

# SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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Minutes of the February 15, 2023 Meeting of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments

Held at SCCOG, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich, CT

**PRESENT:**

Bozrah	Glenn Pianka	Montville	Ron McDaniel
Colchester	-	New London	Michael Passero
East Lyme	Kevin Seery	Norwich	-
Franklin	Charles Grant	North Stonington	Bob Carlson
Griswold	Dana Bennett	Preston	Sandra Allyn-Gauthier
Jewett City	Tim Sharkey	Salem	-
City of Groton	Keith Hedrick	Sprague	Cheryl Blanchard
Town of Groton	John Burt	Town of Stonington	Danielle Chesebrough
Lebanon	Kevin Cwikla	Stonington Borough	Jeff Callahan
Ledyard	Fred Allyn, III	Waterford	Rob Brule
Lisbon	Tom Sparkman	Windham	-
Military Liaisons:	US Coast Guard Academy: LCDR Craig Johnson New London SUBASE: -		
Tribal Affiliates:	Mohegan Tribe: - Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation: -		

SCCOG staff: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan. SEAT: Mike Carroll. seCTer: Joe Violette. CT DOT: Kevin Tedesco. Office of Sen. Blumenthal: Ellen Graham. Office of Rep. Courtney: Ayanti Grant. Office of Senator Murphy: Erin McBride. SE CT Cultural Coalition: Wendy Bury. TVCCA: Deb Monahan. seCTer: Joe Violette. Eastern CT Tourism District: Jim Bellano. Eversource: Teresa Jackman, Jaquan Samuels. Office of Policy and Management: David Lukens.

1. Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. The Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Act on Minutes of January 18, 2023 Meeting:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 1/18//2023 (Grant, Sparkman). Motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

MOTION: To approve the Treasurer's Report (Sparkman, McDaniel). Motion passed unanimously.

5. Communications: One communication was received from Senior Advisor Jim Butler communicating a request for support for state funding for the Thames River Heritage Park from the Thames River Heritage Park Foundation (TRHPF).

6. Public Comment: Deb Monahan reminded the Board to refer residents to TVCCA for assistance with heating costs. TVCCA also has programs to assist with water and sewer bill issues. Mr. Pianka mentioned progress regarding bottle redemptions and asked for support for a bill to remove the requirement to publish legal notice in a newspaper, noting limited readership and a recent \$600 bill for a legal notice. See Eversource comment under #12.

7. Guest Speaker: David Lukens, Broadband Mapping Coordinator, CT Office of Policy and Management.

Mr. Lukens briefed the SCCOG on efforts to document broadband availability in Connecticut as part of state and federal efforts to address broadband insufficiencies. He noted that mapping will control where certain federal funds may be used, and that current mapping still contains errors. He asked for those who know of unserved areas to report them to his office, and in particular, to communicate where community anchor institutions exist, which are places like libraries and senior centers that provide internet connectivity to the public. He noted upcoming federal funding opportunities which would best be utilized through partnership with service providers, and that the funds would be prioritized for use addressing unserved areas before underserved and anchor institutions with inadequate service.

8. SCCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

SCCOG Transportation Program Manager briefed the SCCOG on the draft 2023-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which is currently available for public review. Comments are due March 6<sup>th</sup>. Public hearings will be held via Zoom on February 16<sup>th</sup>. A revised plan will be presented to the Executive Board and full SCCOG in March for potential adoption in March. The Plan identifies the long-range transportation needs of the region and creates a general policy guide for the future allocation of available public resources to address those needs. A list of projects is included for potential funding over a twenty-year period, constrained by the amount of funding expected to be available. Projects recommended in the Plan include road and transit improvements, bridge construction and rehabilitation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and maintenance projects. Ms. Rattan noted that current estimates suggest that \$5 billion in federal transportation funds will be available to the region in the next twenty years, that the included list of projects does not utilize that full amount, but that recommendations for additional projects will soon be generated from a number of planning

studies underway, and they will utilize a good deal of the additional available funding. Mr. McDaniel asked about the I95/Exit 74 interchange; Ms. Rattan explained that it is not included in the plan list since funds have already been appropriated for that project, which is underway.

