



NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

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MINUTES

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

Hybrid Meeting

NVCOG Conference Room

49 Leavenworth Street, 3rd Floor

Waterbury, CT 06702

10 a.m., Friday, May 13, 2022

NVCOG Representatives: Sheila O'Malley, Alternate, Ansonia (virtual); Gerry Smith, First Selectman, Beacon Falls (virtual); Stephen Sordi, First Selectman, Bethlehem (virtual); Jeff Caggiano, Mayor, Bristol (virtual); Andrew Martelli, Alternate, Cheshire (virtual); Rich Dziekan, Mayor, Derby (in-person); Ed St. John, First Selectman, Middlebury (in-person); Pete Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck (virtual); George Temple, First Selectman (virtual), Kristyn Rosa, Alternate (virtual), Oxford; Joe Kilduff, Mayor, Plymouth (in-person); Annmarie Drugonis, First Selectwoman, Seymour (virtual); Mark Lauretti, Mayor, Shelton (in-person); Jeff Manville, First Selectman, Southbury (virtual); Mark Raimo, Alternate, Watertown (virtual); Barbara Perkinson, First Selectwoman (virtual), William Agresta, Alternate (virtual), Woodbury.

Guests/Other: John Field, DEMHS Region 5 (virtual); Sara Radacsi, CTDOT (virtual); Hedy Ayers, Eversource (virtual); April Chaplin, The Kennedy Center (virtual); Joe Violette, Greater Waterbury Chamber (virtual); Tom Hyde, Naugatuck Valley Regional Development Corp., (virtual); Jan Mizerski, GWTD (virtual); Betty Bajak, GWTD (virtual).

Staff: Rick Dunne (in-person); Mark Nielsen (in-person); Aaron Budris (virtual); Joanna Rogalski (virtual); Lauren Rizzo (in-person); John DiCarlo (in-person); Karen Svetz (virtual); Michael Szpryngel (in-person); Richard Crowther, Jr. (in-person); Keith Rosenfeld (in-person); Ricardo Rodriguez (in-person); Christine O'Neill (in-person); Joshua Lecar (in-person); Richard Donovan (virtual); Desira Blanchard (in-person); Savannah Nicole Villalba (virtual); Kevin Ellis (in-person).

1. Commencement of Meeting

Rich Dziekan called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. For public comment, Hedy Ayers of Eversource said their Quarter Two ERP meetings will be scheduled soon. The topic will be hurricane preparedness. Also, the Eversource Foundation has kicked off its 2022 giving season.

2. NVCOG Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the April 8, 2022 NVCOG & CNVMPO Meeting* – On a motion by Joe Kilduff, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the April 8, 2022 NVCOG and CNVMPO meeting.

- b. *Approval of Agency Financial Reports and Summaries for the Period Ending 3/31/22* – Michael Szpryngel said NVCOG is 75% through the fiscal year. There have been no unexpected reductions in funding sources. The net position is \$184,000. Advertising, professional dues and subscriptions, and legal expenses have run over budget. On a motion by Joe Kilduff, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adopt the NVCOG financial reports and summaries as presented.

- c. *Approval of NVCOG FY 2023 Budget* – Mr. Szpryngel presented the proposed FY 2023 budget. There are slight variations from the budget that was proposed in January. He noted that a deficit budget had been adopted last year, but NVCOG is now looking to break even or better. For FY 2023, a flat budget is proposed. Rick Dunne said the reason NVCOG had adopted a deficit budget last year was due to the adoption by the legislature of a formula that cut funding to the NVCOG region. The formula has not been changed and the funding has not been restored. Accordingly, this year's budget contains the same staffing levels as last year, and dollars will be made up as possible. The budget has been recommended by the Executive Board. On a motion by Sheila O'Malley, seconded by Joe Kilduff, it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the recommendation of the Executive Board to: Adopt the NVCOG FY 2023 budget as presented.

- d. *Annual Appointment of Auditor* – Mr. Szpryngel said this is a statutory requirement whereby each year OPM requires the formal appointment of an auditor. He recommends the appointment of the existing auditor. This will be the second year of their three-year contract. On a motion by Rich Dziekan, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize management signature on the engagement letter with King, King & Associates, CPAs, and provide notification to OPM of auditor appointment.

- e. *Director's Report* – Rick Dunne said the RSG funding issue puts NVCOG at a slight disadvantage with the federal infrastructure program. NVCOG has been working with Commissioner Boughton to put together a process regarding regionalizing infrastructure applications. Without the additional RSG funding, NVCOG has been negotiating with legislative leaders and OPM for funding for the agency to be able to provide that capacity for the towns.

