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DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE NHCOG MEETING OF March 13, 2014

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein	Canaan (Falls Village), Patricia Allyn Mechare
Colebrook, Thomas McKeon	Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway
Goshen, Robert Valentine	Hartland, Wade Cole
Harwinton, Michael Criss	Kent, Bruce Adams
Litchfield, Leo Paul, Jr.	Norfolk, Susan Dyer
North Canaan, Douglas Humes, Jr.	Roxbury, Barbara Henry
Salisbury, Curtis Rand	Sharon, Brent Colley
Torrington, Elinor Carbone	Warren, Craig Nelson
Washington, Mark Lyon	

Others in Attendance:

Ted Shafer, Burlington First Selectman	Steve Silver, CL&P
Chuck Burnham, CL&P	Andrew Brydges, CEFIA
Sean Hayden, NWCD	William McCalpin, C-PACE
Aron Steeves, ConnDOT	Sue Duskow, Johnson Controls, Inc.
Richard Lynn, NHCOG Staff	Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOG Staff
Darlene Krukar, NHCOG Staff	Media Representatives

1. Call to Order, Opportunity for Public Comment. The meeting, held at the Cooperative Extension Meeting Room at UConn Torrington, was called to order by Chairman Don Stein at 10:06 a.m. There was no public comment.

2. Regional Focus on Energy Saving Programs of Municipal Significance, with Introductory Comments by Jocelyn Ayer. Following introductory comments by Jocelyn Ayer, Andrew Brydges, Director of Institutional Programs, CEFIA (Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority) explained the ESPC (Energy-Savings Performance Contracting Program). The program allows municipalities to implement energy efficiency upgrades at no up-front cost. Some examples are LED lighting, advanced HVAC systems, and building weatherization. It has been found that what works best is to blend the quick payback items with the longer payback items. The process for applying has been streamlined. Municipal monthly energy bills do not increase and most of the savings are seen at the end of the contract. CEFIA is looking at whether it would make sense to let the smaller municipalities aggregate projects to enhance cost effectiveness. There are 13 prequalified private sector vendors that are available to provide program support. Mr. Brydges then introduced Sue Duskow from Johnson Controls. She stated that performance contracting is a tried and true program that can help save tax dollars and she encouraged municipal officials to pursue the program. Sean Hayden, Executive Director, Northwest Conservation District, described the Small Business Energy Advantage Program. He stated that the Town of Thomaston has

completed all the steps of the Small Business Energy Advantage and they have saved approximately 50% on their energy costs. Eligible "small businesses" include, restaurants, municipally owned buildings, retail stores, churches, B&Bs, and museums. These programs also have no up-front costs, zero interest and low cost financing payable on your electric bills.

William McCalpin spoke on the C-PACE (Connecticut Property Assessed Clean Energy) program. C-PACE is a program that has been around for about one year. The program provides 0% upfront, long-term low cost financing for energy upgrades with the minimum project size of typically \$100,000. The municipality needs to opt in to participate in C-PACE, which allows CEFIA to put a senior lien on the property. Discussion followed. Jocelyn Ayer stated that she would forward W. McCalpin's power point presentation to all the NHCOC members.

3. Overview of ConnDOT District 4 Paving Program for the Northwest Hills. Aron Steeves was introduced and distributed a listing of VIP (vendor in place) projects for 2014. The VIP program is funded through bond money and the district receives \$13 million a year which allows them to address about 47 miles each year. District IV has 1,500 miles of state roads. He stated that he is a contact for any questions or concerns regarding the state roads in the district. Discussion followed regarding the lack of funding available for maintenance of state roads and Pat Mechare asked if there was anything the NHCOC could do to help increase the funding. A. Steeves noted that there is a need for the motoring public to be more vocal in advocating for more road maintenance funding. There are vocal advocates for train tracks and bikeway funding, but the advocacy for road improvement funding is much more limited. He reminded the NHCOC members that they can use the vendors on the state contract list for municipal projects as well.

#### 4. Administrative Items.

- a. On a motion by Craig Nelson and seconded by Pat Mechare, the NWCCOC minutes of 12/5/13, and the treasurers reports for 11/13, 12/13 and 1/14 were unanimously approved. LHCEO members abstained
- b. On a motion by Michael Criss and seconded by Sue Dyer, the LHCEO minutes from 11/13/13 and the financial statements for 11/13, 12/13 and 1/14 were unanimously approved. NWCCOC members abstained.
- c. On a motion by Sue Dyer and seconded by Leo Paul, the NHCOC minutes from the 1/2/14 special meeting, 2/4/14 special meeting, 1/9/14 regular meeting and the financial statement for 1/14 were unanimously approved.
- d. On a motion by Bob Valentine and seconded by Craig Nelson, the NHCOC unanimously endorsed sending letters of support for the Cornwall Open Space grant application, the Goshen Open Space grant application, the Regional Chore Service, the Housing Development Fund's "Special Priority Projects and Programs" application and the Waterbury's TIGER application for the Naugatuck River Greenway.  
On a motion by Michael Criss and seconded by Sue Dyer, NHCOC members unanimously approved adding the blanket endorsement of STEAP applications to the agenda. Discussion followed on the policy of writing letters of support for STEAP grants. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Barbara Henry, NHCOC members unanimously authorized Rick Lynn to write letters of endorsement from the NHCOC

for any individual STEAP grants without bringing the application to the Board for approval.

