

MINUTES OF 12/16/20 MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
HELD VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Mark Nickerson, East Lyme; Charles Grant, Franklin; Todd Babbitt, Griswold; Keith Hedrick, City of Groton; Kevin Cwikla, Lebanon; Fred Allyn, III, Ledyard; Tom Sparkman, Lisbon; Ron McDaniel, Montville; Michael Passero, New London; Mike Uργο, North Stonington; Sandra Allyn-Gauthier, Preston; Kevin Lyden, Salem; Cheryl Blanchard, Sprague; Jeff Callahan, Borough of Stonington; Danielle Chesebrough, Town of Stonington; Rob Brule, Waterford. Council Alternates: John Burt, Town of Groton; John Salomone, Norwich. Tribal Liaison: Rodney Butler, Robert Hayward, Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. Military Liaison: Captain Todd Moore, Adam Wright, U.S. Naval SUBASE; RADM William Kelly, USCGA. Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan, Wendy Leclair, Liz Crutcher, Just LaFountain, Carly Holzschuh, Sam Alexander. Other: Deborah Monahan, TVCCA; Mike Carroll, SEAT; Grayson Wright, CTDOT; Erik Shortell, FHWA; Ayanti Grant, Congressman Courtney's office; Brianna DeVivo, Senator Murphy's office; Ellen Graham, Senator Blumenthal's office; Ayanti Grant, Congressman Courtney's office; Nancy Cowser, Sheri Cote, seCTer; Wendy Bury, SE CT Cultural Coalition; Randy Collins, CCM; Catherine Young, CAA; Patrick McCormack, Uncas Health District; Steve Mansfield, Ledge Light Health District; Francesca Provenzano, CT DPH; Amanda Durante; Dominick Celtruda.

1. Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Act on Minutes of 11/18/20:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 11/18/20 (Sparkman, McDaniel). So voted unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

MOTION: To approve the December Treasurer's Report (McDaniel, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

5. Communications: The Executive Director highlighted three letter in the Communications section of the agenda packet: A letter dated November 27th form Kim Lesay at CTDOT notifying that Norwich's New London Turnpike Complete Streets project had been selected for TAP funding; a letter dated November 30th form FTA's Peter Butler and FHWA's Amy Jackson-Grove certifying SCCOG's Transportation Planning Process; and a December 3rd letter from EDA's L. Cruz-Carnall denying CARES Act funding to the state and its nine COGs.

6. Public Comment: None.

7. COVID-19 Response Discussion:

Mr. Mansfield reported on the Vaccine Access Management System (VAMS); and discussed eligible persons who will receive the vaccine in Phase 1A.

Mr. McCormack discussed other information pertaining to upcoming vaccinations.

Mr. Lyden thanked Mr. Mansfield and Mr. McCormack for all their work keeping the region's municipalities informed.

Mr. Allyn asked if there is an agreed upon level of vaccination to achieve a safe and effective protection of the population.

Ms. Provenzano said the goal is to vaccinate 70% of the population in 12 months.

Additional questions and answers followed.

Mr. Mansfield addressed enforcement of the Governor's Executive Orders and sector rules.

Mr. McCormack said that the health districts are still waiting for guidance on changes to quarantine rules from the Governor's office.

Captain Moore briefly commented on the DOD's vaccination plan, anticipated to begin before the end of the year.

8. Committee and Liaison Reports:

A. Executive Committee

1) DEMHS Region 4 Regional Recovery Steering Committee – Update

The Executive Director reported that he recently learned that the EDA grant application submitted by the State and the state's nine Councils of Government had been denied. He said the COGs were looking to the Governor's office to take the lead on appealing this denial and on the submitting of a new application. He said this application, had it been funded, would have provided SCCOG a little over \$320,000 over a two-year period to pay for the COVID-19 recovery work that the COGs have been tasked to perform.

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2) JLUS Parking Management Plan - Update

The Executive Director provided a brief update on the work of the SCCOG's consultant Kimley-Horn. The consultant should have a web site up for the study which will allow for public access to information being prepared and to provide on input at this study progresses.

3) FY 2019-20 Audit

The Executive Director reported on the Audit, which he described as a clean audit with no findings of deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses. He highlighted as key points the fact that the SCCOG Reserve Fund has grown by \$91,212 this past year, and the new BF&O rate is now 104.031%, which is more than 3% lower than last year. He commended the Auditors for their work in making the draft Audit available for review and action by the Executive Committee prior to this meeting.

