

MINUTES OF THE 4/17/19 MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
SCCOG OFFICE, NORWICH, CT

PRESENT: Council Representatives: Glenn Pianka, Bozrah; Art Shilosky, Colchester; Mark Nickerson, East Lyme; Charles Grant, Franklin; Todd Babbitt, Griswold; Tom Sparkman, Lisbon; Ron McDaniel, Montville; Michael Passero, New London; Mike Urgo, North Stonington; 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; John Salomone, Norwich. Military Liaison: Captain Paul Whitescarver, Adam Wright, U.S. Naval SUBASE. Tribal Liaison: Chuck Bunnell, Mohegan Tribe. Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy. Other: Mike Carroll, Al Fritzsche, Cherise Perkins, SEAT; Jaroslaw Pizunski, Amalgamated Transit Union; Melinda Wilson; seCTer; Staff from Congressman Courtney's Office; Bob Ross, CT Office of Military Affairs; Kathleen Stauffer, The ARC New London County; Dominick Celtruda; Merrill Gerber, Preston; Catherine Young, CT Airport Authority; Grayson Wright, CTDOT; Mike Caplet, DEMHS Region 4; Pat Benzes, Eversource; Eva Bunnell, U.S. Census Bureau; 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 asked Captain Whitescarver to lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Act on Minutes 3/20/19:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 3/20/19 (Lyden, Steward). So voted unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report:

MOTION: To approve the April Treasurer's Report (Nickerson, Urgo). So voted unanimously.

6. Public Comment:

None.

7. Communications:

None.

8. Guest Speakers:

A. Eva Bunnell, U.S. Census Bureau

Ms. Bunnell gave a Power Point presentation on plans for the upcoming 2020 Census. She asked for SCCOG members' help in informing people that the Census is safe, easy, and important. She stressed the importance of the Census, noting that it is used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and as a basis for federal grants to states and municipalities. She especially wants to work with local government officials to get the word out about the importance of counting every person once. In response to a question from Mr. Simmons, Ms. Bunnell said the Census is interested in each municipality forming a Complete Count Committee.

9. Committee and Liaison Reports

A. Executive Committee

1. Proposed HB 7192 Update

The Executive Director said at their meeting earlier this month, he had provided the Executive Committee an update on the status of HB 7192, An Act Concerning Municipal and Regional Opportunities and Efficiencies. He stated this bill has been voted on favorably by the Planning and Development Committee, and still requires the formation of regional tax assessment divisions and would change the RSG grant funding formula to COGs reducing the RSG by about 50%. He said he had been informed that the provisions requiring all Tax Collectors to be appointed and to combine the Tax Collector and Tax Assessor offices had been removed, but cannot find an updated bill online. The state's COG Directors have been told by OPM Undersecretary Harris that the bill is still a work in progress. The Executive Committee discussed the impact this bill might have if approved as now amended; the Executive Director stated he would keep the COG informed about its status.

2. CTDOT Proposed Reduction in Match of USDOT Funds

The Executive Director reported that just prior to the deadline to submit the draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), CTDOT emailed a directive stating that it would not be providing a 10% state match to the federal funds as it historically has, and that it would reduce its match to 8%, increasing the MPO match from 10% to 12%. He said the state's MPO Directors discussed this in a conference call, and that he urged his fellow Directors to submit their draft UPWPs showing the historical state match of 10%, and suggesting we request a meeting with CTDOT and OPM officials to discuss this change, which was done unilaterally with no advance warning and without any consultation with the

MPOs. He said he submitted the SCCOG's UPWP before the March 29th deadline with the state's share shown at 10%. Since then, there have been email discussions with OPM and CTDOT senior staff, and a meeting has now been scheduled between them and the MPO Directors next Tuesday. He said the difference in additional funds the COG would have to provide to the match is approximately \$25,000 over the two-year period (and an additional \$29,000 if the state maintains their imposition of a 20% local - 0% state match of SCCOG's FY 2016 Carryover funds), but could come at a time when OPM is reducing RSG funds to the COGs. He stated he would keep the COG informed about the status of the required match formula.

3. FY 2019 STIP/TIP Amendments

The Executive Committee has recommended in favor of these amendments. Chairman Sparkman noted these will be taken up under New Business.

4. Other

The Executive Director stated that with the Executive Committee's approval, he has entered into a MOA with Sustainable CT. The SCCOG will be taking on two Fellows from this program for the summer.

