

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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Minutes of the October 19, 202 Meeting of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments

Held at SCCOG, 5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich, CT

PRESENT:

Bozrah	Glenn Pianka	Montville	-
Colchester	-	New London	Michael Passero
East Lyme	-	Norwich	-
Franklin	Charles Grant	North Stonington	Bob Carlson
Griswold	-	Preston	Sandra Allyn-Gauthier
Jewett City	-	Salem	-
City of Groton	-	Sprague	Cheryl Blanchard
Town of Groton	-	Town of Stonington	Danielle Chesebrough
Lebanon	Kevin Cwikla	Stonington Borough	Jeff Callahan
Ledyard	Fred Allyn, III (Chairman)	Waterford	-
Lisbon	Tom Sparkman	Windham	Jim Rivers
Military Liaisons:	US Coast Guard Academy: LCDR Samuel Andriessen New London SUBASE: Steve Sadlowski		
Tribal Affiliates:	Mohegan Tribe: - Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation: Bob Hayward		

SCCOG staff: Amanda Kennedy, James Butler, Kate Rattan. seCTER: Paul Whitescarver. CT DOT: Jennifer Pacacha. Eversource: Teresa Jackman, Jaquan Samuels. Office of Sen. Murphy: Erin McBride. Office of Rep. Courtney: Ayanti Grant. TVCCA: Deb Monahan. SE CT Cultural Coalition: Wendy Bury.

1. Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Act on Minutes of September 21, 2022 Meeting:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 9/21/2022 (Cwikla, Grant). Executive Director Kennedy noted one correction to be made. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Ms. Kennedy reported that DEMHS continues to work to improve their reimbursement rate, and has filled open positions and signed a contract with a payment management system vendor.

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

5. Communications: SCCOG received a copy of Connecticut Natural Gas Corporations' Biennial Forecast of Natural Gas Demand and Supply, as required by law.

6. Public Comment: Ms. Jackman distributed information regarding the process for utility shutoffs and introduced Jaquan Samuels, Community Relations Specialist for portions of eastern Connecticut. Ms. Monahan reminded the SCCOG of utility assistance available through TVCCA (860-425-6681).

7. Guest Speaker: Captain Paul Whitescarver, seCTer's Executive Director, presented a summary of the functions of seCTer and the contents of the upcoming update of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a draft of which is expected to be presented for adoption by the SCCOG in November. Survey respondents were asked to pick the top 3 most pressing economic issues (out of 17 choices), and most frequently selected lack of available workforce, lack of affordable housing, and lack of regional collaboration/efficiencies. Mr. Pianka noted that regionalizing municipal positions could result in large savings especially for smaller municipalities. Mr. Allyn noted that SCCOG's Shared Services study was originally conducted primarily to find opportunities for savings, but now there is extra pressure to find staff to fill open positions. Mr. Whitescarver noted New England's historical legacy of public services being provided at the municipal level.

The CEDS draft will be presented for SCCOG endorsement and will go out for public review prior to being submitted to US EDA.

8. Committee and Liaison Reports

A) Executive Committee

- i) FY 2021 STIP/TIP Amendments: Ms. Kennedy noted that the Executive Committee recommended approval and that this item would be discussed under new business.
- ii) Change to Asset Capitalization Limit: Ms. Kennedy noted that the Executive Committee recommended approval and that this item would be discussed under new business.
- iii) Proposed Amendments to SCCOG Bylaws: Ms. Kennedy noted that the Executive Committee recommended approval and that this item would be discussed under new business.

B) Legislative Committee: Mr. Grant stated that he would be calling a meeting of the legislative committee in early November and asked that individuals interested in participation contact Ms. Kennedy. Mr. Whitescarver asked if non-SCCOG members

could participate and Mr. Grant responded that while not members of the committee, they would be welcome to provide input.

- C) Tribal Liaison Representatives: Mr. Hayward noted that they are tracking Covid activity, which has continued at a low level. He also noted that the Mashantucket-Pequots are interested in regionalism, as they provide services to their small population of tribal members.
- D) Military Command Representatives: Mr. Sadlowski provided a summary of several items including the return of the USS San Juan to SUBASE New London, and the honorary naming of Crystal Lake Drive as Submarine Capital Avenue. LCDR Andriessen noted recent events at the Coast Guard Academy including an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Symposium, homecoming, and a ribbon-cutting for the future Maritime Center of Excellence.
- E) Congressional Office Report: Ms. Grant reported that Representative Courtney's office has been working to find resolution for issues being experienced by municipalities with the federal Sam.gov grants system, and that community project funding from the past round has begun to reach recipients. Ms. McBride stated that Sen. Murphy is working on the FY23 budget as well as IJA implementation.
- F) seCTer: The Annual Meeting is November 10th and all are invited.
- G) Eastern CT Tourism District: No report.
- H) SEAT: No report.
- I) Regional Water Committee: No report.
- J) Regional Emergency Planning Team: Mr. Sparkman encouraged his fellow chief elected officials to attend future meetings of the Regional Emergency Planning Team in person to provide independent review of the budget developed by the Steering Committee, as opposed to sending proxies who are often members of the Steering Committee.
- K) Regional Human Services Coordinating Council: Ms. Monahan reported that the RHSCC will meet on October 21st.
- L) SE CT Cultural Coalition: Ms. Bury stated that the Coalition is still seeking municipal contacts to verify information going in to the Regional Profile currently being prepared. Ms. Bury stated that the Coalition is evaluating how arts have been/can be supported by municipalities pre- and post-COVID/ARPA. Ms. Bury asked if SCCOG could review other relevant organization's legislative agendas and highlight common priorities.

10. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Kennedy stated that the SCCOG is eligible for an additional \$165,000 in federal transportation planning funds this fiscal year as a result of the passage of the recent IJA infrastructure bill, and that she would submit a revised Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to the SCCOG for their approval in November, which is a condition of accessing the funds. SCCOG will need to provide the full non-federal match for these funds (20%) instead

of the usual 10% because the State did not budget for and will not provide their customary 10%. Ms. Kennedy stated that she will also submit a revised FY 2023 budget for SCCOG approval, which will include the additional federal funds.

Ms. Kennedy reported that SCCOG has been working to address staffing shortages in Building Inspection, planning, and zoning enforcement, and was making progress finding a replacement Building Inspector for Ledyard and Preston, as well as providing interim planning and ZEO services in North Stonington and Preston.

Ms. Kennedy noted that SCCOG had begun a project to develop a regional open space plan, and that local planners would be invited to an introductory meeting in the next few weeks.

11. Old Business: None.

12. New Business:

A) FY 2021 STIP/TIP Amendments

Region	FACode	Proj#	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$ (000)	Fed\$ (000)	Sta\$ (000)	Loc\$ (000)	Comments
10,11,13	STPA	0172-0525	VARIOUS	DISTRICT 2	REPLACE TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS	PD	2023	645	645	0	0	NEW PROJECT
10,11,13	STPA	0172-0525	VARIOUS	DISTRICT 2	REPLACE TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS	FD	2024	554	554	0	0	NEW PROJECT
10,11,13	STPA	0172-0525	VARIOUS	DISTRICT 2	REPLACE TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNALS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS	ROW	2024	150	150	0	0	NEW PROJECT
13	STPR	0052-0094	ROUTE 32	FRANKLIN	REPLACE BR 00935 o/ NEW ENGLAND CENTRAL RAILROAD	PD	2023	1,060	848	212	0	NEW PROJECT
13	STPR	0052-0094	ROUTE 32	FRANKLIN	REPLACE BR 00935 o/ NEW ENGLAND CENTRAL RAILROAD	FD	2024	778	622	156	0	NEW PROJECT
13	BRFP	0052-0094	ROUTE 32	FRANKLIN	REPLACE BR 00935 o/ NEW ENGLAND CENTRAL RAILROAD	CON	FYI	15,700	12,560	3,140	0	NEW PROJECT
10,11,13	STPA	0172-0524	VARIOUS	DISTRICT 2	REPLACE HIGHWAY ILLUMINATION AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS	PD	2023	360	288	72	0	NEW PROJECT
10,11,13	STPA	0172-0524	VARIOUS	DISTRICT 2	REPLACE HIGHWAY ILLUMINATION AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS	FD	2023	500	400	100	0	NEW PROJECT

Motion: To approve the proposed TIP Amendments (Grant, Passero). Motion passed unanimously.

B) Change to Asset Capitalization Limit – Action Item

Ms. Kennedy stated that SCCOG's accountant and auditor recommended a change to SCCOG's capitalization limit (value of items that are tracked and depreciated as capital assets) from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Motion: To approve changing the asset capitalization limit from \$1,000 to \$5,000. (Cwikla, Grant). Motion passed unanimously.

C) Proposed amendment to SCCOG Bylaws

Chairman Allyn reviewed the proposed changes to the SCCOG Bylaws, which would provide a non-voting seat on the Board for a representative of CTDOT and a voting seat on the board for a representative of SEAT, as required by federal transportation law. Ms.

Kennedy noted that this requirement has been in place for several years, SCCOG has been cited for non-compliance during its quadrennial review by FHWA several times, and was recently reminded of the need to comply during an interim check-in. Ms. Kennedy noted a third change to the bylaws would add the Senior Advisor as back up to the Executive Director to sign checks. Mr. Passero asked for clarification that the proposed change would provide a vote to SEAT in addition to the current SEAT Chair's SCCOG membership as Chief Elected Official. Ms. Kennedy confirmed. Discussion over potential SEAT representative under proposed bylaw, which need not be a current member of SCCOG. Ms. Kennedy added that the SEAT representative would only be allowed to vote on MPO matters; i.e. transportation plans and funding decisions SCCOG votes on as the region's designated metropolitan planning organization. Ms. Kennedy stated that per SCCOG's bylaws, the proposed amendment must be submitted to the SCCOG agenda twice before it could be voted upon, so this item will appear on November's agenda for potential action.

13. Next Meeting:

The Chairman stated that the next meeting would be November 16, 2022.

14. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn (Grant, Cwikla). The Chairman adjourned the meeting without exception at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Kennedy, Executive Director, on behalf of Cheryl Blanchard, Secretary