

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE NHCOC MEETING OF July 10, 2014

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein
Burlington, Ted Shafer
Goshen, Robert Valentine
Kent, Bruce Adams
Morris, Barbara Bongiolatti
Roxbury, Barbara Henry
Warren, Craig Nelson
Winchester, Marsha Sterling

Canaan (Falls Village), Patricia Allyn Mechare
Colebrook, Thomas McKeon
Harwinton, Michael Criss
Litchfield, Leo Paul, Jr.
Norfolk, Susan Dyer
Torrington, Elinor Carbone
Washington, Mark Lyon

Others in Attendance:

Eric Hampton, DECD
Donna Shea, UConn
Sean Redding, CL&P
Chuck Burnham, CL&P
Erin Wilson, Torrington
Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOC Staff
Lois Pinney, NHCOC Staff

Jerry Rollet, Torrington PW
Anthony Lorenzetti, UConn
Kathy Gibson, CL&P
Hon. Roberta Willis, State Representative
Richard Lynn, NHCOC Staff
Darlene Krukar, NHCOC Staff

1. Call to Order, Opportunity for Public Comment. The meeting held at the Northwestern CT Chamber of Commerce, 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. Barbara Henry said Roxbury just received an application for a cell tower and there are concerns. They are also working on alternative housing. Pat Mechare said Falls Village is making progress on four new municipal projects. Bruce Adams thanked COG members for their help in supporting Kent on the tribal recognition issues. Barbara Bongiolatti stated that Morris is working on a bridge on Smokey Hollow Road. Marsha Sterling stated that Winchester appreciates being able to use the Harwinton Animal Shelter and progress is being made on bridge improvements in the town. Elinor Carbone stated that the building on Field Street in Torrington has been demolished to make room for the court house and the popular summer Main Street activities begin tonight. She stated that the cooperative arrangement that Torrington has with Litchfield and Goshen for animal control has been great. Michael Criss stated that Harwinton has entered into a contract with Barkhamsted and New Hartford as well as Winchester for animal control. Harwinton had a public hearing on two bridges and they have also had applications for two new cell towers. They are working on the Nutmeg network and the EOC center is under construction. Ted Shafer stated that he has received two new cell tower applications and that he attended a meeting on standalone prescription drop off boxes and would like this issue to be on a future agenda. Discussion followed. Tom

McKeon stated Colebrook will be having a hearing with the post office in a couple of weeks to discuss when the hours will be reduced. Don Stein stated that Barkhamsted has joined the Nutmeg Network. He talked about new legislation for Emergency Medical Services and would like this on a future agenda. Jean Speck from DEMHS is very knowledgeable about this. Barkhamsted has hired a consultant to review their roads and plan for road maintenance. Bob Valentine stated that Goshen hired a consultant several years ago to develop a roadway maintenance program using a special software program and it is working well.

3. Overview of DECD Programs of Municipal Interest Including Financial Assistance, Technical Assistance, and Tax Credits for Businesses. Eric Hampton introduced himself and gave a power point presentation on the programs available to help small business. He stated that small business is DECD's focus in the foreseeable future. They will help financially with loans and grants. He quickly reviewed some handouts that he made available to COG members. Erin Wilson stated that Eric Hampton is the point of contact for towns in our region for all DECD issues and is a good resource for answering questions.

4. Discussion of PURA Decision Pertaining to Tree Trimming by Utility Companies with Introductory Comments by Bob Valentine and Overview of Municipal Tree Warden Responsibilities by Jerry Rollett. Bob Valentine stated that the Town of Goshen has always used a volunteer tree warden and is concerned with the new ruling that they would have to hire a new employee. The municipal tree warden has to be certified by taking a state-sponsored class, or else be a professional forester or arborist. Jerry Rollett stated that he attended the class to become a certified tree warden. Certification is good for three years and you need to take continuing education classes to maintain certification. As the Tree Warden, Mr. Rollett stated that he has rights over trees in the public right of way and on town property. He also has control over any part of a tree that overhangs public land. He stated that Torrington works closely with CL&P and CL&P has been very cooperative. Jerry stated that CIRMA provides classes for issues related to tree wardens. Mark Lyon stated that he is concerned about the time that will be needed from his volunteers. Sean Redding from CL&P spoke on changes made to the state statute. CL&P will now need proof of receipt of notification to trim trees and needs written consent for trees on private land and notification for public right of way work. If the tree is a hazard to the public, CL&P can take it down without notification. Several COG members stated that they plan to send a town employee to the training class in order for them to serve as a certified tree warden. Discussion followed.

5. Overview of the Education and Technical Assistance Services Available through the Technology Transfer Center at the University of Connecticut, including the New Safety Circuit Rider Program. Donna Shea distributed and reviewed a handout. The Connecticut Technology Transfer Center (T2C) provides training classes on a variety of transportation issues. The T2C has a Public Works list serve to provide a forum for public works employees to share information. The T2C will bring a training class to your town if you provide them with a place to hold it. They would like to hear from the towns as to what training is needed in the area. Tony Lorenzetti stated that he is the Safety Circuit Rider Coordinator. He is available to help towns prepare a local road

safety plan. Their main focus is to prevent accidents. He distributed a handout that reflects the number of fatalities and non-fatal injuries listed in their database for local roads in the NHCOC region. He stated that towns can access a lot of information from their website and he would be willing to help towns find the information. Discussion followed.

6. Community and Economic Development Updates.

a. Addition of Burlington to the Northwestern CT CEDS. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Bob Valentine, COG members unanimously voted to add Burlington to the CEDS.

b. Preparation of Regional Infrastructure Plan as Recommended in CEDS. Jocelyn Ayer reviewed the draft regional infrastructure action plan that what was previously distributed by email. She stated that creating this Plan is a major recommendation in the CEDS and that the subcommittee working on it includes her, Rick Lynn, and Bill Baxter. The four main focus areas of the Plan are: maintaining and improving transportation of people and products; upgrading and expanding waste water treatment facilities; reducing energy costs; and improving internet and cell phone connections. If there are any other major issues that you don't see on the list, let her know.

She also reminded COG members that she needs a representative from each town on the Regional Planning Advisory Committee to attend the 5th Thursday events which are being held four times a year. The town representative just has to commit to coming to one meeting per year. She distributed a handout on the next scheduled 5th Thursday for July 31, 2014 and noted that the October 30th forum will include information on local control over cell tower siting

7. Emerging Opportunities.

a. Official Designation of "Regional Transportation Planning Organizations" for Rural Transportation Planning. Rick Lynn stated that the newest Federal Transportation Bill, known as "MAP-21", places an increased emphasis on non-metropolitan transportation planning. The proposed regulations for this bill specifically include an opportunity for States to designate "Regional Transportation Planning Organizations" for those regions that are not served by a Metropolitan Planning Organization. He is in the process of discussing the proposed designation with ConnDOT and will report back to COG members on any recommendations.

b. Establishment of Northwest Hills Regional Human Services Coordinating Council. Rick Lynn stated that as a result of the MORE Commission, regional planning areas now need to establish a Regional Human Services Coordinating Council. This new Coordinating Council could function as a sub-committee of the NHCOC, much like the Recycling Advisory Committee. In addition to representatives from eight different state agencies, the bill provides for COGs to also appoint representatives to serve on the Council. Any COG members interested in serving on the Council, or with suggestions for other representatives, are asked to contact Rick.

8. Administrative Items.

- a.* On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Sue Dyer, the NWCCOG treasurer's report for 5/2014 was unanimously approved.
- b.* On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Tom McKeon, the LHCEO financial statement for 5/2014 was unanimously approved.
- c.* On a motion by Pat Mechare and seconded by Mark Lyon, the NHCOC minutes from 6/12/2014 regular meeting and the financial statement for 5/2014 were unanimously approved.
- d.* Don Stein stated that the NHCOC is looking for a statement of interest from towns that are interested in purchasing a field tablet and software for their Assessors so that NHCOC staff can continue negotiations with Vision. Any towns interested in pursuing this opportunity are asked to contact COG staff by the end of the month.

9. Committee Updates.

- a. Recycling Advisory Committee.* Sue reported the next HHW collection day is September 13, 2014 at the Torrington Water Pollution Control Plant and we will hopefully have a paper shredding event and e-collection on the same day in Litchfield.
- b. Public Works Equipment Cooperative.* No report.
- c. Public Safety Task Force Update from DEMHS Region 5.* COG members were encouraged to submit the municipal after action report from the State Wide Exercise if they have not done so already.

10. Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 pm.