The Executive Director said he also reported to the Executive Committee on the Municipal Grant for Medical Dial-a-Ride Program, which had run out of funds this year just after halfway through the year. He said he has since met with ECTC Director John Roode, whose agency serves as ride broker for the program, and the Senior Center Directors from the Towns of East Lyme and Groton, who coordinate the efforts of their counterparts at the 12 SCCOG member towns who have joined together in running this program. At this meeting, he said he offered SCCOG staff assistance in working to see that funds do not get used up so soon during the next program year. He said last year, Voluntown from the NECCOG region, was allowed to participate in the SCCOG town consortium, without any notice to the SCCOG. He said this determination was made by CTDOT staff who administer the program statewide. He said he has questioned Voluntown's inclusion in the SCCOG program, since they are no longer in the SCCOG region, and which also participates in the NECCOG program. He said even though Voluntown citizens use the Griswold Senior Center, he does not think Voluntown should have access to share the funds allocated to SCCOG towns as a non-member, and noted that their trips the past year cost more than the funds they brought into the program, and that when Voluntown withdrew from the SCCOG, he was directed by USDOT officials to advise Voluntown in writing that they no longer would receive any federal or state transportation funds through the SCCOG. He said the Executive Committee agreed that Voluntown should not participate in the SCCOG region's Dial-a-Ride program.

B. Legislative Committee/Legislative Update

No report.

C. Tribal Liaison Representatives

Mr. Bunnell said work at their East Windsor site is moving forward, with demolition of buildings having started, and work on financing initiated. He said this venture is expected to add 2,000 jobs. He thanked the members of the SCCOG for their support for the joint-venture casino proposed by the two Tribes. He reported that the Tribe is in ongoing discussions with the Governor regarding the future of gaming in Connecticut, including sports wagering, and said the Tribe has never had more employees than now, and that they are taking over the operation of two casinos in Niagara Falls, Canada.

D. Military Command Representative

The Chairman asked members to join him in thanking Captain Whitescarver, who was attending his last SCCOG meeting, for his years of service to the COG and to the region; those present gave the Captain a round of applause. Captain Whitescarver discussed the importance of the ongoing JLUS implementation study, and reminded that his Change of Command ceremony will be May 3 in the afternoon.

E. Congressional Office Report

Staff from Congressman Cortney's office reported on seCTer's EB procurement event on May 29th.

F. seCTer

Ms. Wilson provided additional detail on the May 29th major supplier event with EB. She also mentioned a new value added program at seCTer, involving a \$150 discount on small business loan application fees for clients who live in, or have their business that the loan is for, in seCTer member municipalities.

G. Eastern CT Tourism District

No report.

H. SEAT

Mr. Carroll reported that SEAT remains busy. He said they are working on the micro-transit model, and are soon to go live with Google Transit. He said he SEAT Board meeting would immediately follow the COG meeting.

I. Regional Water Committee

No report.

J. Regional Emergency Planning Team

The Executive Director stated that in front of each of the members was a memo from Region 4 Coordinator Mike Caplet, which was received after the agenda had been mailed out. He asked the SCCOG to consider acting on the appointment to the Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) Steering Committee of New London Fire Chief and EMD Thomas Curcio as a replacement for retired Chief Henry Kydd.

MOTION: To appoint New London Fire Chief Thomas Curcio to the Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) Steering Committee (Passero, McDaniel). So voted unanimously.

K. Regional Human Services Coordinating Council

No report.

L. SE CT Cultural Coalition

No report.

10. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director stated he had no additional report.

11. Old Business

None.

12. New Business

A. FY 2018-2019 STIP/TIP Amendments

- NHPP-BRX, 0094-0261, I-95 NB, New London, NHS-Rehab BR 03819-NB, Gold Star (PHS 1B) – AC Entry, CON, 2021, \$0, New Project
- NHPP-BRX, 0094-0261, I-95 NB, New London, NHS-Rehab BR 03819-NB, Gold Star (PHS 1B) – AC Conversion, CON, 2021, \$24,000,000, New Project
- NHPP-BRX, I-95 NB, New London, NHS-Rehab BR 03819-NB, Gold Star (PHS 1B) – AC Conversion, CON, FYI, \$24,000,000, New Project

MOTION: To approve of the FY 2018-2019 STIP/TIP amendments (Osten, Passero). So voted unanimously.

13. Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for May 15th, 2019 (It was noted that May 22nd is the date of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy graduation).

14. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:15 a.m. (Lyden, Passero). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Fred Allyn III, Secretary