

MINUTES OF THE NHCOC MEETING OF May 10, 2018

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Don Stein	Burlington, Ted Shafer
Canaan, Henry Todd	Colebrook, Tom McKeon
Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway	Goshen, Bob Valentine
Hartland, Wade Cole	Harwinton, Michael Criss
Morris, Tom Weik	New Hartford, Dan Jerram
Norfolk, Matthew Riiska	North Canaan, Charles Perotti
Sharon, Brent Colley	Salisbury, Curtis Rand
Torrington, Elinor Carbone	Washington, Mark Lyon
Winchester, Bob Geiger	

Others in Attendance:

Sara Radasci, CT DOT; Felicia Jones, NWConneCT; Donald Lowe, town of Sherman; Christian Allyn, town of North Canaan; Priscilla Pavel, town of Cornwall; John Johnson, Kent Planning & Zoning; Cathy Awaad and Michael Hayden, NRWIB; Evan Dobos, CivicLift; Gertrude O'Sullivan, Foundation for Community Health; Steve Silver, Eversource; Craig Minor, Brian Ohler and Jay Case, CT State Legislature; Jocelyn Ayer, Joanna Wozniak-Brown, and Rick Lynn, NHCOC staff; Media Representatives

Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment.

The meeting, held at the NHCOC office, was called to order by Chairman Mark Lyon at 10:06 a.m.

Town-by-Town Issues and Updates by COG Members.

Most towns provided updates on their budget process as well as recent bridge or culvert repairs.

Bob Valentine announced a partnership between the Goshen Business Circle and the Fire Department to put up American flags along Route 63.

Mark Lyon introduced Don Lowe, First Selectman of Sherman.

Matt Riiska highly recommends the group CPM based on their successful demolition of two town-owned buildings.

Charles Perotti announced that Geer Adult Day Center won its case to be assessed as a non-profit.

Mayor Carbone announced Torrington will become a Purple Heart City. Purple Heart recipients from other towns will participate.

Bob Geiger explained that Lambert Kay, now Winsted Edgeworks, is under renovation and the American Mural Project is under construction.

Michael Criss explained that there will be some ordinances on the upcoming town vote including an ordinance to allow the Board of Selectmen to sign intergovernmental agreements like the one requested by the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board rather than requiring a town meeting.

Dan Jerram said the town recently purchased a 100-acre farm and preserved land along the Farmington River.

CivicLift: A Community Website and Engagement Platform. Evan Dobos, CEO/Founder of CivicLift with Introductory Comments by Jocelyn Ayer.

Jocelyn Ayer explained that the new CEDS strategy is 5-year plan to support jobs and to grow the economy with core tasks around: a fiber optic broadband network, food/agriculture, tourism, innovation and entrepreneurship. We will achieve the CEDS goals and strategies through public-private partnerships. The community website initiative that Evan will be presenting would implement a core CEDS strategy and is an example of how a public-private partnership can work.

Evan Dobos presented on his CivicLift platform, a tailored website to inform residents and visitors about events, destinations and services . Farmington, Waterbury, Danbury, and Torrington use this platform already to engage residents and businesses. The platform can collect events and information from existing civic calendars (including CTVisit), social media, and local businesses to automatically populate a region-wide event calendar and add any additional events. With a mixture of news and announcements, detailed blog posts, and a searchable events calendar, residents and visitors would have easy and mobile friendly access to the latest information all in one place.

Local businesses can opt for a premium listing with a bigger map marking, photos, and dedicated page on website with links to social media, upcoming events, contact information, description. Premium listings are \$250/yr. Custom sites for individual towns can be created for \$1000/year. Custom sites would include the town's name, logo, and images, would display only the town's content and events, would be hosted on a domain name of the town's choice (such as www.VisitFallsVillage.com), and integrated with the regional site so that local events get regional exposure.

Most towns agreed on the benefits of a regionally coordinated events website. Towns will need to assist in marketing the resource to their residents and businesses. Don Stein made a motion that the NHCOC participate in the proposed CivicLift regional website. The motion was seconded by Elinor Carbone and Henry Todd, and all voted in favor.

Legislative Update

Mark Lyon invited the state legislators in attendance to provide an update on the newly passed state budget. Representative Ohler shared with towns the latest state aid figures by municipality. Legislators stated it was a compromise budget with town aid road made whole, elimination of the cap on the mill rate, and a provision that the Governor cannot make a mid-year cut in ECS funding.

Senator Miner said revenue sectors are not performing as anticipated. The income tax is showing some signs of improvement but sales tax is depressed. There were not long-term structural changes to address pension obligations or other deficit challenges.

Overview of Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board and Request for NHCOC Towns to Sign Intergovernmental Agreement. Catherine Awwad, Executive Director.

