

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE NHCOG MEETING OF DECEMBER 10, 2015

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein	Canaan (Falls Village), Patricia Allyn Mechare
Burlington, Theodore Shafer	Warren, Craig Nelson
Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway	Goshen, Robert Valentine
Hartland, Wade Cole	Litchfield, Leo Paul, Jr.
New Hartford, Daniel Jerram	Morris, Tom Weik
North Canaan, Doug Humes	Roxbury, Barbara Henry
Sharon, Jessica Fowler	Kent, Bruce Adams
Torrington, Elinor Carbone	Washington, Mark Lyon
Harwinton, Mike Criss	Salisbury, Curtis Rand
Winchester, Laurie Besette	

Others in Attendance:

Richard Lynn, NHCOG Staff	Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOG Staff
Mike Muszynski, CCM	Joanna Wozniak-Brown, NHCOG Staff
Rep. Craig Minor	Catherine Awward, NW Reg. Workforce Invest. Board
Media Representatives	Eric McPhee, CT Dept. of Public Health
Other members of public	Lisa Lynch, Prime Time House
Kathy Weinstein, Prime Time House	Justin Milardo, CT Dept. of Public Health
Dave Murphy, Milone and MacBroom	Don Cuneo, NWCONNECT
Kim Maxwell, NWCONNECT	Rep. Jay Case

Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment. Don Stein, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.. There was no public comment offered.

Welcome to New NHCOG Members: Candy Perez, Town of Winchester and Tom Weik, Town of Morris. Don Stein congratulated Candy Perez and Tom Weik on their recent election and welcomed them to the NHCOG.

Summary of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act and Role of the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board. Catherine Awwad, Executive Director of the NW Regional Workforce Investment Board, introduced her organization which supports employment and training for regional workers and serves 41 municipalities. The Workforce Investment Board is currently working on a new four-year strategic plan for the region. Ms. Awwad would like to hear directly from both municipal leaders in the region and employers to better understand each town's current economic development initiatives and related workforce needs.

Overview of the Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) Planning Process for Western Connecticut. Eric McPhee, CT Dept of Public Health and Justin Milardo, and David Murphy, Milone and McBroom, Inc. Eric McPhee introduced the WUCC planning process and explained that the WUCCs are planning regions for water utility coordination. Three such regions have been established for Connecticut and these regions are based on COG boundaries. NHCOG is part of the Western CT WUCC. The state's three WUCCs will convene in early February and hold monthly meetings to discuss the preparation of water supply plans for the WUCCs. A major consideration will be the designation of exclusive service areas for the various water utilities, i.e. who is most appropriate to serve water where necessary. Eric stated that the meetings will be public

meetings and that anyone may attend. Discussion followed. Don Stein stated that Rick Lynn and he attended a recent meeting on the WUCC planning process and recommend that Joanna Wozniak-Brown represent the NHCOC at the regular meetings of the Western CT WUCC and report back to the COG as appropriate. It was the consensus of the COG that this would be an appropriate way to proceed.

Status of Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans in the Region.

- a. Annual Update of 9-town Northwest Corner Plans. David Murphy of Milone & MacBroom brought copies of the plans for the 9 towns and asked that the towns complete their annual Mitigation Action tracking.
- b. Request for Approval of Authorizing Resolution to Extend Agreement for 11-town Litchfield Hills Region. Rick Lynn presented the extension request to September of 2016 to provide time for the preparation of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. On a motion duly made and seconded, the extension was unanimously approved by the NHCOC.

State Representative Craig Minor update on legislative matters. Rep. Minor described the deficit mitigation and budget negotiation packages under discussion and commented on the status of legislative priorities of the NHCOC.

Update on Service Provided to the Regional Community by Prime Time House. Lisa Lynch, Executive Director, and Kathy Weinstein, Director of Development, described the services Prime Time House provides to the region, particularly in mental health and employment support. They distributed and reviewed a brochure on Prime Time House, and would appreciate support from member towns when they initiate a major campaign for Mental Health Awareness Month. .

