

MINUTES OF 6/16/21 MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
HELD VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Mark Nickerson, East Lyme; Charles Grant, Franklin; Todd Babbitt, Griswold; Timothy Sharkey, Jewett City; Kevin Cwikla, Lebanon; Fred Allyn, III, Ledyard; Tom Sparkman, Lisbon; Ron McDaniel, Montville; Michael Passero, New London; Mike Urgo, North Stonington; Peter Nystrom, Norwich; Sandra Allyn-Gauthier, Preston; Kevin Lyden, Salem; Cheryl Blanchard, Sprague; Jeff Callahan, Borough of Stonington; Danielle Chesebrough, Town of Stonington; Rob Brule, Waterford. Council Alternates: John Burt, Town of Groton; John Salomone, Norwich; Jim Rivers, Windham. Tribal Liaison: Chuck Bunnell, Mohegan Tribe. Military Liaison: Captain Todd Moore, Dawn Works-Dennis, U.S. Naval SUBASE; LCDR Samuel Andriessen, USCGA. Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan, Wendy Leclair. Other: Deborah Monahan, TVCCA; Grayson Wright, CTDOT; Erik Shortell, FHWA; Sheri Cote, seCTer; Wendy Bury, SE CT Cultural Coalition; Patrick McCormack, Uncas Health District; Steve Mansfield, LLHD; State Rep. Doug Dubitsky; Catherine Young, CAA; Ayanti Grant, Congressman Courtney's Office; Ellen Graham, Senator Blumenthal's office; Brianna DeVivo, Senator Murphy's office; Teresa Jackman; Henry Resnikoff; Maryam Elahi; Cathy Zall; Cindy Dupointe; Greg Berube; 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. Act on Minutes of 5/19/21:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 5/19/21 (Lyden, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

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

5. Communications: The Executive Director noted there was a letter in the agenda packet from EPA denying the SCCOG's grant application for brownfield funding.

6. Public Comment:

Ms. Elahi, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Eastern CT, reported that she had sent a letter to all of the municipal CEOs and educational leaders recommending that 30% of their ARPA funding be applied to three areas: housing, mental wellness, and early childhood education.

7. Guest Speaker: Cathy Zall re: UniteCT

Ms. Zall explained this program and its eligibility requirements. She stated applications are filed online, and either the tenant or the landlord can begin the application, but the tenant must finalize it. Far fewer people have applied that anticipated, with only 7% of those eligible in New London County doing so. One of the primary problems now is incomplete applications. She said that she is working to see that more people apply for this rental assistance program.

8. Committee and Liaison Reports:

A. Executive Committee

1) Ledyard LOTCIP Project/Estimate Adjustment

The Executive Director summarized the reasons for the changes in cost from the estimate that accompanied the original pre-application to the cost figure which has been determined after preparation of the final application. He stated that the Executive Committee had reviewed and recommended in favor of this request.

MOTION: To approve of the cost increase in Ledyard's LOTCIP project to install a multi-use pathway on Colonel Ledyard Highway from \$1.87M to \$2.85 (Urgo, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

2) Requests to Amend SCCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Executive Director summarized the two requests to amend the MTP, one to include the pedestrian bridge at the planned National Coast Guard Museum in New London, and a second to include the proposed Norwich modification to Exit 18 on I-395 and the construction of an arterial road into a new business park. He said that both requests are the result of a solicitation by Congressman Courtney for projects and that Congress is giving preference to projects that are in State Transportation Improvement Programs (STIP). He reminded that to be in a STIP, a project must first be in the MPO's MTP and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He said the Executive Committee has recommended in favor of including these projects in the MTP.

MOTION: To approve of the National Coast Guard Museum Association's and the City of Norwich's request to amend the MTP to include their projects in Appendix B of the MTP (McDaniel, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

3) 2021 Planning Study Prioritization

The Executive Director summarized the two applications received, one from the City of Norwich to conduct a circulation study of Chelsea Harbor Drive and other downtown streets and one from the Town of Groton to prepare a Community Connectivity Master

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Plan. He said the Executive Committee agreed with staff's recommendation which prioritized the Norwich project as first priority and the Groton project as second priority.

MOTION: The SCCOG assign as Planning Study priorities the Norwich Chelsea Harbor/Downtown Mobility Study as first priority, and Town of Groton Community Connectivity Master Plan as second priority (Nystrom, Cwikla). So voted unanimously.

4) FY 2021 TIP/STIP Amendments

The Chairman stated these would be taken up under New Business.

B. Legislative Committee/Legislative Agenda Discussion

The Executive Director provided an update on the bill that would revise the RSG formula.

C. Tribal Liaison Representatives

No report.

D. Military Command Representatives

Captain Moore reported that the SUBASE is the first US military installation to advance to Health Status Alpha.

LCDR Andriessen stated that the Coast guard Academy was returning to full capacity.

E. Congressional Office Report

Ms. Grant, Ms. Graham, and Ms. DeVivo all reported on the work of their respective offices.

F. seCTer

Ms. Cote reported that seCTer's CARES Act funding has been expended; loan funding is still available.

G. Eastern CT Tourism District

No report.

H. SEAT

Mr. McDaniel reminded there would be no SEAT meeting today.