9. Committee and Liaison Reports

A) Executive Committee

i) FY 2021 STIP/TIP Amendments: Ms. Kennedy noted that the Executive Committee recommended approval and that this item would be discussed under new business.

ii) LOTCIP:

(1) Endorsement: L094-0004, New London, Hodges Square/Williams Street Improvements, \$2,706,000. ACTION ITEM

(2) Re-endorsement (cost increase): L028-002, Colchester, Lebanon Avenue Streetscape Improvements, \$774,200 ACTION ITEM

MOTION: To endorse the New London and Colchester proposed projects for LOTCIP funding (Grant, Sparkman). Motion passed unanimously.

B) Legislative Committee: Mr. Grant stated that he had submitted testimony on behalf of SCCOG regarding Education Cost Sharing (HB 5003), and would be submitting testimony in support of SB 1002, which addresses issues with ZEO certification. He stated that CT DEEP was taking public comment on their solid waste proposals, which he feels are inadequate to address the full issue. Mayor Allyn concurred that the proposals did not go far enough. Mr. Grant mentioned that Chairman Chesebrough would like to circulate information on a ranked choice voting proposal. Chairman Chesebrough stated she would do so and asked for municipal support. Mr. Grant reviewed the request from Mr. Butler/TRHPF for a letter in support of funding of the Park and asked for a motion to approve a letter.

MOTION: To send a letter expressing SCCOG's support for the funding of the Thames River Heritage Park, as requested by TRHPF (McDaniel, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

Mr. Grant stated that he would track the public notice bill (HB 6556) and submit testimony in favor of the statute's revision.

C) Tribal Liaison Representatives: -

D) Military Command Representatives: LCDR Johnson mentioned upcoming events and that the Coast Guard would attend Tuesday's recognition of Alvin Kinsall.

E) Congressional Office Report: Ms. Grant stated that their office is engaged in broadband, Rep. Courtney recently attended meetings regarding repositories for number fuel. His office has requested information regarding a bill that would direct the study of MPO consolidation. Ms. Graham stated that the congressionally directed spending project

solicitation process is underway. Ms. McBride noted that the Farm Bill is being reauthorized without school meal provisions.

- F) seCTer: Mr. Violette noted that seCTer is making process on the CEDS and is engaged in the Health Care sector industry partnership.
- G) Eastern CT Tourism District: Mr. Bellano reported that the District received 20 applications for marketing partnership funds. Only a handful towns now lack representation in the District.
- H) SEAT: SEAT is reviewing the Areas of Persistent Poverty grant opportunity as well as the state Microtransit Pilot program. Mr. Carroll is also awaiting better understanding of the impact of the Census Urban Area redesignations.
- I) Regional Water Committee: No report.
- J) Regional Emergency Planning Team: Mr. Sparkman noted the ongoing issues with repayment of expenses. Mr. Caplet noted recent progress on programs, including updating the regional asset list (inventory). Local Emergency Operations Plans will be due in February 2024. A cybersecurity committee is being created. Progress has been made re: emergency animal sheltering. Mr. Pianka stated that he was pleased to see retroactive access to planning funds.
- K) Regional Human Services Coordinating Council: Deb Monahan stated that the RHSCC met 1/20 to adopt a legislative agenda.
- L) SE CT Cultural Coalition: Ms. Bury stated that the Arts & Prosperity survey was about to start, and that Norwich was exploring the creation of a cultural district. Ms. Bury has taken a new position, and while hiring is underway, Ms. Mathiasen will act as municipal liaison. The plan is to expand municipal services once new staff are on board.

9. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Kennedy highlighted several items in the written report: Jennifer Lindo began work as SCCOG's Land Use Specialist January 30, performing ZEO and blight enforcement duties. Candidates are being reviewed for the open Building Official position. DEMHS spending with grants expiring in 2024 and later is currently frozen until reimbursements come in. A mid-year budget review showed no issues, as did the draft audit (final expected very soon). SCCOG was notified that it was not selected for Safe Streets for All funding and has requested a debrief in advance of the next application round. Staff are reviewing the transit planning grant and recreational trails grant opportunities. Public meetings are underway for the first phase of the Regional Open Space plan. Mayor Allyn asked about a recent request from CCM regarding flooding that seemed to duplicate recent hazard mitigation planning. Ms. Kennedy stated she would reach out to CCM for clarification.

10. Old Business: None.

11. New Business:

FY 2021 STIP/TIP Amendments

FACode	Proj#	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments
STPSU	0028-0208	CT 2	COLCHESTER	REHAB BRS 03395 & 03396 o/ CT 85	CON	FYI	5,800	4,640	1,160	0	NEW PROJECT
STPSU	0057-0122	CT 138	GRISWOLD	REPLACE BR 07036 (CULVERT) o/ BROOK	CON	2024	2,000	1,600	400	0	NEW PROJECT
STPNL	0163-0206	US 6	WINDHAM	REHAB BR 06729 (CULVERT) o/ BROOK	CON	2024	1,000	800	200	0	NEW PROJECT
STPNL	0103-0278	WEST TOWN STREET	NORWICH	REPLACE GUIDERAILS ON SR 642 EB	CON	FYI	1,000	800	200	0	MOVE FROM FY24 TO FYI, CHANGE FA-CODE FROM STPA TO STPNL

FACode	Proj#	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments
STPA	0170-3577	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	LINE STRIPING/PAVEMENT MARKINGS (1 of 4) - AC CON	CON	2023	-2,000	-2,000	0	0	DELETE FY23
STPA	0170-3578	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	LINE STRIPING/PAVEMENT MARKINGS (2 of 4) - AC CON	CON	2023	-2,000	-2,000	0	0	DELETE FY23
STPA	0170-3579	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	LINE STRIPING/PAVEMENT MARKINGS (3 of 4) - AC CON	CON	2023	-2,000	-2,000	0	0	DELETE FY23
STPA	0170-3580	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	LINE STRIPING/PAVEMENT MARKINGS (4 of 4) - AC CON	CON	2023	-2,000	-2,000	0	0	DELETE FY23
STPA	0170-3650	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (2 OF 4) - AC ENTRY	CON	2023	0	0	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3650	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (2 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2023	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3650	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (2 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2024	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3650	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (2 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	FYI	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3651	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (3 OF 4) - AC ENTRY	CON	2023	0	0	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3651	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (3 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2023	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3651	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (3 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2024	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3651	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (3 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	FYI	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3652	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (4 OF 4) - AC ENTRY	CON	2023	0	0	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3652	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (4 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2023	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3652	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (4 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2024	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3652	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (4 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	FYI	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3649	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (1 OF 4) - AC ENTRY	CON	2023	0	0	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3649	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (1 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2023	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3649	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (1 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	2024	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT
STPA	0170-3649	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	PAVEMENT MARKINGS (1 OF 4) - AC CONVERSION	CON	FYI	2,500	2,500	0	0	NEW PROJECT

Ms. Kennedy described the projects being proposed for funding, which included bridge maintenance projects and guiderail replacement in Norwich. The second set of items move pavement marking projects to different years.

Motion: To approve the proposed TIP Amendments (Grant, Cwikla). Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Chesebrough asked if Eversource reps would like to speak, as they came in after public comment. Ms. Jackman asked that tree trimming notifications be circulated to the public, and stated that Eversource has a number of assistance programs available for residents who are having trouble with rent payments.

12. Next Meeting:

The Chairman stated that the next meeting would be March 15, 2023.

13. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn (Grant, Burt). The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Kennedy, Executive Director, on behalf of Cheryl Blanchard, Secretary