



SECHA Board of Directors Meeting  
March 11, 2022  
8:30 AM

Conducted by Zoom Conference

### **Draft Minutes**

Attendees: Norton Wheeler, Mark Oefinger, Susy Hurlbert, Fred Allyn III, Deborah Monahan, Paula Turley, Jennifer Zettler, Bob Fusari, Lee-Ann Gomes, Amanda Kennedy, Nicole Haggerty

1. Call to Order

Mr. Wheeler called the meeting to order at 8:31 AM.

2. Introductions

Members introduced themselves. New attendees were Lee-Ann Gomes, who is working as SCCOG's Regional Recovery Coordinator, Nicole Haggerty, who has recently joined SCCOG as a Planner, and Paula Turley, ECAR's recently-elected President and State Director.

3. Approve March 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: To approve the March 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes (Monahan, Oefinger). So voted unanimously.

4. Financial Report

Ms. Kennedy presented the financial report. A grant to SECHA was approved by the Community Foundation of Eastern CT (CFECT) in amount of \$5,000. Staff expenses have been low due to DOH grants covering Affordable Housing Plan support; but some time has been spent on follow-up implementation, funded by SECHA funds. Revenues-expenses will be positive for FY 2022. Ms. Kennedy noted SECHA should adopt a FY 2023 budget at the July meeting.

MOTION: To approve the financial report (Monahan, Oefinger). So voted unanimously.

5. Board Membership

Mr. Wheeler asked to move this item earlier on the agenda. Mr. Oefinger (nominating committee) reported the proposed slate of officers and members: Norton Wheeler (Chair), Susy Hurlbert (Vice Chair), Amanda Kennedy (Treasurer), David Stanland (Secretary), Jennifer Zettler (new member), Amanda Kennedy (new member). Discussion as to status of membership of Jim Butler, who is retiring as Executive Director of SCCOG as of June 30<sup>th</sup>. Motion: To approve the proposed new members and officers (Oefinger, Wheeler). So voted unanimously.

#### 6. Center for Housing Opportunity

Ms. Kennedy provided updates on push to create Center for Housing Opportunity for Eastern CT, with lead support from CFECT, first acknowledging the name conflict with ECHO needs to be addressed. Numerous sessions have been held with funders, with progress towards initial commitment to a pilot. CHO may be run within Connecticut College's Holleran Center for Community Engagement. Discussion as to whether a 1-year commitment will provide a stable foundation and whether a part-time staffer provides much more to the region than SECHA's current level of activity. Ms. Savin and Ms. Monahan said there is a new funding opportunity from DECD that may be useful- Community Investment Fund. Discussion as to role of SECHA with the Center, whether SECHA could/should morph into a CHO. Mr. Wheeler proposed a follow-up conversation with Maryam Elahi of CFECT and Ms. Kennedy to communicate SECHA member concerns and explore the role of SECHA and CHO.

#### 7. Affordable Housing Plans

Ms. Haggerty presented the results of SCCOG's analysis of Affordable Housing Plans that have been drafted or adopted. Discussion ensued as to how SECHA can motivate/resource municipalities to implement their plans. Concerns that plans do not include commitment from municipalities to be proactive. Discussion re tax exemption strategy and the legality thereof, potential resources to assist with inventorying town-owned lands for potential housing, limited capacity of small towns to populate affordable housing committees. Potential SECHA actions: forums, model regulations, connecting to partner organizations about AHP strategies (Habitat, CHFA, SE CT Land Trust), follow-up visits to Commissions. Oefinger- what strategies did Stonington's discarded draft include that could be promoted? Fusari- a barrier is contaminated privately-owned sites, towns could take ownership and clean up if there was funding. Discussion of potential SECHA involvement in promoting employer-based programs. Ms. Kennedy noted L&M announced a program in 2021. Ms. Savin stated any outreach to employers should include one or more "peer" companies that

already have a housing benefit program for their employees. Ms. Kennedy proposed developing, for SECHA's review, a summary listing information about each strategy, examples of implementation, funding resources, potential partners, and specific ways SECHA could assist, so that SECHA can determine specific next steps at the July meeting.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 AM.