

# DEMHS REGION 4 REGIONAL RECOVERY STEERING COMMITTEE

Community Planning & Capacity Building/Infrastructure Working Group  
Economic/Natural & Cultural Resources Working Group  
Health & Social Services/Housing Working Group

April 29, 2021

Steering Committee  
Meeting Summary

**Members Present:** Mayor Fred Allyn, Town of Ledyard/SCCOG Chairman (Co-Chair); Deborah Monahan, TVCCA (Co-Chair); Tracey Hanson, Town of Voluntown/NECCOG Chairman (Co-Chair); Jim Butler, Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments; Maryam Elahi, Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut; John Filchak, Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments; Reverend Benjamin Watts, Shiloh Baptist Church of New London; Reverend Catherine Zall, New London Homeless Hospitality Center; Tony Sheridan, Eastern CT Chamber of Commerce; Wendy Bury, Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition; Nilda Havrilla, Connecticut Legal Services; Jim Bellano, Town of Windham

**Others Present:** SCCOG: Sam Alexander, Carly Holzschuh, Amanda Kennedy; DEMHS: Darlene Richards, Mike Caplet.

## 1. Call to Order

Deborah Monahan called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.

## 2. Roll Call

Twelve members were in attendance.

## 3. Review of Meeting Notes from 2/25/21

Ms. Monahan asked for any corrections to the March meeting summary.

## 4. Recovery Update- Mike Caplet

Mr. Caplet shared that there was a lot happening on the funding side of things right now in determining how ARPA funds will be used by the State and municipalities. The Regional Recovery activities continue to focus on addressing unmet needs.

## 5. Status of Reported Unmet Needs

Ms. Kennedy shared the status of unmet needs that have been reported from Region 4. In most cases, they have been referred to a specific agency or program for follow-up. Some have been

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referred to the State Recovery Committee. Additional information and programs have been rolled out that address several of the reported unmet needs (housing, vaccine access, broadband).

## 6. March Working Group Meetings- Issues Raises

Sam Alexander reported on last week's Community Planning, Capacity Building & Implementation meeting, which included a briefing by CT Broadband Coordinator Burt Cohen. The FCC will soon rollout a broadband subsidy program (Emergency Broadband Benefit). Ms. Kennedy added that Gov. Lamont has proposed allocating \$10 million of ARPA funding toward broadband planning and installation. Mr. Filchak reported on the Health & Social Service/Housing, and Economic/Natural and Cultural Resources working group meetings. Mental Health continues to be raised as a critical issue, which requires both new funding and staff capacity. Ms. Elahi urged the group to consider what system change needs to happen to leverage new funding for the best impact. Ms. Monahan encouraged keeping the good aspects of COVID response (teleprogramming better meets certain needs) and asked whether some ARPA response activities should be permanent. Members discuss measuring impact through cost-benefit analysis as well as a continued equity lens.

## 7. New Issues Raised

Mr. Filchak and Mr. Sheridan raised the issue of needing to invest in the region's transit system, especially Shoreline East. Mr. Butler mentioned that CT DOT would be briefing SCCOG next week on the results of a recent study of Shoreline East.

## 8. Other

Ms. Havrilla introduced Connecticut Legal Services, a non-profit legal assistance organization. They have offices in New London and Windham as well as elsewhere across the state. Their largest practice areas are housing and family. They are working to assist people in obtaining UniteCT funding. Her concern is that there will be a flood of evictions after the federal moratorium ends on June 30. Their Windham office is not staffed full-time to cover housing needs.

## 9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting will be Thursday, May 27<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM. Ms. Elahi proposed a special meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM to focus on systems change. Ms. Bury asked if there were any resources to refer to. Ms. Kennedy said she would send out the GRI regional assessment which can provide a starting point for conversation.

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## 10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM.

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