Request for NHCOC Endorsement of Applications for Funding Under the Regional Performance Incentive Program.

- a. Regional Animal Shelter Design and Engineering. A consultant's report found a regional animal shelter to be feasible and desirable to service the Torrington area. The Animal Shelter Committee of the NHCOC recently met with OPM Under Secretary Scott Jackson, and it was agreed that an appropriate strategy would be to seek RPI funding to design the project and then funding under the new Regional Dog Pound Program to construct the facility. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Barbara Henry, the NHCOC voted unanimously to endorse this strategy.
- b. CT Rural Broadband Initiative now called NWCONNECT. Jessica Fowler presented on NWCONNECT, and their work to bring fiber optic cable and enhanced mobile phone coverage to the region. NWCONNECT seeks NHCOC support to apply for an RPI grant for a feasibility study for the region and \$10,000 from the COG for marketing and outreach. Discussion followed. On a motion by Mark Lyon, and seconded by Barbara Henry all voted in favor of the RPI application. It was decided that the \$10,000 request will come before the executive committee for discussion at its next meeting before coming back to the full board for its consideration.

Administrative Items

- a. Request for Approval of Minutes for 10/8/15 and 11/5/15. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Craig Nelson, the minutes were approved with Tom Weik abstaining.
- b. Request for Approval of Financial Statements for September and October 2015. On a motion duly made and seconded, the financial statements were approved.

- c. Request by ConnDOT for STIP Amendments Pertaining to Replacement of Highway Illumination Systems. On a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Craig Nelson, the proposed STIP amendments were unanimously approved.
- d. Comments on ConnDOT's "Non-Metropolitan Areas Consultative Planning Process". Following a brief discussion, and on a motion by Leo Paul and seconded by Craig Nelson, the document was unanimously endorsed.
- e. Meeting Schedule for 2016. On a motion by Pat Mechare, seconded by Jessica Fowler, the NHCOC meeting schedule for 2016 was unanimously approved.

Committee and NHCOC Staff Reports

- a. Legislative Committee Leo Paul and Barbara Henry, Co-Chairs. Leo stated that a joint meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and area legislators is being planned for the month of January. As with last year, the plan is to hold the meeting at the UConn Torrington campus. Barbara Henry stated that the CT Secretary of State is still refining the job description for the regional election monitor and we really cannot do much until this is completed and the MOU prepared. Rick Lynn stated that a per capita allocation of SGIA funding to the COGs, as proposed by some, would have a devastating impact on the rural COGs. OPM is charged with defining the formula. Dan Jerram made a motion to authorize Rick to write letter to OPM in support of an equitable distribution of SGIA funding to the COGs. Craig Nelson seconded the motion and all voted in favor.
- b. Recycling Advisory Committee. Rick reported that the RAC recently met and recommends that the existing contract with MXI Inc. be extended for one year even though it involves a price increase. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the NHCOC that we should issue a new RFP for these vendor services due to the price increase.
- c. Staff Assistance to Planning and Zoning Commissions in Preparing Municipal Plans of Conservation and Development. Jocelyn Ayer, due to meeting overrun, suggested we defer this topic to the next COG meeting. Jocelyn noted that NHCOC will be hosting the "2016 NWCT Economic Development Summit" on January 26th at South Farms in Morris. The forum will bring together local economic development group members, selectmen, and interested local business owners/employers with the State and regional groups that can assist them with their economic and community development efforts such as DECD, the region's Workforce Investment Board, CERC, SCORE, USDA, and others. She handed out a save the date flyer to the towns. She also asked COG members to vote for their favorite photographs of the region for the COG office and thanked members for their submissions

Town by Town Issues and Updates by COG Members. This item was postponed due to time constraints.

Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. Mark Lyon mentioned the work being done at recent REPT meetings, and the interest in increased attendance and participation by elected officials at the meetings. He noted that the budget includes funds for training that could be of use to them.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:27 pm.