- e. On a motion by Barbara Henry and seconded by Leo Paul, the proposed dues amount of \$0.80 per capita, using the 2012 CT Department of Public Health population estimates for FY14-15, was unanimously approved.
- f. On a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Sue Dyer, NHCOC members unanimously endorsed a budget amendment of \$20,000 for office relocation and moving expenses.
- g. On a motion by Barbara Henry and seconded by Tom McKeon, NHCOC members unanimously appointed Sue Dyer, Mark Lyon, Leo Paul, and Craig Nelson to be the NHCOC representatives on the LCD Board and Sue Dyer, Don Stein, Curtis Rand, Brent Colley, Jerry Rollett, Jim Hart, Tracy Mirsky, Naomi Boccio, and Brian Bartram as the members of the Recycling Advisory Committee.
- h. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Curtis Rand, NHCOC members unanimously endorsed the ConnDOT STIP amendments pertaining to the replacement of overhead sign supports, with Doug Humes abstaining.

5. Regional Discussion: Potential for Enhanced Municipal Efficiency Through the Use of Tablet Computers for Assessor Field Work. Don Stein stated that his assessor has asked for a tablet for field work. He asked if other towns were interested in learning more about this option. After discussion, it was decided a special meeting should be held to discuss this topic and to invite Vision and Quality to explain the field use of the tablets and the cost involved. It was agreed that the area assessors should also be invited.

6. Update on 2014 TIGER grant and Proposed Regional Workshop on Passenger Rail Stations in Cooperation with the Berkshire Regional Planning Staff. Jocelyn Ayer stated in the last round that the NWCCOG applied for a TIGER grant to upgrade the railroad tracks from Kent to North Canaan. There is a new round of TIGER grant applications and Jocelyn suggested working with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission on submitting a joint TIGER application to make the application more competitive. Also the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has been working on identifying locations for passenger rail stations and Jocelyn suggested the NHCOC invite the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) to come to our area to hold a workshop and explain the findings from their study that would be relevant to our towns. She asked that \$1,500 of the HPR money be allocated to offset BRPC's costs to do this. There was discussion on the fact that there is some opposition to passenger service being restored on the Housatonic Railroad, and some concerns with other rail related issues. On a motion by Doug Humes and seconded by Leo Paul, NHCOC members voted to table spending \$1,500 to have the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission come to our region and hold a workshop until a proposal is submitted by the BRPC. Gordon Ridgway and Pat Mechare were opposed to tabling the motion. On a motion by Sue Dyer and seconded by Leo Paul, NHCOC members authorized Jocelyn Ayer to work with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission in writing a TIGER grant application for rehabilitation of the tracks for the freight system, with the resulting application presented to the NHCOC at a later date.

7. Update on Activities of the MORE Commission. Barbara Henry and Don Stein stated that the MORE Commission activities have been very limited to date. Leo Paul stated that

the MORE Commission Mandates Working Group has been successful in getting the Speaker of the House to agree to changes in the wording on a couple of mandates.

8. CRRA and Proposed SB-27 Entitled “An Act Concerning Connecticut’s Recycling and Materials Management Strategy”. Don Stein stated that this bill creates a successor agency to CRRA, with a maximum of 45 employees. The way the bill is written, most control will rest with the DEEP. He hopes to see changes to the bill that would allow more of a partnership between DEEP and CRRA or its successor. After discussion, on a motion by Barbara Henry and seconded by Bob Valentine, NHCOC members decided to write a letter to area legislators stating that in order for the NHCOC to support this bill then changes are needed to protect the municipal financial constraints included in the existing municipal contracts with CRRA. Mark Lyon, Craig Nelson, Bruce Adams, and Wade Cole all abstained.

9. Committee Updates.

a. *Legislative Committee.* There was discussion on HB-5391 and SB-288 pertaining to Resident State Troopers. Leo Paul stated that he has heard that there is a bill that will cap the fringe and benefits and overtime at 70% and discussion followed. On a motion by Curtis Rand and seconded by Barbara Henry, NHCOC members unanimously voted to write a letter of support for HB-5391. Barbara Henry stated that the sharing of resident troopers in Roxbury and Bridgewater is going forward and other towns are able to pursue this as well.

Leo Paul stated there is proposed legislation that will save towns’ money by allowing the posting of shorter legal notices. The notices would provide the date and subject of the hearing, and indicate that additional details are available at town hall or the town web-page.

Leo Paul stated that there is also activity underway to enable the reporting requirements for prevailing wage to be done electronically.

Bob Valentine encouraged COG members to attend hearings in Hartford to testify on bills of interest or concern. He stated that the COG’s legislative committee would be meeting in the near future to discuss this topic.

b. *Recycling Advisory Committee.* On a motion made by Bob Valentine and seconded by Leo Paul, Council members authorized the NHCOC staff to release the RFP for Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days for 2014 and 2015.

c. *Update from DEMHS Region 5.* On a motion made by Bob Valentine and seconded by Leo Paul, Council members unanimously authorized the NHCOC Executive Director to serve as the Region 5 oversight agent for the 2013 and 2014 Homeland Security Grants and sign all appropriate documents. Rick Lynn encouraged member towns to sign and return the 2013 DEMHS MOA that was recently emailed to them.

10. Town by Town Issues and Updates by COG Members. Due to time constraints, this agenda item was tabled.

11. Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. There was no other business raised. On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm.