

**Southeastern Connecticut
Regional Human Services Coordinating Council**

*A steering committee of the
Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments*

Draft Minutes

Friday, April 16, 2021

Conducted via Zoom

Attendees: Nancy Bulkeley (Dominion), Deb Monahan (Thames Valley Council for Community Action), Kathleen Stauffer (The Arc Eastern Connecticut), Mayor Ron McDaniel (Town of Montville), Jennifer O'Brien (Community Foundation of Eastern CT), Stephanie Turbes (Colchester Social Services), Natalie Martinez (Veteran Affairs), Emma King (Office of Rep. Courtney), Joan Wessell (Senior Resources), Dina Sears-Graves (United Way of Eastern CT), Lee-Ann Gomes (Norwich Human Services), Stephanie Guess (DMHAS), Kevin Lyden (Town of Salem), Angela Fournier (Town of Windham), Jennifer Granger (UCFS), Mary DeMarco (Town of Windham), Leanne Theodore (Town of Stonington) Jim Butler (SCCOG), Amanda Kennedy (SCCOG), Carly Holzschuh (SCCOG).

1. Call to Order

Ms. Monahan called the meeting to order at 8:35 AM.

2. Welcome and Introductions

3. American Rescue Plan/COVID Recovery Activities

General discussion about American Rescue Plan funds. There is still a need to do outreach to populations for vaccine distribution, including providing transportation to vaccine appointments. A FEMA van is planned in May to do mobile vaccine clinics. There is a need for "trusted messengers" to reach populations that are hesitant about the vaccine.

UniteCT has also been used extensively to get rental and mortgage assistance to those in need.

Ms. Granger reported that there is still also a high need for continued COVID testing, and that currently testing is only free until May 31st.

They were awarded a \$3.3 million grant for two years, possible uses including enhanced vaccine infrastructure, treating patients in ongoing COVID recovery, capacity building in the community, and well visits for community members who have been avoiding medical offices.

Ms. Monahan reported that energy and food assistance is still needed in the community.

Ms. Kennedy shared updates on the Regional Recovery work.

4. 2021 Legislative Activity

Legislative measures discussed included:

- (Ms. Stauffer) The Biden American Jobs Plan includes substantial money for workers in home and community-based care.
- (Ms. Wessell) Proposed legislation for funding expanding broadband access.
- (Ms. King) FEMA benefit for COVID funeral expenses.
- (Mr. Butler) A new CT Creates report recommended that due to retirements at state departments, more work may be pushed onto local nonprofit agencies.
- (Ms. Sears-Graves) Provisions for early childhood education, eligibility, loan forgiveness for educators.
- (Ms. Granger) Telehealth legislation has been extended to May 20. Telehealth has been very important for mental and physical health and has had high member satisfaction.

5. Shared Services: Board Engagement & Recruitment

(Ms. Kennedy) The subgroup working on this item will speak with Leadership Greater Hartford's program administrator before the next meeting.

6. New Business

Ms. Granger suggested that future agendas have an item re: diversity, equity, and inclusion measures.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 AM.