



## MINUTES OF THE JUNE 11, 2020 NHCOC ZOOM MEETING

DATE: Thursday, June 11, 2020  
TIME: 10:00 a.m.  
LOCATION: Virtual Zoom Platform Meeting ID: 897 5195 9274

### Members in Attendance:

Don Stein, Chairman, Barkhamsted	Ted Shafer, Burlington
Henry Todd, Canaan	Gordon Ridgway, Cornwall
Bob Valentine, Goshen	Magi Winslow, Hartland
Michael Criss, Harwinton	Denise Raap, Litchfield
Tom Weik, Morris	Matt Riiska, Norfolk
Charlie Perotti, North Canaan	Barbara Henry, Roxbury
Curtis Rand, Salisbury	Elinor Carbone, Torrington
Timothy Angevine, Warren	Jim Brinton, Washington
Bob Geiger, Winchester Town Manager	

### Others in Attendance:

John Field, DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator	Martin Connor, ESF-14 Chair
Maria Horn, CT State Representative	Steve Silver, Eversource
Rick Lynn, NHCOC staff	Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOC staff
Janell Mullen, NHCOC staff	Darlene Krukar, NHCOC staff

Opportunity for Public Comment. Don Stein, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM by asking for public comment. Steve Silver of Eversource just noted that they were carrying on business as usual.

### Town by Town Updates and Issues, with Focus on Town Hall and Municipal Recreation Area Re Opening Plans.

Don Stein, Barkhamsted, began by announcing that the swimming area on the MDC reservoir will be open. He has vetoed the opening of the senior center, but is endorsing an outdoor gathering for the seniors. Ted Shafer, Burlington, mentioned that the senior center remains closed. It will likely remain closed until the fall. The Town is doing a modified summer camp. There is some discussion amongst the youth sports leagues, such as little league and soccer. Henry Todd, Canaan, mentioned that the town pool will be open on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. All of the seniors have been given Ipads so that they can communicate with each other. He added that Canaan Town Hall is still open by appointment only. Those entering from the public tend to be those doing title searches. Gordon Ridgway, Cornwall, mentioned that the opening of the town beach will take place on June 20<sup>th</sup>. There is a food delivery service for people that need it in town. He commented that the Town Hall is still closed to the public and that remote meetings have been well-received by the town boards and commissions. Bob Valentine, Goshen, followed by updating that they plan to open the library by appointment only. They are in the process of applying sneeze guards, providing PPE, and hand

sanitizer. Face masks will also be required in the library. Plexiglass and sneeze guards have been installed in their Town Hall. Summer camp will open up to 40 students. Magi Winslow, Hartland, followed by noting that staff has been tested. The Town Clerk's office is her biggest concern since they are frequently dealing with customers in the Town Hall. The town beach is open with strict regulations. The library is still closed. There will be a drive-by graduation on Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. Mike Criss, Harwinton, drafted a re-open plan for the Town. Summer camp has been cancelled this year and the senior center will remain closed. He is waiting for guidance on youth sports. Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup> will be the first day that the Town Hall will be open to the public. There will be temperature checks for those entering the building. The library will be doing curbside pick-up. The playground and the basketball court remain closed. Meetings will continue virtually. Denise Raap, Litchfield, mentioned that there is not a senior center in Litchfield, but there is a community center, which will have a soft opening at the end of June. Most of the programs have been moved outside. Summer camp will not be held this year. The town beach is open. Charlie Perotti, North Canaan, mentioned they are preparing to open the pool which is undergoing some repairs. Barbara Henry, Roxbury, said that many seniors are clamoring for the center to open. She inquired about other senior programs during this time. She plans to open the playground and will hire someone to be there to constantly clean it. Tom Weik, Morris, mentioned that the town beach is currently open. The senior events include a picnic and the possibility of a concert. Matt Riiska, Norfolk, stated that the town beach will open on Saturday. He mentioned moving the senior program outside to the ball fields. Curtis Rand, Salisbury, mentioned that the town beach has opened, and they will limit capacity. He plans to keep the playground closed. There are remote programs such as yoga and balancing exercises for seniors. They are offering recreational lessons such as kayaking on Lakeville Lake. Mayor Carbone, Torrington, stated that the pool would not be open as all the safety precautions would be cost-prohibitive. The traditional camps will not take place. A virtual program for children will take place. There will be some family friendly drive-in movie offerings. The summer concert series will be held. Little league and softball seasons will occur. The Sullivan Senior Center is not ready to open yet but grab and go lunches continue to be provided. The Mayor did ask about how other towns are managing those paying taxes during this time. Tim Angevine, Warren, mentioned that seniors are benefitting from virtual platforms, such as Zoom. The Town beach is open. Jim Brinton, Washington, stated that the senior center remains closed. The senior bus will be up and running next week. The town beach will open on June 20<sup>th</sup> with a set capacity. The tennis courts and ball fields are open, but the basketball courts and the playgrounds are not. Bob Geiger, Winchester, stated that the senior center remains closed, but there is meal pick-up occurring. The town beaches on Highland Lake are open. To conclude the Town by-Town update, Don Stein mentioned that all town employees were tested by an organization called AFC.

#### Region 5 Parcel Mapping for Enhanced Emergency Response and Associated Projects.

Janell Mullen, NHCOC, began her presentation by sharing her screen so that others could see the parcel mapping that was developed. She stated that NHCOC began working with New England GEO in January to develop a standardized way to digitize parcels for the 43 towns that make up DEMHS Region 5. This project's purpose was to enhance emergency response and the E-911 system. She mentioned that the data can be used by member towns for further planning practices. The next phase in the project will be to map the critical facilities in DEMHS Region 5. Don Stein added that property owner information will be omitted when the data is shared with third parties.

#### Overview of Proposed Economic Development Projects Submitted by the NWC Economic Development Corporation for Funding with EDA Grant.

Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOC, began by stating that the COG provides fiscal administration and staff support for the Northwest Connecticut Economic Development Corporation (EDC). The Northwest Connecticut EDC just got their Year 2 EDA grant funding for \$60,000 to implement the CEDS

(Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy). The NWC EDC was eligible to apply for additional CARES Act Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds (up to \$400,000) because the region is an officially designated economic development district, one of three in the state. The \$399,622 funding request was submitted June 4<sup>th</sup> and is detailed in the board packet for this meeting. If funded, activities will include addressing broadband needs, building capacity of the Northwest CT Food Hub, direct outreach and assistance to small businesses and supporting small businesses through the [DiscoverLitchfieldHills.com](http://DiscoverLitchfieldHills.com), CivicLift platform. A visitor guide will be the focus for next summer. Don Stein added that along with Kim Maxwell, he will be reaching out to legislators to leverage federal funding in order to support broadband in the region.

Request for Authorization to Expand Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update to Cover all 21 Towns in the Northwest Hills Region. Rick Lynn, NHCOC, began by summarizing that Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans need to be updated on a five-year cycle to be eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation grant funding. Milone & MacBroom was selected to update the plan for nine member towns at the April meeting. Dan Jerram, New Hartford, suggested at the April meeting that we look into updating all 21 municipal plans at the same time so that the NHCOC as a whole can be on the same time frame. Milone and MacBroom offered to include the additional 12 COG towns for \$32,000. Since this additional funding is not eligible for federal funding at this time, Rick Lynn suggested that the COG consider paying for this \$32,000 plus the local share for the 9 original towns out of the COG's reserve fund. The proposal was moved by Henry Todd and seconded by Mike Criss. Barbara Henry stated that Roxbury was denied for grant funding of a proposed project, but she is still in favor of updating the plan. Matt Riiska, Norfolk, asked about other member towns getting a grant successfully under this program. Rick Lynn, NHCOC, mentioned that Barkhamsted had applied for riverbank restoration and was not successful when they applied. He mentioned that the update of the plan, in and of itself, can be beneficial to identify and prioritize risks and vulnerabilities. Bob Valentine, Goshen, asked about the types of grants that member-towns could be eligible for. Don Stein discussed his riverbank restoration application. Barbara Henry stated that they had applied for culvert repair and that they will re-apply during this cycle. The motion passed with 15 affirmative votes and 2 negative votes. Matt Riiska and Bob Valentine voted against the motion.