Catherine Awaad & Deputy Director Mike Hayden explained the history of the NRWIB and the need for an updated signed agreement by July 1. The NRWIB serves 43 communities and all of NHCOC with federal and state funds. They supervise training programs, communicate with economic development agencies, and provide other workforce development support.

Of the proposed intergovernmental agreement, Bob Valentine (as previously mentioned by Craig Nelson) expressed concern with the provision that states the municipalities will be held liable for ineligible expenditures made by the NRWIB . If the NRWIB has insurance to cover such expenditures should they occur, Bob questioned why this provision would be necessary.. Bob Geiger also expressed concern about this contractual provision. Ms. Awaad said that provision is required by federal regulations. The liability

would be shared on a percentage basis. For example, Goshen's share would be 0.36% of the liability. Since 2003, there have been no claims and no dollars expended for such ineligible expenditures. One claim in 2000 was set by the then Executive Director who was dismissed for cause. Since the City of Waterbury was the employer of record, the City took care of liability at that time. Tom Weik asked for an email explaining the town's potential shared liability and the reasons that the NRWIB does not believe this will lead to a cost to the town so he can share it with their entire BOS. Michael Criss explained that under his current town charter, the signing of this agreement has to go to town meeting. Harwinton's town counsel advised him to sign it after the town meeting and to propose an ordinance to eliminate the need to go to town meeting on agreements like this.

Summary of ConnDOT's Municipal Grant Program and Request for NHCOC to Continue to Serve as Applicant for Towns Served by Geer. Joanna Wozniak-Brown stated that

ConnDOT offers matching grants to municipalities who dedicate cash and/or in-kind services towards elderly transportation. Towns may use the money towards their own senior bus or for participation in programs like Geer and the Northwest CT Transit District. Towns must sign the Maintenance of Effort sheet, the Grant Assignment sheet (if using a third party), and submit the budget sheets showing the transportation line item. If towns have in-kind contributions, they should submit those as well. It is requested that the required forms be sent to the NHCOC as ConnDOT is seeking COG assistance in aggregating and submitting the paperwork. Joanna stated she is available for any questions on this program or the required forms.

Administrative Items

a. Approval of Minutes for Regular Meeting of April 12, 2018. On a motion duly made and seconded, all voted in favor.

b. Approval of Financial Statement for March 2018. On a motion duly made and seconded, all voted in favor.

c. Nominating Committee Recommendation for NHCOC Officers and Executive Committee Members for FY 2018-2019. Ted Shafer, Nominating Committee Chairman, thanked fellow committee members Tom McKeon and Elinor Carbone. The proposed officers are: Bruce Adams as Chairman, Leo Paul as Vice Chairman, Bob Valentine as Treasurer, and Don Stein as Secretary. The two at-large members nominated to the Executive Committee include Craig Nelson and Mark Lyon. No other nominations were presented. The election of officers will occur at the June meeting of the COG, subject to the nominations made at today's meeting.

d. Request by ConnDOT for Endorsement of Proposed Amendment to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Pertaining to Transportation Demand Management. Sara Radasci explained that CTRides works with DOT to help with commuting options. The program is funded by air quality funds. On a motion by Henry Todd, seconded by Curtis Rand, the amendment was endorsed. Rick Lynn noted the reduction of a significant number of car trips and extensive gas savings as a result of the program. All voted in favor of the motion.

e. Approval of Proposed NHCOC Budget for FY 2018-2019 as Endorsed by the NHCOC Executive Committee. Bob Valentine said the adopted state budget from Hartford will mean NHCOC won't need to rely on its rainy day fund in order to balance the proposed budget. He stated his support for the proposed budget. On a motion by Tom McKeon, seconded by Michael Criss, all voted in favor of the proposed budget.

f. Authorizing Resolution to Apply for FFY 2017 Emergency Management Performance Grant for Regional Haz Mat Team. On a motion by Don Stein, seconded by Michael Criss, all voted in favor of authorizing the resolution.

Committee Updates

a. Legislative Committee. Michael Criss discussed the adopted state budget. He expressed disappointment that the state didn't allocate funds for the ongoing pension obligations.

- b. Regional Animal Facility Committee. Elinor Carbone explained that the Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program is no longer available and the committee is looking for other funding sources for construction. The facility is in the final stages of design and the Committee will keep COG members up to date on funding efforts. Brent Colley offered space in Sharon's animal shelter if needed because it is underutilized.
- c. DEMHS Region 5. Mark Lyon reminded towns of a statewide exercise in June. May 21 is the REPT Steering Committee meeting to allocate unspent funds and the Steering Committee is looking for ideas on how to best utilize the unspent funds.

Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.