



DEMHS Region 4 Recovery Steering Committee (RESF # 14)

Ex-Officio Coordination

Name	Organization	Contact Information	Sector Represented
Mike Caplet	DEMHS – Regional Coordinator	Mike.caplet@ct.gov 860-250-3449	CT Division of Emergency Management & Homeland Security
Mike Licata	Regional Long-Term Recovery Coordinator	mlicata@windhamct.com 860-208-3787	Region 4 Regional Emergency Planning Team

Steering Committee Members

Name	Organization	Contact Information	RSF Represented
Allan Cahill (Co-Chair)	Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG)	firstselectman@hamptonct.org 860-942-9542	Community Planning & Capacity Building
<i>Chairman, Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments; First Selectman, Hampton, and owner of a dairy farm.</i>			
John Filchak	Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG)	John.filchak@neccog.org 860-942-3860	Community Planning & Capacity Building
<i>Mr. Filchak is the Executive Director for the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments - position he has held since 1995. Prior to this he served as Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture for Connecticut - appointed by Governor Lowell P. Weicker. Mr. Filchak is an acknowledged leader in the development and advocacy of regionalism in Connecticut - serving on the Municipal Opportunities and Efficiencies Commission (MORE) and presently on the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR - appointed by the Senate President Pro Temp). He also served on the Transitions Teams for both Governor Malloy and the Shared Services Committee for Governor Lamont. Mr. Filchak attended the University of Montana for his undergraduate and graduate work.</i>			
Mark Nickerson (Co-Chair)	Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG)	mnickerson@eltownhall.com 860-460-0098	Community Planning & Capacity Building
<i>Chairman, Southeastern CT Council of Governments (SCCOG); First Selectman, East Lyme, and owner of small business.</i>			
James S. Butler	Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG)	jbutler@seccog.org 860-889-2324	Community Planning & Capacity Building
<i>Executive Director, Southeastern CT Council of Governments (SCCOG); 45 years of professional planning experience, including serving as Planning Director for Town of Groton and Town of East Lyme. James holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science/Urban Planning from Rutgers University and a Masters of Public Administration from the University of New Haven; He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners; and is in his 22nd year serving as Executive Director of the SCCOG.</i>			
James V. Bellano	Eastern Connecticut Tourism Board	jbellano@windhamct.com 860-207-3599	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources
<i>James Bellano serves as the Chair of the Eastern Connecticut Tourism Board. Since 2015 he has served as Director of Economic Development for the Town of Windham. Previously, Jim worked as the Director of Economic Development for the City of Danbury. Prior to his career in economic development, Mr. Bellano practiced law in Westchester County, New York. Jim received his Juris Doctor from the Quinnipiac University School of Law and a Master's of Science in Social Science from Long Island University.</i>			



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Chuck Bunnell	Mohegan Tribal Nation	cbunnell@moheganmail.com 860-862-6120	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources
<p><i>Chuck now serves as the Chief of Staff to the Mohegan Tribal Nation where his work involves all aspects of Tribal government. In his role he serves as one of the senior executives to the Mohegan Tribe of Indians' Tribal Council, owners and/or operators of several integrated resorts in the United States, Canada, and Korea. Prior to his work with the Mohegan Tribe, Chuck served on the staff of United States Senator Chris Dodd, Chairman of the Senate Banking Committee and former Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Chuck represents the tribe and business at several local, state and national organizations including the local Council of Governments and Chamber of Commerce Board. Chuck is very involved in several non-profit Boards of Directors concentrating on health and children as well as the Advisory Board of the Thomas J. Dodd Archives Center at UConn. Chuck is married with four children and six grandchildren. He resides in Waterford, Connecticut with his wife Eva.</i></p>			
Wendy Bury	Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition	w.bury@culturesect.org 860-448-5135	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources
<p><i>Since 2014, Wendy has served as the founding Executive Director of the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition. The nonprofit organization's mission is to improve the economy, vitality and quality of life in Southeastern Connecticut by supporting the arts, cultural and creative community. The Cultural Coalition is part of a statewide network - one of nine regional arts and cultural organizations - that support the creative economy and the CT Office of the Arts and the Department of Economic & Community Development through a public-private partnership. The Cultural Coalition provides programs and services to, and advocates for, more than 500 partners, including museums, performing arts organizations, artists, historical societies, economic development agencies, tribal and military entities, municipalities and creative businesses. Currently, Wendy serves on the board of the CT Arts Alliance and is Co-Chair of its Policy & Issues Committee. She is a Trustee of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT, Southeastern CT Enterprise Region (seCTer) board member, and Mitchell College President's Advisory Council member. She served as Co-Chair of the Lamont/Bysiewicz Transition Arts, Culture and Tourism Policy Committee.</i></p>			
Maryam Elahi	Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut	maryam@cfect.org 860-442-3572	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources / Health & Social Services
<p><i>Maryam Elahi is President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut. Prior to joining the Foundation in 2013 and for more than 25 years, she served in positions of leadership in the international human rights community as an advocate, teacher, and grant-maker. Maryam was the director of the International Women's Program at the Open Society Foundations in NYC from 2007 until 2013. She had previously been the founding director of the Human Rights Program at Trinity College in Hartford, establishing the first undergraduate college Human Rights Program in the United States. Maryam is a graduate of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, Boston College Law School, and Williams College. She currently serves on the boards of Connecticut Public and Connecticut Council on Philanthropy. She is also on the advisory boards of numerous international human rights organizations.</i></p>			
Mark W. Hill	Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board	hillm@ewib.org 860-859-4100 x123	Economic
<p><i>Mark Hill is the incoming President & Chief Executive Officer of the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board (EWIB). EWIB is the oversight body recognized under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the coordination of workforce development services in the 41-town Eastern CT region. Mark has a ~30 year record of leadership in both the private sector and workforce development policy. His private sector experience includes Connecticut companies like General Dynamics' Electric Boat, Pfizer and Aetna, where he held several leadership roles in management, operations, and finance during that tenure. In 2014, Mark joined EWIB to manage the operating performance of the organization. He led the development of the award-winning Eastern CT Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative (MPI), a nationally-recognized job skills training program managed in partnership with more than twenty state and regional partners. The MPI has successfully raised the baseline of the labor force's competencies to align with skills in-demand by the manufacturing industry. Since its inception in 2016, the MPI has resulted in more than 1,550 job placements in the region and is being duplicated across the state of Connecticut. It was also recognized by the 550-member National Association of Workforce Boards for outstanding achievement in partnership.</i></p>			



