

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE NHCOC MEETING OF April 10, 2014

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein  
Colebrook, Thomas McKeon  
Goshen, Robert Valentine  
Kent, Bruce Adams  
Morris, Barbara Bongiolatti  
Norfolk, Susan Dyer  
Roxbury, Barbara Henry  
Torrington, Elinor Carbone  
Winchester, Dale Martin

Canaan (Falls Village), Patricia Allyn Mechare  
Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway  
Hartland, Wade Cole  
Litchfield, Leo Paul, Jr.  
New Hartford, Daniel Jerram  
North Canaan, Douglas Humes, Jr.  
Salisbury, Curtis Rand  
Washington, Mark Lyon

Others in Attendance:

Janine Sullivan-Wiley, NWRMHB  
Tom Vannini, DEMHS Region 5  
Chuck Burnham, CL&P  
Mark Lauretano  
Richard Lynn, NHCOC Staff  
Darlene Krukar, NHCOC Staff

Betsy Gara, COST  
Steve Silver, CL&P  
Neil Ryan, ConnDOT  
Brian Ohler  
Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOC Staff  
Media Representatives

1. Call to Order, Opportunity for Public Comment. The meeting, held at the Cooperative Extension Meeting Room, UConn Torrington was called to order by Chairman Don Stein at 10:06 a.m. Karen Bartomioli inquired if the COG had taken a position with regard to the subdivision bill under consideration by the legislature (SB 405). There was no other public comment.
2. Town by Town Issues and Updates by COG Members. Bruce Adams stated that Kent has a meeting scheduled regarding the Scaghticoke tribe issue on Sunday. He also asked if anyone had suggestions on dealing with the influx of motorcycles. Gordon Ridgway stated that Cornwall is concerned about the proposed legislation to relax the current level of tree trimming. Discussion followed. Chuck Burnham suggested that a letter be written to the area legislators and the governor. Mark Lyon stated Washington is working on their budget and looking at the potential of regionalizing schools. Elinor Carbone stated that progress is being made for the courthouse in Torrington. Torrington will be working on upgrading their public water system. She praised the firefighters that responded to the warehouse fire in Torrington and thanked the surrounding towns that helped and stated that things went better than could have been scripted. Don Stein stated that he has heard that the state is pushing to have all towns hookup to the Nutmeg network. Discussion followed. He stated that Region 7 is interviewing for a school resource officer. Wade Cole stated that Hartland is looking forward to doing spring work. Dale Martin stated Winsted has some economic development work going on. Dan Jerram stated that New Hartford is looking at the decrease in school

enrollment and working on the budget. Barbara Henry stated that Roxbury is negotiating with the teamsters and asked who had defined pension benefits and who had defined contributions. Discussion followed. Most towns have defined contribution programs with a range from 3 to 9 percent. Bob Valentine stated that Goshen is looking at employee benefits especially insurance benefits. All other towns stated there was nothing new to report.

3. Overview of NW Regional Mental Health Board and Request for Town Appointments to Board. Janine Sullivan-Wiley distributed and reviewed handouts. She explained what the board does and how it was created. She stated that the NWMH board is looking for town representatives from each town and the state law states the representative cannot be a professional (can be a retired professional). The board provides public education and works to enhance the quality of life for persons with mental illness, and substance abuse or addiction. Barbara Bongiolatti stated that the NWMH representative from Morris is very helpful and provides an important service in her community. Discussion followed.
4. Update on 2014 Legislative Session. Betsy Gara distributed and reviewed a status report on the legislation being tracked by COST. She stated that there is only three weeks left to the session and she doesn't see a lot else being addressed. Gordon Ridgway stated that he is concerned about the proposed legislation that will relax the current levels of tree trimming. Senate Bill 405 will allow subdivisions without a public hearing and COST is opposing it. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Mark Lyon, NHCOC members unanimously endorsed having NHCOC staff write a letter opposing SB 405.
5. Overview and Request for NHCOC Endorsement of Proposed Unified Planning Work Program for 2015 ConnDOT Grant. Rick Lynn reviewed the major focus areas of the proposed unified planning work program for the 2015 ConnDOT grant. He stated that much of this work program is required by ConnDOT but we do have a lot of flexibility on how best to address our transportation planning needs. Two special studies are proposed with this year's funding. The proposed work program budgets \$10,000 for a consultant to look into bus stop signage and benches for the Northwest Transit District to enhance the level of service for their customers. The work program also calls for hiring a consultant engineer to prepare a 5 year capital improvement plan for the region with allocated state and federal funds for local road improvement. He stated that the region is allocated about \$500,000 a year under the rural collector program and \$600,000 a year under the new LOTCIP program. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Pat Mechare, COG members unanimously endorsed the proposed unified planning work program for 2015. Discussion followed on the rural collector program funding and it was decided to seek the option of having two \$250,000 projects per year instead of one \$500,000 project a year as proposed by ConnDOT.

