MINUTES OF 8/19/20 MEETING OF THE

SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

HELD VIA ZOOM

PRESENT: Council Representatives: Mark Nickerson, East Lyme; Charles Grant, Franklin; Todd Babbitt, Griswold; Keith Hedrick, City of Groton; Timothy Sharkey, Jewett City; Fed Allyn, III, Ledyard; Tom Sparkman, Lisbon; Ron McDaniel, Montville; Michael Passero, New London; Mike Urgo, North Stonington; Sandra Allyn Gauthier, Preston; 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: None Present. Military Liaison: Captain Todd Moore, Adam Wright, U.S. Naval SUBASE; LCDR Dan Stepler, USCGA. Staff: James Butler, Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan, Wendy Leclair. Other: Mike Carroll, Al Fritsche, SEAT; Grayson Wright, Lisa Rivers, CTDOT; Erik Shortell, FHWA; Ayanti Grant, Congressman Courtney's office; Deborah Monahan, TVCCA; Jen Granger, UCFS; Nancy Cowser, seCTer; Wendy Bury, SE CT Cultural Coalition; Theresa Jackman, Eversource; Carey Redd, City of New London; Patrick McCormack, Uncas Health District; Greg Berube; Dominick Celtruda; one reporter.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Nickerson opened the meeting at 8:32 a.m.

2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.

3. Act on Minutes of 7/15/20:

   MOTION: To approve the minutes of 7/15/20 (Sparkman, Grant). So voted unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

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

5. Communications:

   The Executive Director noted the four letters in the Communications section of the agenda packet, including a letter of support for a CTNext grant application by TILL:bioFASHIONtech, a company which makes wool clothing intending to locate in an historic building in downtown New London. He stated that City of New London staff has asked for an additional letter of support on behalf of TILL:bioFASHIONtech, which would accompany that company's application for a USDA loan. The consensus of the SCCOG members present was to have staff provide such a letter.

6. Public Comment:

Ms. Jackman reported that Eversource was available to speak with towns about their recent storm response, and offered to have an Eversource spokesman available for that purpose at a future COG meeting.

Ms. Young announced that the CT Airport Authority had cancelled their open houses at the Groton – New London and Windham Airports.

7. Committee and Liaison Reports:

A. Executive Committee

1. Section 5310 Grant Applications

The Executive Director and Transportation Program Manager Kate Rattan explained the 5310 program and ten applications (seven traditional, three non-traditional) received as outlined in a staff memo dated July 24th. He said the Executive Committee recommends that the SCCOG forward staff's recommended prioritization of projects to CTDOT.

MOTION: To endorse the priority order the Section 5310 applications receive as recommended by SCCOG staff in their July 24, 2020 memorandum (Grant, Hedrick). So voted unanimously.

2. Resolution No. 20-4, Regarding a Regional Services Grant

The Executive Director explained this annual resolution allowing receipt of a Regional Services Grant (RSG) from OPM. He said that the Executive Committee has recommended SCCOG adoption of this resolution.

MOTION: To approve of Resolution 20-4, Relating to a Regional Services Grant (Sparkman, Grant). So voted unanimously.

3. TMA Certification Review and SCCOG Response

The Executive Director reported on the staff response to FHWA/FTA's 29 recommendations and one corrective action in the SCCOG's TMA Planning Certification Review report. He said they had not yet received a response to SCCOG's response, but that staff had begun work on addressing the recommendations in the report. He noted that Erik Shortell from FHWA was in attendance at this meeting, and that he might wish to comment. Mr. Shortell said he believed a response to the SCCOG staff comments should be sent later this week.

4. Funding for COG Work on COVID Response/Recovery

The Executive Director reported that the state's nine COG Executive Directors have had several meetings to discuss this issue, and as of today OPM still has not confirmed that it will fund the COGs' efforts in this work using CARES Act funding as they had previously suggested they would do. He said he has suggested that the COGs notify the State, which has requested this work be done, and which has now entered into contracts with two private consulting firms for related work, and which has informed the COGs that they cannot charge this work against their DEMHS or RSG funds, that by a certain date, say September 1, the COGs can no longer work on this effort without a contract. Other COG Directors do not favor this "line in the sand" approach, and he said he agreed for now because this work is so important and we should not do anything that would result in diminishing the COG's role in a regional response. He said he would continue to update the SCCOG on the status of this issue.

5. FY 2018 STIP/TIP Amendment (to be taken up under Item 10. A. New Business)

6. DEMHS Regional Recovery Steering Committee

The Executive Director reported that the 18-person DEMHS Region 4 Long-Term Recovery Steering Committee has met several times, and recently established a Health and Social Services/Housing Working Group, which met for the first time yesterday. The next meeting of the Steering Committee has been postponed until September, allowing the two recently contracted consultants to begin their work and for the State to provide additional structure and direction to the Regional Steering Committees. He said he had proposed an administrative sharing of duties for staffing the Steering Committee and working groups to the NECCOG Executive Director, who has accepted this approach. This will result in SCCOG staff supporting the Regional Recovery Steering Committee and the Community Planning & Capacity Building/Infrastructure Working Group, and NECCOG staff responsible for the Health and Social Services/Housing and Economic/Natural and Cultural Resources Working Groups.

Mr. Sparkman asked for clarification that the future Regional Recovery Steering Committee meeting would not conflict with the September 10th meeting of the Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) of the CEOs. Staff said they would make sure it does not.

8. Executive Director's Report:

The Executive Director reported on four items.
He said that the SCCOG has published an RFQ/RFP solicitation for consultants to prepare a JLUS funded parking study in the City of Groton.
He said that the SCCOG has published an RFQ/RFP for transportation engineering consultant services.

He reminded that staff recently emailed the SCCOG asking which towns wish to rejoin/join the CRCOG Regional Purchasing Council, which through the SCCOG, has only a $500 fee.

He reminded that at the request of OPM, he had sent an email to all SCCOG member municipalities asking for the designation of a Drought Coordinator, whose name and contact information should be sent to DEMHS Region 4 Coordinator Mike Caplet.

9. Old Business:

A. COVID-19 Response Discussion

The Chairman recognized Uncas Health Director Patrick McCormack, who provided an update on COVID related activities statewide and in the region which his office is involved in.

The Chairman next recognized Captain Moore. Captain Moore reported that the Assistant Secretary of the Navy will be visiting the SUBASE next week. He then called on Adam Wright to make an announcement. Mr. Wright said that the region has been awarded a Defense Manufacturing Community Grant, one of six awarded in the country. Mr. Wright recognized CT Office of Military Affairs Director Bob Ross' efforts in securing this grant.

The Chairman asked LCDR Stepler of the USCGA for any updates he had. LCDR Stepler reported that all cadets have reported to the Academy and on their testing and quarantine protocols.

Ms. Grant stated the Congressman's office had heard reports that FEMA Region I has begun to deny for reimbursement previously eligible COVID-19 activities; she asked if this was the case with any SCCOG municipalities to please let her know.
The Chairman then asked that Liaison Reports to the SCCOG be placed back on and made part of the agenda for the September meeting.

10. New Business:

A. FY 2018 STIP/TIP Amendment

- SEAT Replacement of Paratransit Vehicles, FY 20, Total $450,000

MOTION: To approve of the FY 2018 STIP/TIP Amendment (Burt, Salomone). So voted unanimously

11. Next Meeting:

The Chairman asked if the members wished to hold a COVID-19 response call in two weeks on September 2nd, and the members present agreed this call should be scheduled.
The Chairman announced the next regularly scheduled meeting would be held on September 16th.

12. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:28 a.m. (Urgo, Grant). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Keith Hedrick, Secretary