

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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DRAFT Minutes of the April 17, 2024 Meeting
of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments
5 Connecticut Ave, Norwich, CT

PRESENT:

Bozrah	Glenn Pianka	Montville	Lenny Bunnell
Colchester	-	New London	Michael Passero
East Lyme	-	Norwich	John Salomone via Zoom
Franklin	Alden Miner	North Stonington	Bob Carlson
Griswold	Tina Falck	Preston	Sanda Allyn-Gauthier
Jewett City	Laurie Sorder	Salem	Ed Chmielewski
City of Groton	Keith Hedrick	Sprague	Cheryl Blanchard
Town of Groton	-	Town of Stonington	Danielle Chesebrough
Lebanon	Kevin Cwikla	Stonington Borough	Michael Schefers
Ledyard	Fred Allyn, III	Waterford	Rob Brule
Lisbon	Tom Sparkman Via Zoom	Windham	Tom DeVivo
Military Liaisons:	US Coast Guard Academy: - New London SUBASE: CAPT Curtin, Steve Sadlowski		
Tribal Affiliates:	Mohegan Tribe: - Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation: Bob Hayward		
CT DOT	Jennifer Pacacha		

SCCOG staff: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan. seCTer: Paul Whitescarver, Joe Violette. SEAT: -. Office of Sen. Blumenthal: Ellen Graham. Office of Sen. Murphy: Erin McBride. Office of Rep. Courtney: Noah Carver. SE CT Cultural Coalition: Deb Mathiasen. Eastern Regional Tourism District: -. Uncas Health District: Patrick McCormack. Eversource: Theresa Jackman, Jaquan Samuels, Egzon Balidemaj. ACE Transportation: Jarek Pizunski. Tilcon representative. FHWA: Jennifer Brady. FTA: Christina Mendoza, Ari Ofsevit. DEMHS: Mike Caplet.

1. Call to Order: 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.

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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3. Act on Minutes of March 20th Meeting:

MOTION: To approve the minutes (Hedrick, DeVivo). Motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

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

5. Communications: Ms. Kennedy reviewed correspondence from OPM regarding an updating briefing on the State Plan of Conservation and Development, and information from CT Department of Agriculture on the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program.

6. Public Comment: Theresa Jackman from Eversource mentioned that the shutoff exemption is scheduled to end. Customers behind on payments should contact Eversource to make arrangements to avoid shutoff.

7. Public Hearing, 2024 Federal Certification Review: Jennifer Brady (FHWA) and Christina Mendoza (FTA) spoke regarding the process to review SCCOG's activities as a Metropolitan Planning Organization. This review occurs every four years and will result in a report outlining recommendations for improvement, corrective actions, and/or commendations. Any comments regarding SCCOG's activities as an MPO should be forwarded to Jennifer and Christina. The final report of findings will be issued in July.

A) Public Comment: None.

8. 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Plan. Ms. Rattan presented a summary of the Transportation Improvement Plan, a four-year capital plan revised every two years which lists all transportation projects for which federal funding is being allocated. Projects are included only if funding has been allocated to them and they meet criteria for impact on air quality.

9. Committee and Liaison Reports

A) Executive Committee:

i) Ms. Kennedy noted that minutes are provided in the packet.

B) Legislative Committee: Mayor Allyn mentioned that several bills of interest are proceeding, including HB5413 (street takeovers), SB191 (organics recycling), and HB5056 (shared services).

C) Tribal Liaison Representatives: Mr. Hayward noted that the MP Museum had reopened but with limited hours.

D) Military Command Representatives: CAPT Curtin provided information on a temporary construction project affecting both SUBASE gates. The project is being carried out by

CTDOT under an IGA with the SUBASE. He reported that a full test of their recent electrical upgrades was conducted several weeks ago.

- E) Congressional Office Report: Ms. McBride reported on the status of Congressionally Directed Spending requests. She asked that requests for letters of support for grant applications be sent to her and Ariel Vega, their Director of Economic Development. Ms. Graham stated in addition that she sends out notices of funding opportunities regularly and that anyone not receiving them should ask to be added to the list. Mr. Carver provided several updates including a mention that congressional offices could be contacted for help regarding expedited passport processing.
- F) seCTer: Mr. Whitescarver reported on several grant and loan programs available to small businesses. He noted that the CT Wind Collaborative has held its first meeting.
- G) Eastern CT Tourism District: No report.
- H) SEAT: No report.
- I) Regional Water Committee: No report.
- J) Regional Emergency Planning Team: Mr. Sparkman reminded members to return their MOA paperwork and to pay attention to the language regarding use of equipment. A proposed amendment to that language is being discussed, and a special meeting of the REPT CEO Council may be called to review proposed changes. Mr. Caplet reminded members that on 4/23/24 there would be an emergency management conference in Niantic that will include being able to see many of the pieces of shared equipment in the region.
- K) Regional Human Services Coordinating Council: No report.
- L) SE CT Cultural Coalition: Ms. Mathiasen reported that Make Music Day is June 21st and a kickoff meeting for it would be held tonight.
- 9. Health Districts: Mr. McCormack talked about the impact of campgrounds. The health districts have a role in permitting/inspecting them but he also noted that the increase in population has a significant impact on local communities in terms of their patronization of businesses and use of services.
- 10. Solid Waste Committee: Mayor Allyn noted that a meeting was scheduled for April 30th at 10 AM at SCCOG.
- 11. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Kennedy highlighted items from the Executive Director's report, including two upcoming funding application deadlines (LOTICIP & MGP). She mentioned the new Active Transportation Microgrant program which funds up to \$10,000 per year to eligible recipients for bike/ped safety programs. Applications will be reviewed quarterly.

- 12. Old Business: None.

13. New Business:

A) LOTCIP: Endorsement of Colchester Final Design Submission (Lebanon Avenue Streetscape Improvements). The project estimate has increased 8% since the last submission.

MOTION: To endorse the Final Design Submission (Cwikla, DeVivo). So voted unanimously.

B) TIP Amendments

Ms. Kennedy provided a summary of the proposed amendments, which program funding toward 1) Groton- Thomas Rd Bicycle Improvements. Documents award of Transportation Alternatives Funding to this program; 2) East Lyme- I95 @ Exit 74. Coding and estimate increase; 3) Groton- I95 Bridge Rehab. Schedule change and estimate increase; and 4) New London- Downtown Revitalization. This project received a discretionary Federal RAISE grant. Project 1,2,3 were reviewed and recommended for approval by the Executive Board; 4 was not.

MOTION: To approve the TIP amendments (Passero, Allyn). So voted unanimously.

14. Chairman Brule mentioned that Waterford would be asking for bond funding related to emergency communication and would be reaching out to other towns to request support.

15. Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be May 15, 2024, NOT May 22, 2024 as had been planned.

16. Adjournment:

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:42 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Kennedy, Executive Director, on behalf of Rob Carlson, Secretary