

MINUTES OF THE NHCOG MEETING
December 9, 2021 held via Zoom

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Don Stein	Burlington, Douglas Thompson
Canaan, Henry Todd	Colebrook, Christopher Johnstone
Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway	Goshen, Todd Carusillo
Harwinton, Michael Criss	Kent, Jean Speck
Litchfield, Denise Raap	Morris, Tom Weik
New Hartford, Dan Jerram	Norfolk, Matt Riiska
North Canaan, Charlie Perotti	Salisbury, Curtis Rand
Sharon, Brent Colley	Washington, Jim Brinton
Warren, Greg LaCava	Winchester, Josh Kelly

Others in Attendance:

Hedy Ayers, Eversource; John Field, DEMHS Region 5; Mike Muszynski, CCM; Brian Mattiello, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital; John Simoncelli, Greenwoods Counseling; Betsey Paynter, media representatives.

NHCOG Staff: Rob Phillips, Jocelyn Ayer, Janell Mullen, Darlene Krukar and Sarah Better

Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Don Stein at 10:04 am. John Simoncelli began by reporting a “spike alert” now more ever in the last few months in Litchfield County; Hedy Ayers of Eversource highlighted single point of contact forms need to be updated for the member-towns; Craig Nelson welcomed the new leaders to their positions. As the director of NWCTD, he noted that the transit district had received check for \$10,000.00 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

Toast of Appreciation and Welcome to new Selectmen Don began with a thank you to all who have served; Dan Jerram wished the outgoing leaders the best of luck; Don Stein gave a welcome to new members- Todd Carusillo (Goshen), Douglas Thompson (Burlington), Patrick Roy (Roxbury), Chris Johnstone (Colebrook), Greg LaCava Warren).

Report of the Executive Director. Rob Phillips, NHCOG Executive Director, thanked Darlene & Jocelyn for their service, Jocelyn will be moving on from 14 years of service at the NHCOG to work for the Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity. Darlene is retiring after 23 years of services as the Financial/Office Manager. Rob also extended a welcome to Betsey Paynter keeping the momentum of the economic development initiatives.

Municipal Forum. Chairman Stein prompted any Chief Elected Official to ask any questions they may have at this time. Provided there were none, he moved on to the ARPA update.

ARPA Update. Mike Muszynski of CCM began his presentation by discussing eligibility for ARPA funding. There are resources available via the [Connecticut Conference of Municipalities' website](#). He emphasized using the funds for economic recovery items rather than development. He mentioned that the funds can be used for loss revenue as well.

Todd Carusillo, Goshen, added they had used funds to update the Town’s emergency management director’s laptop as an eligible expense.

Overview of recently Conducted Health Needs Assessment. Brian Mattiello, Senior System Director for Social Impact, Strategy and Integration of Charlotte Hungerford Hospital began by discussing the community needs assessment. He mentioned that in a year a more in-depth assessment will also take place with the NHCOG member-towns.

DEMHS Update. John Field, DEMHS Region 5 Supervisor, began by mentioning the rise in COVID cases. CT is currently at an 8% positivity rate. Testing is inadequate in the region. Vaccination/booster sites continue to see activity.

Next steps on regionally coordinated Fiber-to-Home Broadband initiative/ARPA Funds Don Stein presented an option to use ARPA funds for FTTH for consideration by towns in the region.

Update on CCM's Special Committee on Opioids Settlement.

Chairman Stein encouraged towns who have not registered to be a party to the settlement, to do so prior to the early January deadline date. If the state does not reach a 95% participation rate overall, the settlement payout would be substantially reduced to participating municipalities.

Administrative Items

a) Update on Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) Progress. Janell Mullen, NHCOG. Janell began by introducing herself as Regional Planner to those she hasn't met yet. She mentioned that all 21 towns were included in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP) update and will all be on the same cycle moving forward. This work is funded by Federal Emergency Management Agency pre-disaster mitigation funding and led by SLR Corporation (formerly Milone & MacBroom). FEMA requires NHMP as a condition for receiving certain types of non-disaster assistance. Plans must be updated every five (5) years. At this point in the process, the multijurisdictional plan has been submitted to FEMA and approval is anticipated in the very near term. The next step will be for local governments to approve and adopt the plan.

b) ACTION - Resolution to support EMPG Regional Hazardous Materials Teams Grant for 2021-2022 Period in the Amount of \$65,000 (Attachment B). This item was moved by Henry Todd and seconded by Tom Weik. The motion passed unanimously with 16 members voting.

c) ACTION - Kent Land Trust/Warren Land Trust: Application for State Recreational Trails Grant Funding (Attachment C). Henry Todd moved and Jean Speck seconded this item. The motion passed unanimously.

d) ACTION - Acceptance of Audit for FY 2020-21 (Previously Distributed). Dan Jerram moved to accept the audit for FY 2020-2021. Henry Todd seconded the motion. Dan Jerram, New Hartford, inquired about what accounts are federally insured and what are not? The COG staff will be reviewing this. The motion passed unanimously.

e) ACTION - Nomination and Election of NHCOG Vice Chairman for Unexpired Term in FY 2021-2022. Don Stein nominated Henry Todd to serve in the position. There were no other nominations. Dan Jerram moved to elect Henry Todd as NHCOG Vice Chairman. Curtis Rand seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

f) ACTION - Approval of Minutes for October 14, 2021 (Attachment D). Jean Speck moved to approve the minutes for the meeting of October 2021. Henry Todd seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

g) ACTION - Approval of Financial Statements for September & October (Attachments E & F). Jim Brinton moved to approve the financial statements. Todd Carusillo seconded the motion to approve. The motion passed unanimously.

h) ACTION - Approval of 2022 and Jan 2023 Meeting Schedule (See Attachment G). NHCOC Chairman Don Stein mentioned looking forward to returning to in-person meetings when it is safe to do so. Mike Criss moved to approve the NHCOC Meeting Schedule. Denise Raap seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

i) ACTION - Appointment of NHCOC Representatives to the Northwest CT Economic Development Corporation Executive Committee (NWCT EDC). The proposed slate included Don Stein, Josh Kelly, Denise Raap, and Henry Todd. Tom Weik moved to approve. Curtis Rand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

j) ACTION - Appointment of NHCOC Members to the 2022 Legislative Committee. Don Stein asked who would be interested in serving on the Legislative Committee for the upcoming year. Jean Speck, Gordan Ridgway, Denise Raap, Don Stein, and Dan Jerram volunteered to be involved. Michael Criss offered to Chair the legislative committee. Henry Todd moved to approve the proposed appointment. Tom Weik seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

k) ACTION – Re-Approval of FY 2022 Regional Service Grant (RSG) Resolution. Denise Raap moved to approve. Todd Carusillo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 12:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Janell M Mullen
NHCOC Regional Planner