

Attachment D

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

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Barkhamsted, Donald Stein	Burlinton, 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