

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE NHCOG MEETING OF June 12, 2014

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein	Canaan (Falls Village), Patricia Allyn Mechare
Burlington, Ted Shafer	Colebrook, Thomas McKeon
Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway	Goshen, Robert Valentine
Hartland, Wade Cole	Harwinton, Michael Criss
Kent, Bruce Adams	Morris, Barbara Bongiolatti
Norfolk, Susan Dyer	North Canaan, Douglas Humes, Jr.
Salisbury, Curtis Rand	Sharon, Brent Colley
Torrington, Elinor Carbone	Warren, Craig Nelson
Washington, Mark Lyon	Winchester, Marsha Sterling & Dale Martin

Others in Attendance:

Kimberly A. Lumis, Sharon Hospital	Jill Musselman, Sharon Hospital
Peter Cordeau, Sharon Hospital	Gina Chiarella, Take 2
Carol Deane, NWCTD	Erin Wilson, Torrington
Neil Ryan, ConnDOT	Chuck Burnham, CL&P
Jessica Fowler, Sharon	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 Northwestern CT Chamber of Commerce in Torrington, was called to order by Chairman Don Stein at 10:07 a.m. There was no public comment.
2. Town by Town Issues and Updates by COG Members. Mark Lyon stated that Washington's budget has passed and things are good. Pat Mechare stated that Canaan's budget has also passed and they are in the process of finishing up a bid package for their Emergency Service Center and working on bid packages for new sidewalks and streetscaping projects, and some public works equipment. Bruce Adams stated that the availability of public restrooms has become an issue in Kent. He polled the other towns on who has public restrooms available and discussion followed. Marsha Sterling stated that Winchester passed their budget and now has \$700,000 available to improve their roads and they have found that by using contractors off the state contractor list a considerable amount of money can be saved. Brent Colley stated that Sharon has been focusing lately on Community Health and this is why he encouraged Sharon Hospital representatives to attend today's meeting. Don Stein stated that Burlington is now an official member of the NHCOG and welcomed Ted Shafer to the group. Mike Criss stated that Harwinton received a \$325,000 STEAP grant for their Emergency Operation Center and they qualified for a grant for the Nutmeg Network which they are trying to figure out if it is worth accepting. Harwinton has a number of other new upgrades and projects underway. Dale Martin, as a veteran,

thanked Torrington for holding the D-day celebration. He stated that Winchester's annual strawberries festival will be held on Sunday. Wade Cole stated that Hartland passed their budget and things are going well. Bob Valentine stated that Goshen is planning their 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration to be held in September. Craig Nelson stated that Warren's budget passed and they no longer have a road foreman. He discovered that Warren has no job descriptions and asked if other towns had job descriptions that they could share with him. Don Stein stated that Barkhamsted also got a Nutmeg Network grant and discussion followed on voice over internet (VoIP) systems. Mike Criss stated that towns could defer their Nutmeg Network grant award for two years. Don Stein stated that Barkhamsted is putting in an outdoor pavilion in collaboration the school PTO.

3. Update on Sharon Hospital. Kimberly Lumia provided contact information to COG members and encouraged them to call her with anything that might relate to Sharon Hospital (203-525-7107). She stated Sharon Hospital is celebrating its 105th year anniversary. She distributed a handout and reviewed services available. Some of the services include: a stroke designated hospital in partnership with Yale; affiliation with Smilow Cancer Center; a rehab center for physical, occupational and speech therapy; a full service cardiology center; wound care center; sleep center; a geriatric psychiatric senior behavior center; and birthing suites. She stated that even with today's declining birth rates, Sharon Hospital's birthing suites have delivered more babies than in the past. She stated that it is important that people support the community hospital. Discussion followed. Gordon Ridgway stated that he is thankful that Sharon Hospital is there and that the hospital gives the support needed to local ambulance and EMS programs which is very important.
4. Proposed Regional Electronics Collection/Paper Shredding Day. Gina Chiarella distributed a handout and spoke on the role that her company plays in the collection of electronics. She stated that they are permitted in Connecticut and have a general permit for one day collections. She stated that the law states all municipalities are required to provide a way for residents to dispose of electronics. Take 2 allows people to drop off electronics at their location in Waterbury. There are no events too large or too small for them to hold. Take 2 will help to choose a collection day location and coordinate the process and do all the reporting to the state. They also provide permanent collections at a local site. They are the only Connecticut based collection company. Bruce Adams spoke on behalf of Take 2 and stated that they are a great company to work with. He stated that they will take electronics, fluorescent bulbs, batteries, and Freon appliances. Barbara Bongiolatti agreed they have provided excellent service in the past. Take 2 does not do paper shredding themselves but they would help to get someone to sponsor the paper shredding and coordinate having the electronics collection and paper shredding at the same time. Rick Lynn stated that CRRRA will no longer be offering these events and asked if the council members would like to sponsor a one-day collection. There is no cost to holding these events. It was decided to bring this to the RAC committee for input and guidance.
5. Request for NHCOG Endorsement of Proposed Centralized Transportation Facility in Torrington. Elinor Carbone stated that the Transit Facility has been on the radar as a

priority project since at least 2004. She stated that ConnDOT has identified a site in Torrington and they have done roughly 10% of the site design work for the former Hendey Machine Company also known as the Stone Container site. The whole property is 7 acres and ConnDOT is looking at using 2 to 2.5 acres. The City of Torrington is working on how best to memorialize the historic value of the buildings. She is looking for a letter of support from the COG for this project. Carol Deane stated the transit district has 17 buses and needs more buses but they have run out of space and have to use private contractors for maintenance. The NWTB serves 17 towns in Northwest Connecticut. This proposed site is convenient for residents. Erin Wilson, Torrington Economic Development Director stated that this site is on the rail line and would offer an opportunity to work with the state for cleaning up the entire property and make it available for continued growth. They are looking at ways to keep some of the historic architectural features at the new facility. Elinor Carbone stated that she keeps hearing that the surrounding towns need expanded bus service and the Transit District needs more room to expand. She spoke on how the City of Torrington is looking to preserve as much of the history of this site as possible. She stated that this property is privately owned and the City ultimately has no control over the sale of the property or the demolition of a privately owned building. On a motion by Curtis Rand and seconded by Ted Shafer, Council members unanimously endorsed the project and the proposed site for the NWTB facility.

6. Update on Municipal Issuance of Burning Permits. Bob Valentine thanked Tom McKeon for sharing Colebrook's burning permit ordinance, which he used as a basis for creating a similar ordinance for Goshen. He stated that he is still disappointed with the CT DEEP for not having clearer state regulations but he believes Goshen's new burning ordinance will meet the town's needs. Discussion followed.

7. Community and Economic Development Updates.

*a. Proposed "NWCT Grown" Project to Promote Local Agriculture.* Jocelyn Ayer stated that the NHCOG voted at our last meeting to establish a Regional Planning Advisory Committee and she is looking for a nominated representative from each town to serve on this committee. She would like to invite them to the next 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday meeting which will be held on July 31<sup>st</sup>. Jocelyn then reviewed a proposal to apply for a State Dept. of Agriculture Farm Viability Grant to pursue marketing and outreach efforts to support local farms and local restaurants that serve locally sourced food. Some of the proposed activities under the grant would include: "farm to table" events; ; an interactive website map for finding farm stands, pick your own, farmers markets, and restaurants that serve local grown food/products, and a farm incubator demonstration project which would link a young farmer in the area to land on which he/she could farm. To fund this proposal she is looking to apply for a \$49,900 Farm viability grant which would require matching funds in cash or in kind services of \$25,000. She passed around a list of farmers markets she could find in our region and asked if there were any missing to let her know. A show of hands supported applying for this Farm Viability grant. Don Stein stated that looking for cash as local share would be difficult. She also reported that they had been awarded a \$6,000 grant for marketing and outreach to local businesses about taking advantage of the C-PACE program for the towns that have opted into C-PACE.

*b. Regional Strategy for Pursuit of Additional Façade Improvement Program Funding.* Jocelyn Ayer stated that she and Rick had looked into the possibility of another Urban Action Grant to fund a regional façade program and was told that we would need our legislative delegation to request this from the Governor. There is no formal grant process for applying for these funds. A show of hands showed there was interest in another regional façade improvement program. Jocelyn noted that another possible funding mechanism would be a regional STEAP grant application. However, this would require one town to play the lead administrator role since STEAP funding can not come to the COG. Michael Criss said that Harwinton would consider playing that role. Curtis Rand expressed concern about competing demands on STEAP funding. The COG will continue to pursue finding funding.

8. Development of NHCOCG Position Statement Regarding Proposed Water Utility Coordinating Committee Boundaries. Don Stein reported the DPH has extended the time for public input. He suggested that a letter be written stating that the major rivers' watershed areas make more sense for WUCC boundaries than the boundaries currently proposed. Discussion followed. On a motion by Bob Valentine, and seconded by Craig Nelson, COG members voted to send a letter from the COG and also draft a letter for the towns to send on their own that reflects keeping the old boundaries.
9. Request for NHCOCG Endorsement of Elderly and Disabled Van Applications Submitted Under the 5310 Program. The NHCOCG received 5 applications for Section 5310A funding and one application for 5310B funding. Rick Lynn stated that he reviewed all six applications based on ConnDOT's selection criteria and all the applications scored well and presented a solid case for approval. On a motion by Mike Criss and seconded by Curtis Rand, COG members voted unanimously to endorse all applications with equal priority and send the proposed letter of endorsement included in the agenda packet. Doug Humes abstained.
10. Administrative Items.
  - a.* On a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Mark Lyon, the NWCCOG treasurer's report for 4/2014 was unanimously approved.
  - b.* On a motion by Mike Criss and seconded by Sue Dyer, the LHCEO financial statement for 4/2014 was unanimously approved.
  - c.* On a motion by Doug Humes and seconded by Tom McKeon, the NHCOCG minutes from the 5/8/2014 regular meeting and the financial statement for 4/2014 were unanimously approved.
  - d.* On a motion by Bob Valentine and seconded by Curtis Rand, the proposed NHCOCG officers for FY 2014-2015 were unanimously approved as follows:: Don Stein, Chairman; Mark Lyon, Vice-Chairman; Sue Dyer, Secretary; Bruce Adams, Treasurer, Pat Mechare, At-Large Member; and Leo Paul, Jr., At-Large Member. *e.* On a motion by Bob Valentine and seconded by Craig Nelson, the NHCOCG unanimously appointed Jim O'Leary and Mark Lyon to be the NHCOCG representatives to the REPT Steering Committee.

*f.* On a motion by Tom McKeon and seconded by Pat Mechare, NHCOG members unanimously endorsed the STIP Amendment for a Bridge Rehabilitation Project in Litchfield.

*g.* On a motion by Sue Dyer and seconded by Wade Cole, the Unified Planning Work Program Authorizing Resolution was proposed to be added to the agenda and was unanimously approved. Neil Ryan explained that the adopted UPWP agreement needs an authorizing resolution. On a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Curtis Rand, COG members unanimously endorsed the proposed authorizing resolution.

11. Committee Updates.

*a. Recycling Advisory Committee.* Sue Dyer reported that the HHW collection in Falls Village went smoothly with approximately 180 cars attending and 159 households. She thanked Pat Mechare, Bruce Adams, and Brent Colley for volunteering to work the event.

*b. Public Works Equipment Cooperative.* Wade Cole reported the sweepers are working well but they have had a problem with some lower cost brooms they purchased from another company and are working on getting better quality brooms. Rick Lynn reminded the towns of the other equipment available through the PWEC.

*c. Public Safety Task Force Update from DEMHS Region 5.* There was no update but iPads and tourniquets and tourniquet holders were distributed to the towns prior to the meeting.

12. Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. Don Stein stated that the LHCEO used to have a golf outing in July after their regular meeting, and proposed that a similar get-together be scheduled for the NHCOG. He asked staff to poll members on interest and a preferred date. There was no other business raised by members. On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 am.