



NOTICE OF HYBRID MONTHLY MEETING

DATE: Thursday, June 9, 2022
TIME: 10:00 AM – 11:45 AM
LOCATION: **NHCOCG OFFICE – 59 Torrington Road, Suite A-1, Goshen CT**

Optional Remote Meeting Participation Link (Zoom):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86131132495?pwd=TU9PeVBmVDc1dHYyNXE3bnBsRjhxdz09>

Meeting ID: 861 3113 2495

Passcode: 124973

Call-In Option – 1-646-558-8656

AGENDA

(Chairman Don Stein; Vice Chairman Henry Todd; Secretary Charlie Perotti; Treasurer Mike Criss)

- 10:00 AM Determination of Quorum, Call to Order, and Opportunity for Public Comment. **Don Stein, Chairman.**
- 10:05 AM Report of the Executive Director, **Rob Phillips, NHCOCG**
- Introduction of SustainableCT Summer Intern – Serena Levingston, Wesleyan University.
- 10:10 AM MyHome CT Program, **Kelly Ryder, Senior Program Officer – Special Programs at CT Housing Finance Authority (CHFA)**
- 10:25 AM Progress Update on Regional Health Services Coordination, **Leonardo Ghio, Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator** *(Attachment A)*
- 10:40 AM Update on Broadband Regional Initiative, **Don Stein and Emily Hultquist**
- 10:50 AM DEMHS Update, **John Field, DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator**
- 11:00 AM **Municipal Forum:** Information Sharing Round Table
- 11:30AM Committee Activity:
- a) Election of NHCOCG Officers and Executive Committee for FY 2022-2023, **Jean Speck, Chairwoman, Nominating Committee** *(Attachment B)*
- 11:35 AM Administrative Items:

- a) Amendments to the 2021 STIP (*Attachment C*):
 - Eight Amendments – 4-11-22 – New Projects - Bridge Replacement over under Rt 263 in Winchester, Bridge Painting/Metalizing in Harwinton/Colebrook/Litchfield, and Minor Rehab Bridge Work over rail line on Rt 8 SB in Litchfield.
- a) Approval of NHCOC Budget for FY 2022-2023 (*to be provided*)
- b) Request for Endorsement of FY 2022-2023 “Work Plan Summary and Budget” for the Regional Service Grant (RSG) (*to be provided*)
- d) Approval of Special Meeting Minutes for May 12, 2022 (*Attachment D*)
- e) Approval of Financial Statements for March and April (*to be provided*)
- f) Authorizing Resolution to Continue Serving as Applicant for EMPG Funding in Support of the Region 5 Haz-Mat Team.
- g) Update on EDA Grant and Potential Action.

11:45 AM Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment.

****OPTIONAL LUNCH FOR MEMBERS TO FOLLOW****



Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator's

CEO Quarterly Newsletter

June 2022

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What's New In The Region?

Farmworker Health Program - HPSA Designation - Regional Social Service Coordination



View from the Pinnacle, photo courtesy of the Lake Waramaug Task Force [Facebook Page](#).

Farmworker Health Program - Whether lifelong CT residents or newly relocated from New York, we know that the summer season brings everyone out of hibernation to attend the nearest Farmer's Markets, where they "ooh" and "ahh" at the locally sourced and organically grown commodities. Where would we be without our Farmers? Probably facing a worse supply chain shortage than we already are. No, really. The most recent 5-year USDA Ag Census data (2017) shows that 1200-plus farms make up more than 90,000 acres of Litchfield County, illustrating that they are an essential source for not only providing local healthy food options to our communities and schools, but for local economic growth as well.

What's your point? Farmers work long hours performing grueling tasks that take a toll on their bodies, and minds. Many farm families and workers, both native and non-native, do not have the luxury of taking time off to travel to see a doctor, never mind the transportation barriers they might face. Add in costly healthcare premiums, co-pays, and deductibles (or lack of health insurance altogether) and we are on a crash course for untreated illnesses that can result in long-term negative health effects, placing a burden on our healthcare system and local economy. Ultimately, if we like the fresh fruits and veggies that our communities and students have access

to, then it would be in our best interest to ensure that our local farmers and their farmworkers have equitable access to quality healthcare.

