

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 4, 2022 MEETING OF THE SCCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD VIA ZOOM

PRESENT:

Fred Allyn II (Chairman), Rob Brule, Keith Hedrick, John Salomone, Danielle Chesebrough.
Staff: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan.

Chairman Allyn opened the meeting at 8:33 AM.

1. STIP/TIP Amendments

Executive Director Kennedy reviewed the four TIP amendments submitted to SCCOG for its endorsement. The projects were 1) Traffic Control Signals Replacement, 2) Replace bridge crossing Route 32 in Franklin, 3) Replace highway illumination at various locations, and 4) Transportation Alternatives funding. SCCOG staff has reviewed the projects for any conflicts, has outstanding questions on request 4, and recommends the first three projects for approval. Chairman Allyn asked whether the highway illumination would include dark sky shielding. Ms. Rattan stated that they would match current CT DOT specs (with some shielding), but are LED.

MOTION: To recommend SCCOG approval of the FY 2021 STIP/TIP Amendments to the full SCCOG (Chesebrough, Brule). So voted unanimously.

2. SCCOG Bylaw Amendments

Chairman Allyn reviewed the proposed changes to the bylaws: 1) membership changes to comply with federal regulations for metropolitan planning organizations (page 3), 2) responsibility to approve consultants moving from full SCCOG board to Executive Committee (page 7), and the addition of Senior Advisor as a SCCOG staff person authorized to sign checks in the absence of the Executive Director (page 9). Ms. Kennedy explained that MPOs serving Transportation Management Areas (regions with more than 200,000 people) have been required to include membership representing the State and major providers of Public Transportation since at least 2016 and that this deficiency has been noted in multiple FHWA recertification processes as an area to address. Regulations require that the provider of public transportation have voting privileges but not the representative of the State, and the proposed

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bylaws state that the State representative will be non-voting but that the SEAT representative will have voting privileges on MPO matters (transportation plans and projects receiving US DOT funding).

MOTION: To recommend the changes to the Bylaws as presented (Chesebrough, Brule). So voted unanimously.

Ms. Kennedy noted that the Bylaws require proposed changes to be submitted to the full Board twice before they can be adopted.

3. Change to Asset Capitalization Limit

Ms. Kennedy presented a request to change SCCOG's accounting policies to track capital assets over \$5,000 instead of over \$1,000 as has been done for many years. This change was recommended by both SCCOG's accountant and auditor. Mr. Brule asked what items are on the asset list and how dispositions are handled. Ms. Kennedy stated items include computer equipment as well as building improvements and that items are depreciated each year until they have less than \$1,000 in value or until SCCOG files documentation to otherwise dispose of them. Chairman Allyn recalled the recent disposition of a large-format printer.

MOTION: To recommend adopting a \$5,000 capitalization threshold instead of a \$1,000 capitalization threshold. (Salomone, Brule). So voted unanimously.

4. Open Space Plan

Ms. Kennedy briefed the Board on SCCOG's work exploring the potential development of a Regional Open Space Plan. SCCOG staff had been approached by Avalonia last year regarding SCCOG's potential involvement in writing a regional open space plan, and with the recent addition of Kyle Casiglio to the staff now has the capacity to proceed. The plan would supplement the SCCOG's Regional Plan of Conservation and Development, pull together various data sources regarding preserved an open space, and provide a resource for municipalities and other stakeholders seeking funding for land preservation. The project would take about a year to complete given necessary opportunities for public engagement. Ms. Kennedy asked for questions and feedback prior to giving the project a green light to proceed. Chairman Allyn stated it was a good project and other members concurred.

5. Speaker Requests

Ms. Kennedy noted that she had not received a request from seCTer's Executive Director to speak at the October SCCOG meeting so would confirm the speakers from the State Inspector General's office related to the Police Accountability Law responses roles.

6. Future Meeting Logistics

Chairman Allyn noted that the next Executive Committee meeting (November 1) conflicts with the CCM Conference and asked to reschedule the meeting to Monday, November 7th. Members agreed. Regarding full SCCOG board meetings, Ms. Kennedy noted that she had received two requests after the last meeting, the first for the ability to attend meetings remotely, and the second for an extension of the time before SEAT meetings to allow for more information conversations. Members considered various options. Ms. Kennedy will request a ten minute break between SCCOG and SEAT meetings.

7. Letter regarding Fare-Free Transit

Ms. Kennedy asked that this item be added to the agenda. Ms. Kennedy stated that SEAT's Board will be sending a letter to the State requesting that fare-free transit continue after November, and has asked for SCCOG's Board to do the same. Ms. Kennedy mentioned that SEAT had run two weeks of the New London micro transit with fares that shows a dramatic increase in ridership without fares, and there is also savings related to not maintaining fare collection processes. Chairman Allyn said he would like to know where funding would come from to cover lost revenue and asked for information regarding fare collection expenses. Ms. Rattan discussed the maintenance/operations burden of fare collection systems. Ms. Chesebrough clarified that the request was that if fare free continues, micro-transit be included in the program. With no motion to recommend the letter, SCCOG staff will continue to seek information regarding this request for potential future consideration.

11. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting (Salomone, Brule).

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda E. Kennedy, Executive Director