

# SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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DRAFT Minutes of the June 18, 2024 Meeting  
of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments  
5 Connecticut Ave, Norwich, CT

**PRESENT:**

Bozrah	Glenn Pianka	Montville	-
Colchester	-	New London	Michael Passero
East Lyme	Dan Cunningham	Norwich	John Salomone
Franklin	Alden Miner	North Stonington	Bob Carlson
Griswold	-	Preston	-
Jewett City	-	Salem	-
City of Groton	Keith Hedrick	Sprague	Cheryl Blanchard
Town of Groton	John Burt	Town of Stonington	Danielle Chesebrough
Lebanon	-	Stonington Borough	Michael Schefers
Ledyard	Fred Allyn	Waterford	Rob Brule
Lisbon	Tom Sparkman	Windham	Tom DeVivo
Military Liaisons:	US Coast Guard Academy: - New London SUBASE: -		
Tribal Affiliates:	Mohegan Tribe: - Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation: -		
CT DOT	Jennifer Pacacha		

SCCOG staff: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan. seCTer: Paul Whitescarver. SEAT: Mike Carroll. 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: -. Ledge Light Health District: Jennifer Muggeo. Eversource: -.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Brule called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Mr. Brule led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.

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**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

*If language assistance is needed, please contact SCCOG at 860-889-2324, [office@seccog.org](mailto:office@seccog.org).  
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3. Act on Minutes of May 15th Meeting:

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

4. Treasurer's Report:

Ms. Kennedy noted continuing efforts to submit documentation to DEMHS for reimbursement of grant funding.

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

5. Communications: Ms. Kennedy noted two items of correspondence, from CTDOT (Arrow Transportation performance metrics) and CEN Connect (regarding fiber program).

6. Public Comment: None.

7. Guest Speaker: Cathy Zall, New London Homeless Hospitality Center; Avery Lenhart, Windham Region No Freeze Project: Ms. Zall provided an update on the status of homeless needs and services. She has seen needs change over the last four years to include more need from working people, seniors, and others with fixed incomes who are unable to access housing. There is a need to build market rate housing as well as affordable housing to decrease competition over the scarce housing supply. Landlords are also tightening entry requirements. People are staying in shelter longer and there is a growing wait list. Residents include elderly with health needs; 20% are over 60 and some are in their 80s. NLHHC is pursuing multiple strategies with a focus on diversion (helping people find other housing, which can include a security deposit or helping with rent). Shared housing is also necessary to address need (roommates). She also noted that residential care homes are underutilized (for seniors). Ms. Lenhart noted that their shelter is overcrowded with a long wait list. She has seen an increase in unhoused individuals working full time, that are elderly, or have medical needs. SCCOG members commented or asked about the role of nimbyism, gentrification and living wage. Ms. Zall stated she would forward CCEH's legislative agenda next year for SCCOG's review. Ms. Lenhart also discussed the challenge of helping individuals who might find housing but for the lack of a vehicle or transit service. Institutional buyers and college students (priced out of dorms) also put pressure on the market.

8. Committee and Liaison Reports

A) Executive Committee:

- i) Ms. Kennedy noted that minutes are provided in the packet and that the Executive Committee voted to advance several items.
- ii) Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program.

Ms. Kennedy reviewed the status of applications for the latest round of LOTCIP funding, noting that three projects appear eligible under the program but one was not due to the road classification.

MOTION: To approve the three eligible projects to proceed to full application (DeVivo, Burt).

- B) Legislative Committee: Mr. Allyn suggested reviewing workforce housing issues for next session.
- C) Tribal Liaison Representatives: -
- D) Military Command Representatives: -
- E) Congressional Office Report: Ms. McBride reported that the NDAA is headed to the Senate for approval. Mr. Carver mentioned several activities related to AUKUS and ticket “junk” fees. Ms. McBride noted activities related to mental health and job training. Decisions on congressionally directed spending projects are pending.
- F) seCTer: Mr. Whitescarver seconded the importance of producing more housing and spoke about his experience as a zoning commissioner in Ledyard. He said he would come to other commissions to speak about the need for housing on behalf of seCTer. He met with a group in Westerly regarding Shoreline East.
- G) Eastern CT Tourism District: -
- H) SEAT: Mr. Carroll noted ridership is growing. New/expanded services has begun in Groton, Stonington, and Waterford/East Lyme. SEAT is working on the bus stop conversion.
- I) Regional Water Committee: -
- J) Regional Emergency Planning Team: Ms. Kennedy noted that only 20 of 43 municipalities have returned their MOAs, due August 1<sup>st</sup>. She will re-send the documents to the relevant towns.
- K) Regional Human Services Coordinating Council: -
- 9. SE CT Cultural Coalition: Ms. Mathiasen reminded guests of the new community calendar which is compatible with social media platforms.
- 10. Health Districts: Ms. Muggeo mentioned the upcoming heat wave and that the Department of Housing has a grant from the CDC to assess the impact of extreme heat. Regarding housing, the Health Districts get many calls from people in substandard housing but are worried about retaliation from landlords. There is still concern about H5N1. Ms. Muggeo was asked about an uptick in Covid; and mentioned that LLHD asks their own workers to remain home until they test negative. She asked members to repost social media announcements.

11. Solid Waste Committee: The committee will meet next on July 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:30.

12. New Business:

A) TIP Amendments

Ms. Kennedy described the amendments, which are transit operating funds and guiderail replacement in Norwich.

MOTION: To approve the TIP amendments (Sparkman, DeVivo). So voted unanimously.

13. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Kennedy highlighted items from the Executive Director's report, including

- SECHA Housing Tour June 21<sup>st</sup>
- Open Space Plan Draft being reviewed by town planners; presentation to SCCOG in July.
- SCCOG staff (Zincavage) reviewing potential grant re Extreme Heat
- SCCOG staff (Zincavage) preparing grant application for defense funds for community planning.

14. Old Business: None.

15. Next Meeting:

July 17, 2024- potentially at alternative location due to construction at SCCOG.

16. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting (Schefers, Hedrick). So voted unanimously. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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