On a motion by Sue Dyer and seconded by Tom McKeon, discussion of the TIGER grant application for the rail service was added to the agenda. Jocelyn Ayer stated that the application was determined to not be competitive this funding round and will not be submitted. The agenda item was therefore tabled.

6. Request to Transition the Regional Planning Collaborative into a Subcommittee of the NHCOCG. Pat Mechare stated that the NHCOCG Executive Committee suggests that the Regional Planning Collaborative become a subcommittee of the NHCOCG. She stated that the collaborative will then be able to help all twenty towns. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Doug Humes, COG members unanimously agreed to make the Regional Planning Collaborative a subcommittee of the NHCOCG.
7. Administrative Items.
- a. On a motion by Doug Humes and seconded by Leo Paul, the NWCCOG treasurer's reports for 2/14 were unanimously approved.
  - b. On a motion by Sue Dyer and seconded by Wade Cole, the LHCEO financial statement for 2/14 was unanimously approved.
  - c. On a motion by Curtis Rand and seconded by Doug Humes, the NHCOCG minutes from the 3/13/14 regular meeting and the financial statement for 2/14 were unanimously approved.
  - d. On a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Doug Humes, the NHCOCG unanimously approved the NHCOCG serving as applicant for the Municipal Aging Grant for the towns served by Geer.
  - e. Chairman Don Stein appointed the following to the Nominating Committee for COG Officers for FY 2014-2015: Barbara Henry (Chairman), Wade Cole, and Tom McKeon.
  - f. Sue Dyer reported that we received three vendor bids for HHW Collection Days. The low bid was MXI at a cost of \$32 per household and no charge for paint bins. On a motion by Curtis Rand and seconded by Leo Paul, COG members approved entering into a contract with MXI for HHW Collection Days for the next two years. Barbara Henry, Dan Jerram, and Mark Lyon abstained.
  - g. Following supportive comments by Curtis Rand, and on a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Barbara Henry, COG members unanimously endorsed the ConnDOT STIP amendments pertaining to safety improvements at Route 41 in Salisbury, with Doug Humes abstaining.
  - h. Rick Lynn reported that we have received a fully executed lease for the new COG offices. According to the landlord's representative, the structural engineer work is nearing completion and the building plans should be submitted to the Goshen Building Official next week. The landlord's representative stated that the new offices should be ready for occupancy by July.
8. Committee Updates.
- a. *Legislative Committee.* Concern was again expressed about HB 5408 entitled "AAC Tree Trimming" and it was the consensus of the NHCOCG to send a letter expressing concern about this bill.
  - b. *Recycling Advisory Committee.* Sue Dyer stated there was nothing new to add to the earlier discussion.
  - c. *Update from DEMHS Region 5.* Tom Vannini reminded COG members that towns need to submit their Local Emergency Operation Plan update. If there is no change, you can indicate no change, sign it and send it in. School multi-hazard training has started and the next class is in Colchester on Monday. Tom encouraged that school administrators attend this training. School plans need to be included in the LOP due in July. Long term care coordinators need to be appointed in each town. We need names and contact information and DEMHS will provide training. There will be a statewide

exercise on sheltering on June 21 and June 23. Rick Lynn stated that DEMHS has provided a \$30,000 grant for the Northwest Regional Hazmat Team and asked for authorization to oversee the grant. On a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Leo Paul, COG members unanimously authorized Rick Lynn to administer the Northwest Regional Hazmat Team grant.

9. Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. Rick Lynn reported there is a meeting scheduled, as requested by the COG, for April 24, 2014 at the Bantam Borough Hall to discuss the field use of tablets with area assessors. There was discussion on the iPads for the EOCs and discussion on burning permits. On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.