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Dr. Kyle B. McClaine, MD	Hartford Healthcare, William W. Backus Hospital	kyle.mcclaine@hhchealth.org 860-892-2794	Health & Social Services
<p><i>Dr. Kyle McClaine has served as an Emergency Physician at The William W. Backus Hospital since July of 2000. He has been the EMS Medical Director since 2004 and the Chief of Emergency Medicine for the Backus and Plainfield EDs since 2018. Dr McClaine serves as the Medical Director for the Eastern CT Emergency Medical Services Council, is Co-Chairman of the CT EMS Medical Advisory Committee, and is a gubernatorial appointee to the EMS Advisory Board. Dr McClaine has been involved in EMS since college (State University of New York at Buffalo), working as an EMT for the volunteer college and 2 commercial intercity ambulance services. During medical school (Upstate Medical University, Syracuse NY) and residency (Brown University, Rhode Island Hospital), he participated in EMS summer fellowships, EMS research, and was active in RI-1 Disaster Medical Assistance Team as a medical officer. Dr McClaine is certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine, and is a Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians. He is a member of the National Association of EMS Physicians.</i></p>			
Alejandro Melendez-Cooper	Hispanic Alliance of Southeastern Connecticut	alejandro@hispanicalliance.net 860-460-6135	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources / Health & Social Services
<p><i>Born In Peru and living in Connecticut, Alejandro Melendez-Cooper brings rich experience and deep insight to his every undertaking. With a background in Arts, Education and Business he has health positions at Centro de la Comunidad, Connecticut College, Leadership, Education and Athletics in Partnership (LEAP), OIC, New London Community Health Center and The Hispanic Alliance. He has served on numerous organization's Board of Directors, Founded the America Project Partnership (TAPP) as well as the Hispanic Alliance of SECT. Alejandro has diverse experience in the development entrepreneurial business and intense interest in negotiation, communication and conflict management, He has extensive training in family reunification and preservation. He is currently applying his many skills as the President and CEO of the Hispanic Alliance. In his spare time he enjoy painting and cooking for his family and friends.</i></p>			
Deborah Monahan (Co-Chair)	Thames Valley Council for Community Action	dmonahan@tvcca.org 860-425-6503	Economic / Health & Social Services
<p><i>Since 1998, Deb has served as the Executive Director of TVCCA, where she is responsible for the overall administration of all the agency's programs and operations and also directs the development of community resources. TVCCA is a private, non-profit corporation that provides a broad range of human services to the region's economically and otherwise disadvantaged citizens of New London County. In all, 28 programs reach more than 24,000 eligible clients annually, and provide more than \$27 million of services. She also serves as the Co-Chair of the SCCOG Regional Human Services Coordinating Council (RHSCC). She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut. In 2008, Deb was honored by United Community and Family Services as the third recipient of the Palmer Davies Award. In 2011, she was recognized by the Norwich Chapter of the NAACP for community leadership.</i></p>			
Dr. Elsa Nuñez	Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU)	nunez@easternct.edu 860-465-4484	Economic / Community Planning & Capacity Building
<p><i>Dr. Elsa Nunez serves as the President of Eastern Connecticut State University. Prior to joining the Eastern community, Dr. Núñez served as Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs in the University of Maine System from 2003 to 2006. Before her appointment in Maine, Dr. Núñez served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Lesley University. From 1993 to 1997 she was University Dean for Academic Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at the City University of New York. Dr. Núñez also served as Associate Dean of Faculty at the College of Staten Island of The City University of New York from 1986 to 1992. Dr. Núñez received her B.A. from Montclair State College, an M.A. from Fairleigh Dickinson University and an Ed.D. in Language Education from Rutgers University. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, Dr. Núñez is married to Dr. Richard Freeland, former president of Northeastern University and former Commissioner of Higher Education for the State of Massachusetts.</i></p>			
Mark Oefinger	Southeastern Connecticut Enterprise Region	markoefinger@yahoo.com 860-326-1315	Economic / Housing
<p><i>Mark currently serves as the Chairman of the Southeast Connecticut Enterprise Region, after more than 40 years of municipal government and private sector experience, with responsibilities ranging from budgeting and personnel management to long-range community development and planning. From 2002 through 2019, Mark served as the Town Manager for the Town of Groton. He previously served as President of the Eastern Connecticut Housing Opportunities Inc. He also sits as a member of the Board of Directors for Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance. Mark holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Hartford, and a Master's Degree of Community Planning from the University of Rhode Island.</i></p>			



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Leah Ralls	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	Leah.ralls@gmail.com 860-230-6911	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources / Health & Social Services
<p><i>Leah Ralls serves as the Windham/Willimantic Branch President of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 2017. She also currently serves as a Commissioner on the Charter Revision Commission for the Town of Windham. Leah has served as an active social worker for 30 years, spending the last 20 years working for the Public Defender's Office for the Danielson Superior Courthouse. Leah holds a Bachelor's Degree from the Springfield College School of Human Services.</i></p>			
Tony Sheridan	Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut	tsheridan@chamberect.com 860-701-9113	Economic
<p><i>Tony Sheridan is President & CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT, one of the largest business, tourism, and community advocacy groups in the state. Tony emigrated from Ireland to New London at age 19 and became a licensed plumber and pipe fitter. He graduated from Connecticut College with a BA in Urban Affairs and completed his MA in Organizational Psychology at the University of New Haven. He went on to work for the Town of Waterford as Development Coordinator and Connecticut College as Director of Human Resources. Tony was elected to one term as minority Selectman of Waterford in 1989 and subsequently was elected First Selectman for four terms. Since 2004, Tony has served as President & CEO of the Chamber. In this position, he helps lead numerous efforts to support the local business community as well as enhance the economic vitality of the eastern CT region as a whole. He also chairs numerous boards and agencies, including the Connecticut Airport Authority, Connecticut Metro Chambers of Commerce, and the Waterford Police Commission.</i></p>			
Bishop Benjamin K. Watts	Shiloh Baptist Church of New London	rbkw85@gmail.com 860-867-6303	Economic / Natural & Cultural Resources / Health & Social Services
<p><i>Bishop Benjamin K. Watts is the Senior Pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church of New London, Connecticut, where he has served for over 30 years. Under his leadership, the church ministry has grown and serves the spiritual, cultural, and physical needs of its members and the community. Reverend Watts was elevated and consecrated to the sacred office of Bishop by the International Bishops Conference in 2008. He is a member of the Churches Covered and Connected in Covenant (CCCC). Bishop Watts is a 1995 graduate of Hartford Seminary where he received the Doctor of Ministry degree with distinction upon submission of his thesis project entitled, "Understanding and Using Africentrism in Strengthening and Revitalizing the Mission of the Black Church: Analysis and Models." Dr. Watts did his undergraduate work at Selma University and Alabama A & M University, receiving a BA in Psychology with a minor in Philosophy. He is a member of the Shiloh Development Corporation and is a past member of various boards of directors including United Way, Lawrence & Memorial Hospital, and the Hartford Seminary. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees at Connecticut College in New London from 1994 to 1999. He is a Past President of the Connecticut State Missionary Baptist Convention having served from 2004 to 2007. He is a faculty associate at Hartford Seminary in Religion and Community Life, where he is also director of the Black Ministries Program (BMP) and Programa de Ministerios Hispanos (PMH). He is a member of the New London Chapter NAACP and is the Past President of the Southeastern Connecticut Ministerial Alliance.</i></p>			
Reverend Catherine Zall	Homeless Hospitality Center, New London	czall@snet.net 860-227-2188	Health & Social Services / Housing
<p><i>Catherine Zall currently serves as the Executive Director of the New London Homeless Hospitality Center (NLHHC) in New London Connecticut. She also serves as Co-Pastor of the First Congregational Church in New London. Before beginning her work in New London, she served in a variety of positions including almost ten years working as the Deputy Commissioner managing New York City's Welfare to Work program and five years as an Associate Minister at the First Congregational Church in Old Lyme. Ms. Zall has an undergraduate degree from Brown University, a Masters of Business Administration degree from the Stern School of Business at New York University and a Master of Divinity degree from the Yale Divinity School. She has two grown children and lives in New London.</i></p>			