What's the plan? The long and short of it - UConn Medical Students will be working in conjunction with Community Health & Wellness' BETTY Mobile to provide primary care and point of care testing (i.e. blood pressure and blood sugar screenings) for farmworkers in the region. If signs of a chronic illness are identified by UConn students, then the patient will be referred to Community Health and Wellness for ongoing care to address their acute care needs. In addition to primary care, UConn hopes to facilitate the provision of Physical Therapy services. For mental or behavioral health needs, patients will be referred to *McCall Center for Behavioral Health* or *Greenwoods Referrals*, depending on the specific case. The program is set to begin in the month of June and continue throughout the growing and farming season.



Health Professional Shortage Area - HPSA

What is a HPSA Designation? A Health Professional Shortage Area, or HPSA designation, is a government-administered program used to identify areas in States that are suffering from a shortage of healthcare providers in relation to a specific population in need. Receiving a HPSA designation allows all new and existing providers (both primary and specialty care) in the designated Towns or region to receive an additional 10% reimbursement from Medicare. The program also offers student loan forgiveness for providers practicing in the designated area and a J-1 Visa Waiver for international medical students or physicians interested in practicing in the area for a long-term period.

How Does This Help Us? The CT Department of Health identified 11 towns in the COG's catchment area that qualified to be submitted for a low-income population HPSA designation. This low-income designation is determined by identifying the volume of the population in the area that is living at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level; the health professional shortage ratio is determined by the amount of time that physicians in the area spend serving the low-income population. Although we were already aware that we were losing physicians in our region, this magnifies the point, while simultaneously offering a glimmer of hope in attracting new physicians to the area by offering the benefits mentioned above.

Which Towns Are Included in the proposed HPSA Designation? *Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, Litchfield, Morris, Norfolk, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, Torrington, and Winchester.*

Why Weren't All Towns Included? Unfortunately, it all comes down to the historical data that the CT Department of Health receives from the CT Department of Social Services to determine the low-income population HPSA designation. With that in mind, a Regional HPSA was not an option as some of the town's demographic and provider data diluted the region's score as a whole. An additional stipulation of a HPSA designation is that the towns included in the HPSA must be contiguous, which led the CT DPH to identify the Towns listed above. The final determination will not be known until late summer, nonetheless, this is certainly a step in the right direction for the region.



Regional Social Service Coordination

Twenty-One Towns Working Together - Perhaps the most important role of the Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator is to facilitate the networking and sharing of resources among the 21 Town's municipal Social Service providers. In conversation, many of them expressed feeling as though they were "on an island", and alone in their pursuits to assist their clients with various needs, mainly because of the rural landscape. In an effort to build relationships and take a team approach to address the social determinants that our communities encounter, a group email forum was started to share resources, ask questions, and request input on specific cases.

Group training regarding Medicare, Homelessness, and Department of Social Services programs have been coordinated and well attended. With eligibility requirements and programs changing often, it proves difficult for the Social Service workers to stay up-to-date while simultaneously attending to their client's daily needs, providing social programs, running food banks, coordinating volunteers, and let's not forget their own home lives and extracurricular activities or volunteer commitments.

Notable Achievements For the Group - One example of the support the group has offered to date was in response to a request from the Town of Kent's interim Social Service Director. There was a family in need of additional financial support for special programming for their child with physical and mental impairment. The question was posed to the group and a resource was quickly returned, with a successful outcome, to boot. What took the group an hour to solve, could have taken days for Kent's employee to solve alone.

Another significant achievement for the group is the agreement of the Town of Winchester to provide interim Social Services support to the Town of North Canaan until their new hire fills the position this month. With the most recent Social Service director having left in April, this would have posed a major gap in services for the time being. Leveraging these partnerships between towns has proven to be valuable in many ways, the most valuable aspect being that many of your towns share common issues or concerns, so why not lean on each other for a little extra support?

What's Next? Training and presentations surrounding an array of social service sectors and programs will continue to be offered for the duration of the Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator's contract. Agencies such as the Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut and New Opportunities will also begin to become more visible in the towns that they serve, offering additional support to the municipal Social Service providers to assist clients with CT Department of Social Services program applications and in some instances, case management.

Final Thoughts

The Value of Coordination - Addressing social determinants such as food insecurity, improving access to quality health care, increasing mental health resources, and improving community awareness of the resources in the area are incremental steps towards economic stability in your communities. Programs like MyHomeCT, offering up to \$30,000 in assistance to households affected by COVID-19 and meeting certain eligibility requirements to pay past-due mortgages or property taxes will prove to be fruitful by sustaining surrounding property values and keeping life-long residents in place. Grassroots groups, like your local food banks, also play an integral role in ensuring that your communities are able to meet their basic needs. With that said, kudos to your leadership, outstanding social service workers and volunteers alike, for your passion and commitment to the betterment of the community at large.

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By: Leonardo S. Ghio, MBA
Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator
Northwest Hills Council of Governments

Attachment B



MEMO TO: NHCOC Members

From: Jean Speck, Nominating Committee Chairman

Re: **Slate of Officers for FY 2022-2023**

Date: June 9, 2022

The Nominating Committee (consisting of Jim Brinton, Chris Johnstone, and me) proposes the following slate of NHCOC Officers for FY 2022-2023:

Chairman: **Henry Todd**

Vice Chairman: **Michael Criss**

Secretary: **Charlie Perotti**

Treasurer: **Thomas Weik**

In addition to the above officers, the Nominating Committee proposes the following two at-large members to serve on the Executive Committee: **Don Stein and Dan Jerram.**

As specified in NHCOC's Bylaws, the Nominating Committee presented the slate of officers at our May meeting. There were no nominations from the floor at the May meeting. The election of officers shall occur at the June meeting pursuant to nominations made at the May meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

JS/rp

ATTACHMENT C

Requested Changes to CTDOT FY 2021 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) In the Northwest Hills Region

STIP Amendments #1-#8 (4-11-22) – Bridge Replacement over under Rt 263 in Winchester, Bridge Painting/Metalizing in Harwinton/Colebrook/Litchfield, and Minor Rehab Bridge Work over rail line on Rt 8 SB in Litchfield

Region	FACode	Proj#	TempP#	AQCd	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments	code for change
03	BRFP	0065-0114		X6	CT 8	Harwinton-Colebrook	NBI BRIDGE PAINTING/METALIZING	CON	2024	30,000	24,000	6,000		0 NEW PROJECT	05
03	STPR	0162-0159		X6	CT 263	WINCHESTER	REPLACE BR 01571 o/ EAST BRANCH NAUGATUCK RIVER	PD	2022	445	356	89		0 NEW PROJECT	05
03	STPR	0162-0159		X6	CT 263	WINCHESTER	REPLACE BR 01571 o/ EAST BRANCH NAUGATUCK RIVER	FD	2024	286	229	57		0 NEW PROJECT	05
03	STPR	0162-0159		X6	CT 263	WINCHESTER	REPLACE BR 01571 o/ EAST BRANCH NAUGATUCK RIVER	ROW	2024	50	40	10		0 NEW PROJECT	05
03	STPR	0162-0159		X6	CT 263	WINCHESTER	REPLACE BR 01571 o/ EAST BRANCH NAUGATUCK RIVER	CON	FYI	3,400	2,720	680		0 NEW PROJECT	05

Region	FACode	Proj#	TempP#	AQCd	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments	code for change
03, 05	BRFP	0140-0178		X6	CT 8	Thomaston/Litchfield	NHS NBI BRIDGE PAINTING/METALIZING	CON	2023	33,000	26,400	6,600		0 NEW PROJECT	05

Region	FACode	Proj#	TempP#	AQCd	Rte/Sys	Town	Description	Phase	Year	Tot\$(000)	Fed\$(000)	Sta\$(000)	Loc\$(000)	Comments	code for change
03	NHPP-BRX	0170-3551		X6	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	MINOR REHAB - NHS NBI BRIDGES w/ PIN & HANGER ASSEMBLIES - AC ENTRY	CON	2022	0	0	0		0 NEW PROJECT	05
03	NHPP-BRX	0170-3551		X6	VARIOUS	STATEWIDE	MINOR REHAB - NHS NBI BRIDGES w/ PIN & HANGER ASSEMBLIES - AC CONVERSION	CON	2022	9,100	7,280	1,820		0 NEW PROJECT	05

Attachment D

MINUTES OF THE NHCOC MEETING May 12, 2022 held hybrid via ZOOM

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein	Burlington, Douglas Thompson (absent)
Canaan, Henry Todd (absent)	Colebrook, Christopher Johnstone (absent)
Cornwall, Gordon Ridgway - remote	Goshen, Todd Carusillo
Hartland, Magi Winslow -remote	Harwinton, Michael Criss
Kent, Jean Speck - remote	Litchfield, Denise Raap
Morris, Tom Weik	New Hartford, Dan Jerram (absent)
Norfolk, Matt Riiska	North Canaan, Charlie Perotti - remote
Roxbury, Patrick Roy	Salisbury, Curtis Rand - remote
Sharon, Barent Colley (absent)	Torrington, Elinor Carbone
Warren, Greg LaCava (absent)	Washington, Jim Brinton
Winchester, Todd Arcelaschi (absent)	

Others in Attendance:

Hedy Ayers, Eversource; John Field, DEMHS Region 5; Betsy Gara, CT Council of Small Towns (COST) Executive Director; Mike Muszinsky, CT Conference of Municipalities (CCM), Brian Mattiello, Hartford Healthcare, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, and State Representative Marie Horn

Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment Report of the Executive Director - Hedy Ayers shared that they will be hosting virtually their corridor two meetings with the community relations staff and dedicated community liaisons will be reaching out prior to the end of June. The topic will be hurricane preparedness due to hurricane season beginning June 1st. Also, Eversource Foundation recently kicked off their 2022 Giving Program which consists of small grants for eligible non-profits and 5013c for target areas of need such as community needs, education, energy and the environment, community workforce development and education development.. Below is the link to their corporate webpage which will provide additional information.

<https://www.eversource.com/content/general/business/about/community/supporting-the-community/c-haritable-contributions-volunteerism>

Ms. Ayers welcomed Emily Hultquist as a former colleague at CRCOG and praised her previous work in the Capital Region.

Robert Phillips welcomed both Emily Hultquist, the new Assistant Director and Kathryn Faraci the new Regional Senior Planner to the Northwest Hills COG staff. He also announced that the Hazardous Household Waste Collection Day will be held on June 4th at the Falls Village Public Garage. Staff is currently in the process of handing out tickets and flyers to local communities. Following Mr. Phillips report, Emily Hultquist and Kathryn Faraci both provided a brief introduction and shared their prior work experience.

2022 Legislative Short Session Recap– Mike Muszinsky, from CCM ., provided a detailed overview of the budget, education, finance and important legislative pass/fail bill updates which were included in the agenda packet. Betsy Gara from COST, provided an overview of current tax overview including the motor vehicle tax beginning November 30, 2022 and the children tax credit for the lower income bracket and revenue losses. Affordable housing is an issue that needs to be regionally addressed. Mike Criss provided additional remarks on legislative updates as well.

Municipal Forum – Reports by town are as follows:

Bantam - Entering into a hearing for the town court house to become the Boutique Hotel. Litchfield Hill Road Race is under way. Memorial Day parade will also be held. A .8 mill rate reduction is being proposed at the next town meeting. Rose Haven will be turned into a 31 room bed and breakfast.

Torrington - High School/Middle School is under construction along with Prospect Street's new bike lanes and sidewalks. A new Animal Control Facility is also under construction.

Norfolk - Passed budget at annual town meeting and noted a .9 mill rate increase, 13 acres solar ray going in at the transfer station. A town meeting will be held regarding this initiative in mid June. Heavy construction with bridge repair and a new water main being installed.

Goshen - Recently held a public meeting on their budget. Lowering mill rate to 19.6. A new farmer's market opened up on Route 63. Discussions with the Fire Chief regarding new search and rescue using infrared drones. Hosted a chamber meeting regarding the bear issue in town. Need for a permit system for farmers and big landowners. Animal control began May 1st. Purchase a new town truck. Waiting on referendum regarding merger with Torrington and Region 6 in Litchfield.

Roxbury - Proposing a mill rate of 15.25. Two bridges are currently under construction and ARPA is helping with the construction funding.

Harwington - Completed bridge study for the community conducted by Cardinal Engineering. Holding off on setting the mill rate until May 26th due to the delay in the State setting their budget. Looking to lower the mill rate to 28.3. War memorial project is scheduled to begin after Memorial Day. Harwington and Burlington are looking to share the sports field due to lack of enrollment in sports in efforts to maximize use of the fields. Looking to extend the water main in the town garage. Recently hired a new Recreational Director and the recreation program will now all be online.

Morris - The town has an ARPA meeting on May 25th to approve the ARPA package. They will be utilizing \$150,000 in ARPA funds for the purchase of a new fire engine. Lowering mill rate to 24.26. June 2nd will be their town meeting to pass the budget. Cardinal Engineering recently submitted a bridge project on behalf of the town.

Washington - Three bridges are currently under construction. Due to population enrollment increase, the town was unable to lower their mill rate and the current rate remains unchanged.

Barkhamsted - Budget was passed and mill rate remained flat. Town was able to obtain a CBD grant for housing trust closing on an affordable housing initiative for 20 units behind a shopping center. Looking forward to going out to bid in the Fall. Town is moving forward with the BroadBand initiative with Certec in efforts to bring high speed internet service to the area. The town is planning to host a meeting with interested parties and with Certec in efforts to have a collaborative approach to the broadband issue. Spending ARPA funds to assist non-profit organizations in town. Once the town is in agreement with Winsted in extending the water main in town, Barkhamsted will spend ARPA funds for the connection to the 20 housing units. This initiative is still in negotiation.

Kent - The town budget meeting is being held on May 20th and the current mill rate will remain flat. The cell tower is now up on top of Cedar Mountain. The Memorial Day parade is on. The town signed their contract with Mather Corporation for phase I of the streetscape project however, granite curbing may be a challenge. Town is looking to begin construction in a month and a half. Phase II is also looking to begin.

Town has a new social services director and a new park and recreation director. Moved town meeting to virtual due to high numbers in Covid.

Hartland - Town has new blade ordinance and a new wood harvest ordinance on the agenda. The town's scheduled referendum is on May 25th and looking at a no mill rate increase. The Memorial Day event is being held for the first time since 2019. The town recently finished the flyover request for the holiday. First in person dedication in honor of Wade. They are dedicating a bench in the cemetery in his honor. The town is looking to use ARPA funding to purchase a new fire truck for east Hartland.

New Canaan - Region 1 school budget went through. Mill rate will be increasing. DOT pavement and sidewalk project in the town center is looking to be completed at the end of June. A bridge study is currently being conducted which looks at replacing the bridge on West Main Street and will begin construction in 2024. Town will be having a Memorial Day parade. Town has a new Fire Marshall and a new Social Services Director will be starting on June 2nd.

Robert Phillips shared that the budget passed in Salisbury due to the First Selectman attendance at another meeting.

DEMHS Update - Mentioned the current rise in Covid rates. They are continuing to monitor this and participate in the long term recovery meetings. If you have a need for test kits, he suggested reaching out to your local health official. DEMHS is down on staff and are currently looking to fill the positions. DEMHS held their first school safety and security meeting group with 40+ participants. The cyber security working group is looking to get their cyber assessment tool kit out. Mr. Fields will be sending this information out to interested parties. The annual EPI exercise for hurricane preparedness will be held on May 24th and will be working with the National Weather Service. Coordination is being conducted with both Massachusetts and New York emergency management services. A meeting will be held in June. Looking to find a home for NCB.

Funding Format to Support Adolescent and Children's Mental Health in the Region - Brain Mattiello, from Hartford Healthcare - Charlotte Hungerford Hospital provided an overview of the proposed funding format to help address youth mental health issues in the region.

Committee Activity – Recommendation of nominating committee for NHCOC Officers and Executive Committee for FY2022-2023 are as follows Chairman L Henry Todd, Vice Chairman, Mike Criss, Secretary Charlie Perotti, Members at Large Don Stein and Dan Jerram. First Officials from the floor nominated Thomas Weik for the Treasurer position.

Administrative Items

a) ACTION – Approval of Special Meeting Minutes for April 21, 2022 – Jim Brinton moved to approve annual dues Michael Criss seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) ACTION – Approval of Financial Statement for March tabled for next month meeting.

c) ACTION – The NHCOC authorized the Executive Director to enter into a MOU with the Town of Ridgefield and DEMHS regarding the testing, acquisition, custodial assignment, deployment and use of a vertical Lift Antenna System, to be purchased with Homeland Security Grant Funds. Thomas Weik moved to approve the Financial Statement. Mike Criss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at **XXXX** pm. Respectfully submitted by NHCOC staff