



## MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 12, 2019 MEETING

### Members in attendance:

Don Stein, (Chairman) Barkhamsted  
Henry Todd, Canaan  
Gordon Ridgway, Cornwall  
Wade Cole, Hartland  
Jean Speck, Kent  
Tom Weik, Morris  
Matt Riiska, Norfolk  
Barbara Henry, Roxbury  
Brent Colley, Sharon  
Timothy Angevine, Warren  
Bob Geiger, Winchester Town Manager

Ted Shafer, Burlington  
Tom McKeon, Colebrook  
Bob Valentine, Goshen  
Michael Criss, Harwinton  
Denise Raap, Litchfield  
Daniel Jerram, New Hartford  
Charlie Perotti, No. Canaan  
Curtis Rand, Salisbury  
Elinor Carbone, Torrington Mayor  
Jim Brinton, Washington  
Candy Perez, Winchester Mayor

### Others in attendance:

Gertrude O'Sullivan, Foundation for Community Health  
Maria Horn, 64<sup>th</sup> District State Representative  
Rufus DeRham NWCT Arts Council  
Janell Mullen and Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOCG Staff  
Media Representatives

Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don Stein at 10:05 a.m. Hedy Ayers stated that Eversource colleagues would be following up on the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting held with COG representatives to discuss emergency response procedures. Don Stein suggested adding Eversource Storm Response to a future COG agenda. H. Ayers mentioned that there have been many scams recently involving bill payment and she wanted to inform the Chief Elected Officials about this so that they could alert the public.

Welcome to New NHCOCG Members: Jean Speck, Kent First Selectman; Denise Raap, Litchfield First Selectman; Tim Angevine, Warren First Selectman; and Jim Brinton, Washington First Selectman. Chairman Don Stein welcomed the new COG members to the Board and encouraged their active participation in COG activities.

The order of agenda items was shifted due to the availability of presenters.

Municipal Concern with "Mental Health First Aid Training" Required Under Public Act No. 19-191 entitled "An Act Addressing Opioid Use" (see Attachment A). Henry Todd brought attendees attention to a new State mandate requiring the training of emergency responders with respect to mental health first aid. H. Todd expressed concern regarding the limited availability of this training and the already over extended volunteers in the area. State Rep. Horn addressed the COG by mentioning her efforts to question the practicality of this State mandate. Gordon Ridgway suggested that the COG survey the area's first responders to ask how the COG could support them on this and other issues.

Update on Regional Food Hub and Farm-to-School Project. Renee Giroux, consultant to the NHCOC, gave a brief overview of the Food Hub, which is now in its third year of operations. In its first year they worked with 6-7 farms and they are now working with 27 farms, aggregating this locally grown food and finding new markets for it. R. Giroux mentioned three special projects the Food Hub has been participating in: Farm-to School (working with the school districts in our region on procurement through the Hub of locally grown produce), Senior Nutrition, and Produce Prescription. Jocelyn Ayer mentioned that the Regional Food Hub was an initiative of the regional economic development strategy

Overview of the Health Enhancement Community Initiative and Paramedic Intercept Service Expansion. Brian Mattiello, Regional Vice President for Strategy and Community Development and John Capobianco, Vice President for Operations, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital. Brian Mattiello provided an overview of the Health Enhancement Community Initiative. He said no action was needed from the COG Board at this time; he just wanted to make them aware of this pre-planning project. He then described the unmet need within the region for paramedic intercept services based on unanswered calls. He hopes to supplement services in peripheral towns. Don Stein asked about Trinity Health and their current services. Charlotte Hungerford intends to supplement services and does not aim to replace existing services. Bob Valentine asked about satellite locations for paramedic vehicles. B. Mattiello mentioned that none were planned at this time. They are hoping to gain funding for 2-3 trucks to be based in Torrington/Winsted to start. The request for a COG letter of support was unanimously approved.

Update on Western Regional Tourism District and Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. Dan Bolognani, Chairman of Western Regional Tourism District and Executive Director of Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. Dan Bolognani described the work of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area which encompasses 29 towns in the Housatonic River watershed. Their goals are economic vitality, cultural & natural resource preservation, and conservation. They have designated the area as a National Heritage Area so that they can move fluidly across town, county, and state lines. They partner with many local organizations on various educational programming initiatives. Upcoming initiatives include a barn census, thoughts to designate the Housatonic River as a National Water Trail. Bob Geiger remarked that the Regional Tourism Bureau will likely be going through many changes and to stay tuned.

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

- a. Regional Animal Control Facility Construction. Elinor Carbone and Bob Valentine summarized the proposal which would provide funding for construction of a “shovel ready” regional facility that has been a regional priority for many years. Following a motion duly made and seconded, the application was unanimously endorsed.
- b. Special Education Collaboration with Ed Advance. Jeff Kitching summarized the application. On a motion duly made and seconded, the application was unanimously endorsed.
- c. Regional Food Hub Processing Capacity in Collaboration with EdAdvance. Following a summary of the proposed project, discussion ensued regarding whether submitting multiple applications would be counter-productive to getting the COG’s top priorities funded. Bob Valentine and Mayor Carbone emphasized the importance of the Regional Animal Control Facility. Following additional discussion, and on a motion duly made and seconded, COG members voted to endorse the proposed application with Mayor Carbone abstaining.

Administrative Items

- a. Approval of Minutes for Regular Meeting of October 10, 2019. On a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved.
- b. Approval of Financial Statements for 9/2019 and 10/2019. On a motion duly made and seconded, the financial statements were unanimously approved.

- c. Acceptance of NHCOC Audit for FY 2018-2019. On a motion duly made and seconded, the audit was unanimously accepted.
- d. Nomination and Election of NHCOC Secretary for Unexpired Term in FY 2019-2020. Chairman Don Stein nominated Charlie Perotti to serve in this capacity. There were no other nominations from the floor. On a motion duly made a seconded, Charlie Perotti was elected to serve as NHCOC Secretary..
- e) Appointment of NHCOC Representatives to
- 1) Region 5 DEMHS Steering Committee. Tom Weik was nominated to serve in this capacity and was subsequently appointed.
  - 2) NWC Economic Development Corporation. Gordon Ridgway, Brent Colley, Bob Valentine, and Denise Raap were nominated to serve on the EDC Board with Gordon Ridgway, Don Stein, Henry Todd, and Denise Raap to serve as COG representatives on the EDC Executive Committee. The nominations were subsequently approved by the COG on a motion duly made and seconded.
  - 3) Legislative Committee. Michael Criss was appointed to serve as Chair and all COG members will be invited to attend meetings of the Legislative Committee.
- f) Approval of NHCOC Meeting Schedule for 2020. The proposed meeting scheduled passed unanimously.
- g) Action on Draft Letter to OPM Regarding Regionalization. Members agreed to send the letter as drafted with modified wording suggested by Michael Criss regarding regional revaluations.
- h) Authorization to Enter into Agreement with GIS consultant NEGEO for preparation of a "Region 5 Parcel Mapping for Emergency Response, Phase 1" project. Janell Mullen summarized the proposed project and stated that the \$55,750.00 project costs would be funded by DEHMS. On a motion duly made and seconded, the request was unanimously approved.

Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. There was no other business raised and the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.