

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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DRAFT Minutes of the June 21, 2023 Meeting of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments

Held at SCCOG, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich, CT

PRESENT:

Bozrah	-	Montville	Ron McDaniel
Colchester	-	New London	-
East Lyme	Kevin Seery	Norwich	-
Franklin	-	North Stonington	Bob Carlson
Griswold	Dana Bennett	Preston	Sandra Allyn-Gauthier
Jewett City	Tim Sharkey	Salem	Ed Chmielewski
City of Groton	Keith Hedrick	Sprague	-
Town of Groton	-	Town of Stonington	-
Lebanon	Kevin Cwikla	Stonington Borough	Michael Schefers
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. seCTer: Paul Whitescarver. CT DOT: Kevin Tedesco. Office of Sen. Blumenthal: Ellen Graham. Office of Sen. Murphy: Erin McBride, Kyle Thaxton. Ledge Light Health District: Jennifer Muggeo. TVCCA: Deb Monahan. SE CT Cultural Coalition: Wendy Vincent, Deb Mathiasen. BL Companies: Dominick Celtruda. Eversource: Jaquan Samuels, Valentina Jimenez. SEAT: Mike Carroll. Eastern Regional Tourism District: Chris Regan. Rep. Mark DeCaprio.

1. Call to Order: Vice Chairman Brule called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Mr. Brule led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Act on Minutes of May 24, 2023 Meeting:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 5/24/2023 (Cwikla, Hedrick). Motion passed unanimously.

Member Municipalities: Bozrah * Colchester * East Lyme * Franklin * Griswold * Borough of Jewett City * City of Groton * Town of Groton * Lebanon * Ledyard * Lisbon * Montville * New London * North Stonington * Norwich * Preston * Salem * Sprague * Stonington * Stonington Borough * Waterford * Windham

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4. Treasurer's Report:

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

5. Communications: None.

6. Public Comment: None

7. Committee and Liaison Reports

A) Executive Committee

i) Regional Code Enforcement Program. Ms. Kennedy reported out on the discussion held regarding SCCOG's Code Enforcement Program, and options to utilize Building Official Capacity freed up by the departure of one of the participating municipalities from the program. Options included recruiting an additional municipality to the program or developing a coverage program for vacations or other time off in multiple municipalities. Members concurred that both options were viable and could be pursued and made recommendations for several leads. Ms. Kennedy reported she was following up on leads to finalize a direction.

ii) FY 2024 Regional Services Grant (State of Connecticut). Ms. Kennedy reported that the June Budget Implementer Bill included additional funding for COGs which would raise SCCOG's grant from \$380k to \$660k. A discussion was held by the Executive Committee regarding potential program expansions these funds could support. Ms. Kennedy asked the Board for any additional areas to consider. Ms. Allyn-Gauthier suggested SCCOG pursue shared human resources services.

B) Legislative Committee: In lieu of Mr. Grant, Ms. Kennedy reported on legislation passed regarding Zoning Enforcement certification and commissioner training, permitting responsibility regarding vehicle dealers and repairers, and an Act changing the statute currently requiring COGs to employ Regional Election Monitors (unfunded) to an option to employ Regional Election Advisors with \$25,000 annual funding available to COGs who do so. SCCOG should decide by the end of the 2023 whether to retain an individual in 2024.

C) Tribal Liaison Representatives: No report.

D) Military Command Representatives: LCDR Johnson noted that he had been reassigned and that Senior Chief Bryon Kravchuck will be CGA's new Governmental Affairs Officer.

E) Congressional Office Report: Ms. McBride and Ms. Graham had no news to report.

F) seCTer: Mr. Whitescarver spoke about various grant programs seCTer has available to businesses and that he was co-chairing the Regional Health Care Partnership.

- G) Eastern CT Tourism District: Mr. Regan introduced himself as the new Chair of the Eastern Regional Tourism District and asked that municipalities without designated ERTD representatives appoint a representative to participate. He also stated that he would be asking municipal CEOs to respond to him with their top 3 tourist destinations, and that an ERTD goal is to make southeastern CT a multi-day vacation destination.
- H) SEAT: Mr. Carroll reported that after fare collection resumed in April, ridership declined, but has since rebounded.
- I) Regional Water Committee: No report.
- J) Regional Emergency Planning Team: Mr. Sparkman reminded the Board that Memorandums of Agreement are due to SCCOG by June 30th.
- K) Regional Human Services Coordinating Council: Ms. Monahan stated that the RHSCC would meet again on July 21st. Ms. Kennedy noted that that meeting's agenda would include a report by Stonington's Leanne Theodore on their partnership with police and schools.
- L) SE CT Cultural Coalition: Ms. Mathiasen introduced Wendy Vincent, the Coalition's new Executive Director, and reminded the board of Make Music Day.
- M) Health Districts: Ms. Muggeo stated that the Districts were busy with a lot of seasonal inspections, and that they were working with permittees on complying with new requirements. Any CEOs with concerns should reach out. She noted that wildfire smoke is a new public health concern, and that ticks may be submitted for testing, particularly engorged deer ticks.
- N) Solid Waste Committee: Mayor Allyn stated that he hoped to schedule several meetings of this committee in July and August, with the first organizational meeting in early July. The legislature did not pass the waste bill. Mr. McDaniel stated that the legislature needs to be pushed to allow recycled glass in asphalt.

8. Guest Speaker: Valentina Jimenez, Eversource

Ms. Jimenez is the regional representative for Eversource's municipal programs. She spoke about the many energy efficiency programs that Eversource makes available to their municipal clients, which include LED replacement, lighting control, energy efficiency gas measures, financing, and technical assistance, as well as benchmarking through a partnership with UConn. Her presentation will be shared after the meeting.

9. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Kennedy noted that SCCOG had received applications from most towns for Municipal Grant Program (transit) funds. SCCOG is running three corridor studies, with projects in New London and East Lyme nearly complete and a project in downtown Norwich just beginning. Staff are preparing a Safe Streets for All application for just under \$9 million in funding across eight towns. Staff will work on some electric vehicle technical assistance later this year in advance of grant opportunities in 2024. Jennifer Lindo is completing a briefing

paper on short term rental issues which will be presented to the Regional Planning Commission on July 24th. Lastly, SCCOG staff met with members of the Eastern Connecticut Land Bank (brownfields) and they are tentatively scheduled to speak to SCCOG at the September meeting.

10. Old Business: None.

11. New Business: None.

12. Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be July 19, 2023.

13. Adjournment:

The Vice Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Kennedy, Executive Director, on behalf of Charlie Grant, Secretary