

# SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

5 Connecticut Avenue, Norwich, Connecticut 06360

(860) 889-2324/Fax: (860) 889-1222/Email: [office@seccog.org](mailto:office@seccog.org)

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DRAFT Minutes of the February 21, 2024 Meeting  
of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments  
5 Connecticut Ave, Norwich, CT

**PRESENT:**

Bozrah	Glenn Pianka	Montville	-
Colchester	Bernie Dennler	New London	Michael Passero
East Lyme	-	Norwich	-
Franklin	Alden Miner	North Stonington	Bob Carlson
Griswold	Tina Falck	Preston	Sanda Allyn-Gauthier
Jewett City	-	Salem	Ed Chmielewski
City of Groton	-	Sprague	Cheryl Blanchard
Town of Groton	John Burt	Town of Stonington	Danielle Chesebrough
Lebanon	-	Stonington Borough	Michael Schefers
Ledyard	Fred Allyn, III	Waterford	Rob Brule
Lisbon	-	Windham	Tom DeVivo
Military Liaisons:	US Coast Guard Academy: Lt. Comm. Krystyn Pecora New London SUBASE: Capt. Curtin, Steve Sadlowski		
Tribal Affiliates:	Mohegan Tribe: - Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation: Bob Hayward		
CT DOT	Jennifer Pacacha (via phone)		

SCCOG staff: Amanda Kennedy, Kate Rattan, Jessica Cobb. seCTer: Paul Whitescarver. SEAT: Mike Carroll. Office of Sen. Blumenthal: Ellen Graham. Office of Sen. Murphy: Erin McBride. Office of Rep. Courtney: Rep. Courtney, Noah Carver. SE CT Cultural Coalition: Deb Mathiasen. Eastern Regional Tourism District: -. TVCCA: Josh Kelly. Ledge Light Health District: Jennifer Muggeo. Eversource: Jaquan Samuels, Egzon Balidemaj.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Brule called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Mr. Brule led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Act on Minutes of January 17th Meeting:

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**Member Municipalities:** Bozrah \* Colchester \* East Lyme \* Franklin \* Griswold \* Borough of Jewett City \* City of Groton \* Town of Groton \* Lebanon \* Ledyard \* Lisbon \* Montville \* New London \* North Stonington \* Norwich \* Preston \* Salem \* Sprague \* Stonington \* Stonington Borough \* Waterford \* Windham

*If language assistance is needed, please contact SCCOG at 860-889-2324, [office@seccog.org](mailto:office@seccog.org).  
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MOTION: To approve the minutes (Passero, Chmielewski). Motion passed unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report:

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

5. Communications: Ms. Kennedy noted that the meeting packet includes her email to legislators providing information on legal notice costs.

6. Public Comment: None

7. Speaker: Rep. Joe Courtney provided a review of issues in the region and congressional activities. Regional job growth was strong in 2023, partly due to hiring at Electric Boat, and progress was made toward reducing opioid deaths. Recovery coach programs have been effective. Municipal opioid funds can support this work. His staff person Julia McGrath is a resource on this issue. The NDAA was signed into law in December. The agreement with Australia to collaborate on submarine production is important, with Australians coming here to learn how to manufacture and operate nuclear submarines. Mayor Allyn asked about ally contributions to international security. Mr. Brule asked about next steps on nuclear waste consent-based siting. Rep. Courtney reported on the rail study that Amtrak will be conducting. Ms. Allyn-Gauthier asked about education funding,

Committee and Liaison Reports

A) Executive Committee:

- i) Ms. Kennedy noted that the Executive Committee recommended approval of the TIP amendments to be taken up under new business.
- ii) Ms. Kennedy summarized the request for Transportation Management Area status. With the recent census redefinition of urban area, the Norwich-New London area no longer has the threshold 200,000 population that automatically designates it a transportation management area. SCCOG would lose some of its influence over funding decisions as a non-TMA MPO. The Board must formally request TMA status to be reinstated in order to continue as a TMA and a resolution has been drafted to communicate the Board's request to FHWA.

MOTION: To approve the resolution (Scheffers, Passero). So voted unanimously.

- iii) Ms. Kennedy stated that the proposed FY25 budget had been reviewed by the Executive Committee and recommended for approval.

MOTION: To approve the FY 2025 budget (Cwikla, Allyn). So voted unanimously.

B) Legislative Committee: Mayor Allyn summarized the meeting held January 29<sup>th</sup>, and the findings of Ms. Kennedy's research re legal notices. A hearing on the legal notice bill was being held.

- C) Tribal Liaison Representatives: Mr. Hayward reported that construction on Great Wolf Lodge was progressing and is expected to open in the spring of 2025. Mr. Carlson asked how it will affect Route 2 and demand for local businesses. The museum is closed for renovation and will open for limited hours this summer.
  - D) Military Command Representatives: Lt. Commander Pecora provided information regarding efforts to ensure a safe environment for students. Capt. Curtin reported that PCU Idaho would be christened in March. Mr. Sadlowski circulated information about DCIP (Defense Community Infrastructure Program) grants.
  - E) Congressional Office Report: Ms. McBride reminded attendees that a webinar would be held 2/22 regarding congressionally directed spending. Ms. Graham reported that Sen. Blumenthal is currently in the Middle East. Mr. Carver had no additional report.
  - F) seCTer: Mr. Whitescarver reported on seCTer's leadership to create the CT Wind Collaborative and reminded the Board of several business loan opportunities administered by seCTer.
  - G) Eastern CT Tourism District: No report.
  - H) SEAT: Mr. Carroll reported that ridership is at pre-Covid levels. SEAT continues to work towards meeting the mandate for electric vehicles with EVs arriving soon for microtransit services and plans being drafted for facility upgrades to accommodate EVs.
  - I) Regional Water Committee: No report.
  - J) Regional Emergency Planning Team: No report.
  - K) Regional Human Services Coordinating Council: Ms. Kennedy stated that the RHSCC met January 19<sup>th</sup>.
  - L) SE CT Cultural Coalition: Ms. Mathiasen reported that the Coalition would hold an info session on federal grants in March.
9. Health Districts: Ms. Muggeo stated that people were still being urged to stay home if sick. Districts are asking the Legislature to increase appropriations to districts, given recent unfunded legislative mandates.
10. Solid Waste Committee: Mayor Allyn noted that the committee would next meet in April.

Mr. Brule asked Mr. Kelly if he had anything to report. Mr. Kelly thanked the SCCOG for supporting funding for heating assistance, which was passed by the legislature last week..

#### 11. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Kennedy noted that SCCOG would begin the solicitation process soon for two transportation funding programs- LOTCIP and TAP. A public meeting is expected this spring by CTDOT to report on the results of their I-95 planning process. Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Rattan had a productive meeting with CTDOT staff regarding project needs not included in the State's most recent capital

plan. Ms. Burdick is starting to meeting with municipal leaders participating in SCCOG's municipal services program and explore new services. Ms. Zincavage is working with Ms. Bigl to complete the open space plan for municipal and public review. SCCOG submitted an application for BRIC funding to develop a flood mitigation plan for the Yantic River watershed and is also working with CIRCA on early-action planning steps.

12. Old Business: None.

13. New Business: STIP/TIP Amendments.

Ms. Kennedy reviewed the amendments, which include several projects being pushed from FY 24 to future years, and new projects regarding highway lighting, signs, and safety improvements.

MOTION: To approve the TIP amendments (Blanchard, Chmielewski). So voted unanimously.

14. Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be March 20, 2024.

15. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting (Blanchard). So voted unanimously.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Kennedy, Executive Director, on behalf of Rob Carlson, Secretary