MINUTES OF 3/18/20 MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
SCCOG OFFICE, NORWICH, CT

PRESENT IN PERSON: Council Representatives: Mark Nickerson, East Lyme; Charles Grant, Franklin; Fred Allyn, III, Ledyard; Tom Sparkman, Lisbon; Michael Passero, New London; Sandra Allyn-Gauthier, Preston; Rob Brule, Waterford. Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy. Other: Senator Cathy Osten.
PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Council Representatives: Todd Babbitt, Griswold; Keith Hedrick, City of Groton; Timothy Sharkey, Jewett City; Kevin Cwikla, Lebanon; Ron McDaniel, Montville; Mike Urgo, North Stonington; Cheryl Allen Blanchard, Sprague; Jeff Callahan, Borough of Stonington; Danielle Chesebrough, Town of Stonington; Council Alternates: John Burt, Town of Groton; John Salomone, Norwich. Military Liaison: Captain Todd Moore, Adam Wright, U.S. Naval SUBASE; LCDR Daniel Stepler, USCGA. Tribal Liaison: Robert Hayward, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe; Staff: Kate Rattan, Justin LaFountain, Carly Myers. Other: Steve Mansfield, LLHD; Patrick McCormack, Uncas HD; Grayson Wright, CTDOT; Mike Carroll, Al Fritzsche, SEAT; Mary Underwood, TVCCA; Wendy Bury, SE CT Cultural Coalition; Nancy Cowser, seCTer; Ellen Graham, Senator Blumenthal's office; Brianna DeVivo, Senator Murphy's office; Bob May, Fuss & O'Neill; Dominick Celtruda, BL Company; one reporter.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Nickerson called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

2. Roll Call: After the Chairman requested those in the meeting room and on the telephone to identify themselves, he announced a quorum was present.

3. Pledge of Allegiance: The Chairman asked both those attending the meeting and on line to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Act on Minutes 2/19/20:

   MOTION: To approve the minutes of 2/19/20 (Grant, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report:

   MOTION: To approve the March Treasurer's Report (Allyn, Grant). So voted unanimously.

6. New Business:

   A. JLUS Implementation Grant Application

   The Executive Director reported that staff had been encouraged by DOD OEA to make another grant application for JLUS funds. He said that after discussions

with OMA Director Bob Ross and SCCOG Deputy Director Amanda Kennedy, and in consultation with City of Groton Mayor Hedrick, he had prepared a preliminary scope for a new application to OEA for JLUS Implementation funding. This would be for $300,000 to conduct a detailed parking study in the City of Groton, associated with the anticipated increase in employment at Electric Boat. He said that this study is recommended in the recently completed JLUS Implementation Study. It would require 10% in match, which could be SCCOG funds, in-kind hours, or a combination thereof, which is why this requires SCCOG action. He said the Executive Committee recommended approval of staff making this grant application.

MOTION: To approve of the submission of this grant application to OEA for JLUS implementation funds (Brule, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

B. Proposed Amendment to FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Executive Director explained that at the last SCCOG meeting, the board approved the use of FY 2016 carryover PL funds to retain transportation consultant services, to assist SCCOG staff in the conduct of its transportation program. This requires an amendment to the SCCOG's UPWP. The draft changes that reflect the expenditure of these funds for this purpose have been forward to all SCCOG members, and have been approved by CTDOT.

MOTION: To approve of the proposed amendments to the SCCOG FY 2021 UPWP (Sparkman, Passero). So voted unanimously.

C. FY 2018 STIP/TIP Amendments

- 0170-3559, Continuation of asset management activities, 2020-2022
- 0170-3560, Continuation of bridge management activities, 2020-2022
- 0170-3561, Continuation of pavement management activities, 2020-2022

The Executive Director stated the proposed amendments, and said that the executive Committee had recommended their approval.

MOTION: To approve of the FY 2018 STIP/TIP amendments (Sparkman, Passero). So voted unanimously.

D) Roundtable Discussion of Municipal Contingency Planning in Response to COVID-19

The Chairman stated that it was great to have the opportunity to have the region's Chief Elected Officials and Managers get together to discuss this important

health crisis. He asked the Directors of the two regional health districts to provide an update.

Mr. Mansfield reported on the Governor's recent emergency declaration, which has created some uncertainty for health districts. He addressed protocols for dealing with ill employees, and stated that local police departments are responsible for restaurants closing other than for take-out and delivery service.