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I. SCCOG Regional Water Committee

No report.

J. Regional Emergency Planning Team

No report.

K. Regional Human Services Coordinating Council

No report, but Ms. Monahan emphasized the importance of the three areas that Ms. Elahi identified earlier.

L. SE CT Cultural Coalition

Ms. Bury provided a reminder of the letters the Cultural Coalition had sent to all towns requesting 1% of ARPA funding for arts and culture.

9. Executive Director's Report:

The Executive Director reported the State still has not come up with a way to fund the state's nine COGs' work on COVID response and recovery.

10. Old Business:

A. COVID-19 Response Discussion

Mr. McCormack and Mr. Mansfield thanked the SCCOG for their support of additional State funding to the regional health districts.

11. New Business:

A. Proposed Amendments to FY 2021 SCCOG Budget

The Executive Director explained the proposed amended FY 2021 SCCOG Budget. He said the proposed amendments are necessitated in large part by three new sources of revenue and associated expenditures not anticipated/defined at the time the original budget was drafted in November 2019, and a significant reduction in our OPM Regional Services Grant (RSG). In addition, the SCCOG incurred unexpected costs and realized savings due to COVID-19.

Mr. Salomone asked if there were any funds in the proposed amended budget that would fund the SCCOG staff's COVID recovery work. The Executive Director responded saying that there were none in the proposed amended FY 2021 budget, but that he was

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preparing a proposal for the Executive Committee and the SCCOG regarding municipal ARPA funding being dedicated for that purpose.

MOTION: To approve of the proposed amended FY 2021 budget as recommended by staff (Sparkman, Burt). So voted unanimously.

B. SCWA Request to SCCOG for Nominees

The Executive Director reported on a letter he had received from SCCOG General Manager Josh Cansler, sent on behalf of SCWA's Representative Advisory Board (RAB). The RAB is preparing to appoint a nominee to one of two positions on the Authority required to be made from nominees provided by SCCOG. He said that the current member whose term is expiring is former North Stonington First Selectman Nick Mullane, who has indicated he would like to continue to serve on the SCWA.

MOTION: The SCCOG nominates Mr. Nick Mullane for re-appointment to the Southeastern CT Water Authority (Urgo, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

C. Discussion/Set Meeting Date for Discussion of Use of ARPA Funds

The Executive Director suggested two dates, June 23rd and June 30, for the first meeting. The Chairman asked that he poll the SCCOG on the best date.

D. FY 2021 TIP/STIP Amendments

- CMAQ, 0170-3605, Statewide, Statewide TDM (NY-NJ-CT Moderate), OTH, 2021, \$2,684,000, New Project
- CMAQ, 0170-3606, Statewide, Statewide TDM (Greater CT Moderate), OTH, 2021, \$2,106,000, New Project
- HIPNL, 0103-0259, Sherman Street, Norwich, Replace BR 04047 and 03797 o/Yantic River, CON, 2021, \$655,000, Add HIPNL Entry, Admin. Requirement
- STPA-BRX, 0103-0259, Sherman Street, Norwich, Replace BR 04047 and 03797 o/Yantic River – AC Entry, CON, 2021, \$0, Add AC Entry, Admin. Requirement
- STPA-BRX, 0130-0259, Sherman Street, Norwich, Replace BR 04047 and 03797 o/Yantic River – AC Conversion, CON, 2023, \$4,695,000, Add STPA-BRX AC Conversion, Admin. Requirement
- 5307C, 0414-XXX, SEAT, Norwich, SEAT-Facility Rehab/Improvements – Electric Charge Station FY 21, ALL, 2021, Delete Project
- 5307C, 0414-XXX, SEAT, Norwich, SEAT-Facility Rehab/Improvements – 3 Fuel Storage Tans FY 21, ALL, Delete Project
- 5307C, 0414-XXX, SEAT, Norwich, SEAT-Facility Rehab/Improvements – Replace Buses 2008 (2 40ft) FY 21, ACQ, Delete Project
- STPNL, 0044-0159, PD, CT 161, East Lyme, CT Route 161 Corridor Study, PL, 2021, \$250,000, New Project
- STPNL, 0094-0262, PD, CT 32, New London, CT Route 32 Corridor Study, PL, 2021, \$200,000, New Project
- TAPNL, 0103-0280, New London Tpke., Norwich, Ped/Bike Improvements between CT 82 & Town Street, PD, 2021, \$192,000, New Project
- TAPNL, 0103-0280, New London Tpke., Norwich, Ped/Bike Improvements between CT 82 & Town Street, FD, 2022, \$192,000, New Project
- TAPNL, 0103-0280, New London Tpke., Norwich, Ped/Bike Improvements between CT 82 & Town Street, ROW, 2022, \$50,000, New Project
- TAPNL, 0103-0280, New London Tpke., Norwich, CON, 2024, \$1,010,000, New Project

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The Chairman stated that the Executive Committee recommended in favor of the proposed TIP/STIP amendments.

MOTION: To approve of the proposed FY 2021 TIP/STIP amendments (Sparkman, Nystrom). So voted unanimously.

12. Next Meeting:

The Chairman stated that the next regularly scheduled meeting would be held on July 21.

13. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:52 a.m. (Urgo, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Chesebrough, Secretary

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