MOTION: To accept the FY 2019-2020 Audit (Lyden, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

4) Proposed FY 2022 Operating Budget

The Executive Director summarized both the anticipated revenues and proposed expenditures for next fiscal year. He reported on the status of this year's OPM Regional Service Grant (RSG), and what the COGs might expect from this source of revenue next year. He stated that the budget anticipates receiving \$235,000 more than proposed expenditures, a figure which is unallocated due to the uncertainty of two possible grant sources and how these funds will be used if received, some of which would be returned to the SCCOG's Reserve Fund. He noted that staff agreed to a change in its health insurance plan which will save the SCCOG 13.1% from last year's plan, and which is 19.94% less than the cost of the same plan as proposed by Anthem BC/BS. He said the Executive Committee has agreed to his recommendation that staff be awarded a 3% increase in salary, and that this figure was included in the expenditure side of the budget. Proposed SCCOG member dues will remain at \$0.55 per capita.

MOTION: To approve of the proposed FY 2022 budget of \$1,722,118 budget (Lyden, Grant).

Mr. Grant commended what he called the wonderful planner service provided by the SCCOG.

Mr. Hedrick also commended the SCCOG staff.

The motion was then voted upon and unanimously adopted.

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5) Proposed FY 2022 Work Program

The Executive Director summarized the proposed work program, noting that it was based on anticipated funding.

MOTION: To adopt the proposed FY 2022 Work Program (Urgo, Burt). So voted unanimously.

6) Proposed 2021 Schedule of Meetings

MOTION: To adopt the proposed 2021 Schedule of Meetings (Lyden, Grant). So voted unanimously.

7) Bank Authorizing Resolution No. 20-8

MOTION: To adopt Bank Authorizing Resolution No. 20-8 (Lyden, Grant). So voted unanimously.

8) FY 2020 Annual Report

MOTION: To adopt the FY 2020 Annual Report (Sparkman, Grant). So voted unanimously.

- B. Legislative Committee/Legislative Update – Mr. Grant volunteered to serve as Chairman again. Chairman Nickerson thanked Mr. Grant and said he would accept his volunteering for this position. Mr. Grant said he would like to hold a legislative Committee meeting the first week of January.
- C. Tribal Liaison Representatives – MPTN Chairman Butler expressed appreciation to all municipal leaders.
- D. Military Command Representatives – No additional report.
- E. Congressional Office Report – Ms. Grant from Congressman Courtney's office and Ms. DeVivo from Senator Murphy' office reported on negotiations on the COVID Relief bill.

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F. seCTer – Ms. Cowser updated the SCCOG about seCTer’s current activities including working with EDA on 14 projects; and CARES Act funding available for lending.

G. Eastern CT Tourism District – No report.

H. SEAT – Mr. Carroll reported that ridership was down in November to about 60% of normal; and said that after the first of the year, SEAT will embark on a mobile ticketing.

I. SCCOG Regional Water Committee – No report.

J. Regional Emergency Planning Team – Mr. Sparkman reported that MOAs and Resolutions are still coming in, and thanked the Executive Director in chasing down the late ones.

K. Regional Human Services Coordinating Council – The Executive Director reported that the SCCOG Deputy Director was working with members of the RHSCC on non-profit board recruitment and development.

L. SE CT Cultural Coalition – Ms. Bury reported that she is working with the City of New London which is poised to become the region’s first cultural districts.

9. Executive Director’s Report

The Executive Director introduced and thanked the SCCOG staff for their efforts this past year. He reported on EDA’s denial of the statewide application on behalf of all nine COGs for funding to do recovery work as requested by the State, and he spoke to three points that might form the basis for an appeal (stated in Executive Director written report dated 12/8/20).

10. Old Business – None.

11. New Business

A. Nominating Committee Report

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Mr. Sparkman stated that the report of the Nominating Committee was contained in the agenda packet. He said that he, along with Nominating Committee members Ron McDaniel and Kevin Lyden, wished to nominate Fred Allyn III as Chair, Mike Uργο as Vice Chair, Keith Hedrick as Treasurer, Danielle Chesebrough as Secretary, and Tom Sparkman and Jim Rivers as Representatives-at-Large.

MOTION: To elect the slate of officers and Executive Committee as recommended by the Nominating Committee (McDaniel, Nickerson). So voted unanimously.

Mr. Allyn assumed the chair of the meeting, and thanked Mr. Nickerson for his leadership this past year. The Executive Director showed a plaque that will be presented to Mr. Nickerson, and the SCCOG members present virtually applauded Mr. Nickerson.

12. Next Meeting

The Chairman stated that a COVID-19 response call be held in three weeks on December 2nd, and that the next regularly scheduled meeting would be held on January 3rd, and the next regular meeting will be on January 20th.

13. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:54 a.m. (Grant, Nickerson). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Chesebrough, Secretary

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