

MINUTES OF THE 1 FEBRUARY 2022
SCCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
VIA ZOOM

Present: Fred Allyn, III, Keith Hedrick, Danielle Chesebrough, Rob Brule, Cheryl Blanchard, John Salomone

Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan

Chairman Allyn opened the meeting at 8:33 a.m.

1. Update on Hiring of Regional Zoning Official

The Executive Director reported that they had offered the two town ZEO positions on a contract basis to two experienced individuals who both accepted during a telephone call. After agreements were emailed, one telephoned to withdraw and the other stopped replying to repeated telephone calls and email messages. He said that he has spoken with SCCOG staff Sam Alexander and Justin LaFountain and both have agreed to temporarily take this duty on, with Sam working as ZEO for Bozrah where he is already working as Town Planner, and Justin working in Ledyard. He said that the SCCOG will provide this service at least through February at no cost to the towns while the position is readvertised.

2. Update on Funding for Hiring Regional Recovery Coordinator

The Executive Director briefed the Executive Committee on the number of municipalities (7) that have sent in their voluntary assessment payment; he said that others have approved or plan to approve this, but have not yet sent in the first payment. Because not enough funding has been committed to date to support hiring a full-time staff person, the SCCOG will initially retain a part-time person to fill this role. He said that as previously announced, SCCOG has entered into an agreement with retired Norwich Human Services Director Lee-Ann Gomes to work on average 10 hours per week in this position. The Executive Committee agreed that Ms. Gomes limited hours would prioritize assisting towns which have contributed to the funding of the position.

3. Route 32 and Route 161 Corridor Study Updates

The Executive Director informed the Executive Committee that scoping meetings were held by SCCOG staff with Fuss & O'Neill, which has been selected to prepare the Route 32 in New London corridor study and with Beta Group, Inc. which has been selected to prepare the Route 161 study in East Lyme. A scoping meeting with Beta and CTDOT's Technical Committee has been held, and one with Fuss & O'Neill and CTDOT has been scheduled for next week. SCCOG Transportation Program Manager Rattan informed the Executive Committee that the next step will be to form advisory committees for both corridor studies.

4. BRIC Grant Application for Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The Executive Director said that staff was informed by CT DEEP in an email last week that

the SCCOG will be awarded a \$149,963 FEMA funded BRIC grant to update the region's Multi-Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan. It is expected that formal notification of this grant award will be received by the end of February.

5. FY 2021 STIP/TIP Amendments

The Executive Committee reviewed the two sets of amendments, one for safety improvements and pavement rehab on I-95 from Groton to the RI state line, and the other a series of traffic signal controllers and cabinet replacements. The Executive Director and the Transportation Program Manager informed the Executive Committee about the PEL study of I-95 CTDOT was about to commence and comments staff has submitted to CTDOT about the scope of that study. After discussion, the Executive Committee decided to not recommend action to the full SCCOG on the I-95 STIP amendments until such time as CTDOT responds to staff comments/concerns on the I-95 PEL study as that study and its implementation could impact/be impacted by the improvements in the proposed STIP amendment.

MOTION: To recommend to the full SCCOG board the approval of the FY 2021 STIP amendments replacing traffic signal controllers and cabinets at various locations (Project #0172-0516) (Salamone, Hedrick). So voted unanimously.

6. Consent-Based Siting Process for Federal Interim Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel

The Executive Committee discussed a letter from Congressman Courtney to the Executive Director regarding the Department of Energy's request for feedback on the development of a consent-based process to move spent nuclear waste to interim storage sites. The Congressman referred this to the SCCOG because entities such as the COG are eligible to submit comment. After discussion, the Executive Committee agreed that Rob Brule, First Selectman in Waterford which is host to Dominion's nuclear power plant at Millstone, would write a response and that the Executive Director would work with Mr. Brule to draft a statement of SCCOG support for Waterford's position.

7. Other

The Deputy Director reported on CAZEO's interpretation of a new law requiring municipal ZEOs to be CAZEO-certified by January 1, 2023 only applies to new ZEOs appointed on or after January 1, 2023. SCCOG staff does not agree, believing the new law applies to all ZEOs and not just newly appointed ZEOs, and questions the applicability of CAZEO's interpretation as they are not responsible for the interpretation of statutes.

Ms. Chesebrough mentioned a CIRCA municipal grant program, and suggested a possible SCCOG application to study the steps necessary to create municipal storm water authorities. Applications are due today. Staff said they will look into this program and the possibility of future applications.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James S. Butler, Executive Director