#### Status of Organization and Function of Local and Regional Recovery Committees.

Marty Connor, Chairman, ESF-14 (Long Term Recovery) for Region 5 mentioned that Rick Lynn and Janell Mullen also serve on this initiative. Marty mentioned that about half of the local coordinators have been named within the region. He urged member towns to submit contact names of local coordinators to John Field to address unmet needs in the Northwest Hills region. Marty Connor mentioned that childcare will arise as a large issue when parents start to return to work. Don Stein, Barkhamsted, added that their long-term recovery committee is very active in Barkhamsted. They are currently assisting small businesses with Phase 2 re-opening. Mayor Carbone has been hosting tele-Town Halls for the City of Torrington. She has developed informational sessions by business sector to help them reopen and follow the proper safety protocols. The Torrington Area Health District has been very helpful with this initiative. Bob Valentine, Goshen, added that their long-term recovery committee has developed surveys for various sectors of the economy. They are hoping to identify unmet needs moving forward.

#### Introduction of Noah Swanson, SustainableCT Summer Intern.

Rick Lynn, NHCOC, introduced the summer intern, Noah Swanson. He is a UConn student who hails from East Granby. He will serve as the Sustainable CT Fellow in the region as well as assisting with other related projects at the NHCOC.

### Administrative Items

- a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting of May 14, 2020. Bob Valentine moved the approval of the minutes. Barbara Henry seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Approval of Financial Statement for April 2020. Mike Criss moved the approval. Curtis Rand seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- c. Election of NHCOC Officers and Executive Committee for FY 2020-2021. The proposed slate of the May meeting (Attachment H) was moved by Bob Geiger. Seconded by Curtis Rand. The motion passed unanimously.
- d. Request for Approval of Regional Service Grant Spending Plan and Budget and NHCOC Goals and Objectives for FY 2020-2021. Rick Lynn stated that a major funding source for the NHCOC is the Regional Service Grant. The proposed spending plan addresses statutory requirements and identifies other recommended COG work tasks. The proposed motion is to endorse the spending plan and budget and forward it to OPM. Bob Valentine moved. Matt Riiska seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- e. Request for Approval of ConnDOT 5310 Program Grant Application in Support of the Rural Independent Transportation Service (RITS). Rick Lynn, NHCOC, gave an overview of the program that provides trips for seniors to non-emergency medical trips in our rural setting. The transit providers include the Sullivan Senior Center, EdAdvance, GEER, and Northwestern CT Transit District. In addition to operating funds, the request also includes the purchase of a new mini-van for the Sullivan Senior Center. Curtis Rand moved. Mike Criss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- f. Request for NHCOC Letter of Support for OSWA Applications. Rick Lynn stated that there are three requests that the NHCOC has received for a letter of support for proposed open space acquisitions. These requests are from the towns of Washington, Warren, and Litchfield. Denise Raap began with the property in Litchfield. The Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy is a 39-acre property bordered by two streams and is comprised of alluvial marsh. Tim Angevine followed with the application for the Warren Land Trust which is looking to protect two parcels including one with dairy farmland. Jim Brinton of Washington asked the NHCOC to support a grant that would dedicate three parcels to add to the Steep Rock Preserve. Ted Shafer moved. Bob Valentine seconded. The motion to provide a letter of support for all three proposals passed unanimously.
- g. Authorizing Resolution to Continue Serving as Applicant for EMPG Funding in Support of the Region 5 Haz-Mat Team. Bob Valentine moved and Henry Todd seconded the motion that would provide equipment and training to the regional Haz-Mat team. The motion passed unanimously.
- h. Approval of Authorizing Agreement between NHCOC and Geer for State Matching Grant Program. Charlie Perotti moved. Mike Criss seconded the item. The motion passed unanimously.

### Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment.

April Chaplin, the mobility manager for the Kennedy Center, brought to the member towns attention that her organization developed a social enterprise as a result of the pandemic and is able to provide PPE in the area. The PPE is available for purchase via [palmandable.com](http://palmandable.com), [ppeplease.com](http://ppeplease.com), and the [kennedycenterinc.org](http://kennedycenterinc.org). She encouraged members to reach out to her directly if they plan to place an order. Her email is: [achaplin@kennedyctr.org](mailto:achaplin@kennedyctr.org). The proceeds will go back to programs that support those with disabilities.

Chairman Stein added that emergency responders are getting a surplus of masks and that member-towns could look into getting masks from them.

Magi Winslow, Hartland, added a comment regarding safe elections and the funding that was earmarked for this election season. She mentioned that she was told to reserve some funding in the town budget to ensure a safe election.

Curtis Rand asked if other towns were participating in the FEMA webinars.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell M. Mullen, NHCOG