Mr. McCormack said he echoed Mr. Mansfield's comments. He said the state's health directors are working closely together and have been discussing this pandemic for weeks. He did state that Uncas Health District stopped monitoring the prior travel of patients that have become infected. Mr. McCormack shared his cell phone number, and Mr. Mansfield stated he would also share his contact information with SCCOG staff for distribution to SCCOG CEOs.

The Executive Director announced he has been, and will continue to send out information to all SCCOG members such as information provided by the health directors, and he encouraged any CEO with information they wished to share with the SCCOG to email it to him for distribution.

Mr. Urgo questioned how the State Police might cover a Resident State Trooper who falls ill. Mr. Nickerson recommended contacting the Barracks commander with this question.

Chairman Nickerson commented on how this health crisis is so different from previous emergencies he has experienced in his six years as First Selectman, where the duration was shorter and in which as municipal CEO he was guiding the response. Now, most of the control over response has to come from the federal and state governments.

Ms. Chesebrough noted that the Town of Stonington experienced a pretty advanced attempt at hacking the Town's computers yesterday. Mr. Sparkman and Mr. Brule stated that their towns had similar hacking attempts occur.

Mr. Sparkman said that the uniqueness of this situation is that we can plan for a few days, but are now in a position where no meetings can be held, and minimal or no town services can be provided to residents.

Mr. Brule said he was informed that the Governor would be addressing the subject of municipal meetings today; his town was going to the platform ZOOM to hold meetings.

Mr. Allyn said that Ledyard has also tried a meeting on ZOOM, and that it went very well; he noted that WebEx required issuance of credentials and that tens of thousands have applied to received their credentials to use that platform.

Mr. Nickerson said that towns might have a cash flow problem on July 1.

Mr. Cwikla stated that Lebanon had issued an emergency declaration shutting down town hall until April 30; he also reported a hacking attempt.

Mr. Hedrick said that the City of Groton was evaluating use of flex and sick time, and work from home for employees that can. He asked for comment on the question at what point do you pay employees to stay home, and what do you pay them with?

Ms. Chesebrough said Town of Stonington is working on creative ways staff can continue to work and get paid if they are in jobs not easily performed at home, but do not know what to do yet with employees if there is a forced quarantine.

Mr. Passero reported on City of New London efforts to allow those employees that can to work from home, but stated that some like emergency service providers and public works cannot work out of their home. He said their Social Services staff are overwhelmed dealing with how this is impacting the region's homeless population.

The Chairman asked Senator Osten to comment on how this health crisis is impacting labor contracts and provisions such a binding arbitration. Senator Osten stated that these are exigent circumstances, which she will be discussing with her colleagues and the administration. At the Chairman's request, Senator Osten provided her email address where she could field questions like this: catherine.osten@cga.ct.gov.

Mr. Passero stated that he believed the State will have to make provisions for dealing with inadvertent violations collective bargaining agreements due to COVID-19.

Chairman Nickerson said that the last thing we want to do is to lay staff off, as they are part of each municipality's team. He said that as CEOs, it is still a responsibility to ask that question.

Mr. Brule said he found this morning's meeting useful, and asked where are we going as a group? He suggested continuing weekly teleconferences on this issue, because he said working together all SCCOG members will make better decisions. The Chairman said going forward during this crisis, the SCCOG will host a weekly teleconference on Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. This was ratified by a unanimous vote of SCCOG members present.

The Chairman announced that Congressman Cortney was holding a future teleconference for municipal officials and that Senator Blumenthal had offered to do the same. He then asked the SCCOG military liaison if they had any comment.

Captain Moore stated that the work of the United States Navy was continuing, but noted that all leave and transfer to next assignments have been cancelled. He said that SUBASE staff had developed a contact tracing tool for personnel complaining of corona virus symptoms. Chairman Nickerson stated that our towns stand ready to support the SUBASE and their families, as the SUBASE has always supported our towns.

LCDR Stepler said the cadets were on spring break when the crisis hit, and they were directed to report home. Classes will resume on-line at the end of break, and the Academy is schedule to re-open on May 29th, but that is subject to change.

Ms. Underwood asked to be recognized to report that TVCCA was open and working, including the very important Meals on Wheels program.

SCCOG Chairman Nickerson reminded SEAT Board members to stay on the line as their meeting would immediately follow.

7. Next Meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2020.

8. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:55 a.m. (Grant, Passero). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Fred Allyn III, Secretary