.

F. seCTer – no report.

G. Eastern CT Tourism District – no report.

H. SEAT

Mr. Carroll reported on budget issues and said that the new buses should be in service sometime after July 1.

I. Regional Water Committee

Mr. Congdon stated that the Eastern CT WUCC met on May 31 and approved the Coordinated Water System Plan.

J. Regional Emergency Planning Team

Mr. Sparkman, who chairs the REPT, said all SCCOG member municipalities have now provided their FY 2017 MOAs, and that the only ones missing are two from towns in the NECCOG region.

K. Regional Human Services Coordinating Council

Ms. Monahan reported that RHSCC members continue to work with the consultant on the Shared Human Services Study.

L. SE CT Cultural Coalition

Ms. Bury stated that she was looking forward to the SCCOG forming a task force to study the impact of exempting non-profits from property taxation.

9. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director reported that the adopted State Budget included an increase in Regional Service Grants (RSG) from this year's \$1.76M to \$4.1M, but said that OPM has informed COGs that the Secretary is anticipating a \$500,000 holdback from this figure; and he thanked Senators Osten and Formica for their advocacy for having the state's nine COGs be funded at such a meaningful level. He said he is working on amending the SCCOG's work plan to address this additional funding. He also reported that he recently met with Dan Mullins from

the Eastern CT Conservation District, who has received a grant to prepare a stormwater collaborative in the region, assisting municipalities with their MS4 requirements. He said that the SCCOG would sub-contract with the District on this study, assisting with GIS, outreach, and the provision of meeting space.

10. Old Business

None.

11. New Business

A. FY 2018 STIP/TIP Amendment

- HPPS, 0058-0308, Thomas Road, Groton, Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility, CON, 2018, \$1,024,000, Delete Project
- STPT, 0058-0308, Thomas Road, Groton, Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility, CON, 2018, \$465,000, Delete Project

MOTION: To approve the FY 2018 STIP/TIP Amendment (Lyden, Sparkman).
So voted unanimously.

B. East Lyme Miracle Field

Mr. Nickerson introduced Dave Putnam, East Lyme Parks and Recreation Director, who would make a presentation to the SCCOG today about East Lyme's plans to construct a Miracle League field, which would be available to all of the region. Mr. Nickerson said that he was not looking for SCCOG municipalities to contribute toward the construction of the field, but for groups, organizations, and events that might donate funds toward the field. He said they need to raise a little over \$500,000.

Mr. Putnam introduced himself, and said that working on this project has been a career highlight. He spoke to a Power Point presentation, and said the only other Miracle League field in Connecticut is in West Hartford. He said these fields provide an accessible facility for children with physical and cognitive challenges to participate in athletic activities in both competitive and non-competitive events. The location of the planned field in East Lyme is at Flanders Elementary School. He said the planned field is a poured in place surface, is accessible to children with walkers and wheelchairs, and will be fenced. He spoke about their board of directors, and said their Phase I fundraising goal is \$550,000, and that they have already raised about \$150,000. Mr. Putnam agreed to email his Power Point presentation to SCCOG staff so that it can be forwarded to all SCCOG members.

Ms. Monahan suggested the Ed and Mary Lord Foundation as a possible funding source.

Mr. Nickerson wrapped up the presentation, and invited SCCOG members to attend the “I Can Ride” program in East Lyme from August 13th through the 17th.

12. Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for July 18.

13. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m. (McDaniel, Steward). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Nickerson, Secretary