

MINUTES OF THE 1 SEPTEMBER 2020
SCCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Via ZOOM

Present: Mark Nickerson, Fred Allyn, III, Tom Sparkman, Keith Hedrick, Tom Sparkman
Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan

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

1. SCCOG Staff Assistance with Affordable Housing Plans

The Executive Director reported that the SCCOG staff would be assisting under contract 6 of the 7 municipalities (North Stonington, Bozrah, Salem, Sprague, Lebanon, and Franklin) that had received funding from the CT DOH to prepare Affordable Housing Plans. These plans are required of all municipalities in the state per 2017 legislation. The plans must be completed and adopted by July 2022, and updated every five years. He said there is no action required, but wished to inform the Executive Committee and the full SCCOG of staff's work to assist the 6 towns and to remind all municipalities of this mandate.

2. LOTCIP Cost Increase: Jefferson Avenue Project, New London

The Executive Director explained that the Semi-Final (60%) Design construction estimate for this project was about \$400,000 more than the Preliminary Design cost estimate in the Commitment to Fund letter. The Semi-Final Design cost is now at \$2,913,233. He and Transportation Program Manager Rattan explained the difference between the two estimates and discussed the availability of LOTCIP costs to cover this increase.

MOTION: To approve of an increase in cost for the LOTCIP funded Jefferson Avenue Project in New London, to \$2,913,233 based on Semi-Final Design cost estimate (Sparkman, Hedrick).

Mr. Sparkman inquired if the SCCOG's allocation for LOTCIP would cover this increase as well as increases from other funded projects if those projects' costs increased from Preliminary Design to Semi-Final Design. The Executive Director and Transportation Program Manager responded affirmatively, and noted how staff and the process the SCCOG is using in terms of inviting preliminary applications should result in better cost estimates at the Preliminary Design stage going forward.

The motion was voted on and unanimously adopted.

3. TMA Certification Review and SCCOG Response

The Executive Director reported that SCCOG's TMA Planning Certification Review Final Report dated August 19th had been received. While it contained some edits, it did not address all of the SCCOG staff comments, questions, and requests for clarification. He said he planned to contact Mr. Salmoiraghi of FHWA to discuss this. He also said that staff would be moving

forward to address action items that were included in the SCCOG report and that are part of the SCCOG's transportation planning process certification.

4. Request for SCCOG Support of Coalition Against Bigger Trucks

The Executive Director noted the information contained in the agenda packet sent by the CABT, and their request for a letter supporting their position against bigger trucks being allowed on the nation's highways. He noted that the SCCOG had received a similar request several years ago, and then and on similar national scale issues has decided not to express any opinion.

After discussion, the consensus of the Executive Committee was to not take any action on the CABT's request for support.

5. FY 2018 TIP/STIP Amendment

The proposed amendment would fund a new culvert of Route 215 in Groton.

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG the approval of the FY 2018 TIP/STIP Amendment (Allyn, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

6. Funding for COG Work on COVID Response/Recovery

The Executive Director reported that Lisa Tepper Bates, who had been heading up the State's COVID-19 response and who had asked the state's 9 COGs to assist with this effort, was leaving the State's employ for another position. He said that the NECCOG Executive Director had sent an email yesterday to DEMHS Region 4 Coordinator Mike Caplet informing him that the NECCOG board had just met and was about ready to direct him to cease staff work on this project without a contract with the State, despite believing that it was important that COGs be involved with this work. He said he echoed Mr. Filchak's comments in an email to Mr. Caplet, and told him that the SCCOG CEOs were feeling the same way. He said he would continue to keep the Executive Committee posted on this issue.

The Deputy Director did note that the State has now entered into contracts with two consulting firms which will work on the state-wide recovery effort.

7. DEMHS 4 Regional Recovery Steering Committee

The Executive Director reported that there was not much to report on this since the next Regional Recovery Steering Committee meeting has been postponed and only one of three working groups has been stood up.

8. Other

The Executive Director said he had received a telephone call last week from Gerry Grabarek, a member of the Preston Board of Selectmen. He said that Mr. Grabarek called to ask if the SCCOG wished to host/hold a meeting with Eversource regarding tree cutting. The Executive

Director reminded the Executive Committee of Ms. Jackman's offer to have Eversource executives attend a future SCOOG meeting to discuss storm response and asked if the Executive Committee wished staff to set this up to possibly discuss both topics as they are related. The Executive Committee decided against scheduling such a meeting, instead believing it better if individual towns wishing to meet with Eversource contacted the utility themselves for this discussion.

The Executive Director reported that the Regional Service Grant agreement has been sent back to OPM, so he was hopeful that OPM would soon send the SCCOG its RSG funding.

The Executive Director said that staff had just received six responses to the SCCOG's solicitation for a JLUS Implementation Project consultant to prepare a parking management plan in the City of Groton and three responses to a RFP/RFQ for transportation engineering services for the SCCOG.

The Executive Director stated that before leaving the call, Mr. Nickerson had mentioned Mr. Blacker's use of the SCCOG letter to CTDOT Commissioner Giulietti regarding the State Pier in New London. He said that yesterday he had received an email from Mr. Blacker citing the FOIA asking if the SCCOG had received a response to the SCCOG's letter and that he had replied that we had not yet received a response.

The Executive Director reported on preparations for the start of the annual SCCOG Audit.

Mr. Allyn reminded that the Regional Emergency Planning Team was scheduled to meet next week on September 10th. Mr. Sparkman reminded that proxies could be appointed.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted, James S. Butler, Executive Director