Mr. Dunne said EPA has awarded NVCOG an additional \$3.9 million to be added to the Revolving Loan Fund.

Also, the spring meeting of the Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) forum will be hosted by NVCOG on June 3, 2022. This will be a virtual meeting.

3. **Municipal Shared Services**

John DiCarlo said the state's Regional Performance Incentive Program (RPIP) is being funded for the first time since 2015. Staff will be reviewing recommendations internally this month to put forward, as the first review of proposals at OPM will take place this summer. If any CEO has a recommendation that has not been previously suggested, they should contact Mr. DiCarlo by the close of business next week. DEEP's sustainable materials management grant application deadline was extended to May 9, which allowed three additional NVCOG municipalities to apply for grants. DEEP has recognized that NVCOG is doing the most of any region to take advantage of the program.

4. **Emergency Management Update**

- a. *COVID Response Update* – John Field said Covid case rates are on the rise again and continue to be monitored. Regarding long term recovery, Joanne Rogalski said the last monthly meeting was held on May 11 and the focus was on health and human services. The next meeting for long term recovery will be June 8.

The CDC has listed all NVCOG towns, with the exception of Shelton, to be in the high level of impact from COVID.

Regarding FEMA Region 1 and the projects submitted through the portal in October of 2021, FEMA spoke with NVCOG on April 29 about the regional projects. They are continuing to contact municipalities regarding municipal projects.

- b. *Regional Emergency Planning Team Update* – The new State Emergency Management Director, William Turner, and the Deputy Commissioner of DESPP, Frederick Bergeron, met with DEMHS Region 5 EMDs and CEOs. They are investigating new grant tracking software. A new DEMHS grant will be focused on cybersecurity.
- c. *Community Emergency Response Team Update* - Ms. Rogalski said annual reports are being summarized.

5. **NVCOG Planning/Transportation**

- a. *LOTICIP Program Update* – Mark Nielsen said the Holbrook Road project in Seymour was advertised on April 27, the low bid was determined, and the project is awaiting authorization to award. The Guernseytown Road in Watertown project has been authorized for advertisement, and the Burton Road project in Beacon Falls has completed third-party review and the signal replacement project will be submitted as a separate project. Mr. Nielsen also said CTDOT is implementing some expedited procedures to close out projects.
- b. *Presentation: Route 8 and Waterbury Rail Line (WRL) Alternative Modes Assessment Study* – Mr. Nielsen said the WRL action plan includes an increase in service level to add seven trips (programmed for Summer 2022). During the time period of 2025-2030, the plan includes the acquisition of new, modern rail equipment, expanded service, and the development and construction of a new rail maintenance and storage yard. From 2025-2035 the construction of new rail stations with full amenities is planned. Long term vision includes the development and construction of a transfer station and shuttle service to connect with NHML service. Additionally, a bus rapid transit plan is being explored with five possible assessed alternatives.
- c. *Congressionally Directed Spending* – Mr. Nielsen said notice had been received from the federal congressional delegation regarding solicitation for what is known as congressionally directed spending projects. Accordingly, 16 project proposals were submitted to Senator Murphy's office and respective congressional representatives.
- d. *NRG Trail Operations, Maintenance and Management Guide DRAFT* – Aaron Budris said NVCOG staff developed a draft Naugatuck River Greenway Trail Operations, Management, and Maintenance Guide. The purpose of the guide is to help

municipalities with decision making and to coordinate a seamless user experience on the completed NRG Trail. NVCOG staff presented the draft guide to the Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee at its May 11 meeting. Input from the committee will be incorporated into a final document to be endorsed by the NRGSC at a future meeting.

- e. *Title VI Nondiscrimination Plan Update* – Desira Blanchard explained that this Title VI plan updates the 2016 Title VI plan done by VCOG and VTD. The Title VI Plan demonstrates how NVCOG and VTD comply with the transit-related activities of Title VI. It includes demographic and service profile maps and charts, the public participation plan, and a language assistance plan. A public notice and press release were issued earlier in the week to notify the public of the 30-day comment period. Two public information sessions will be held later this month. Endorsement of the plan will be requested after the close of the public comment period.

6. Environmental Planning

- a. *Brownfields Project Update* – Ricardo Rodriguez said there are currently 13 NVCOG and 4 CT Brownfield Land Bank active projects. All projects are moving forward with their various environmental activities. NVCOG submitted an application to EPA, on behalf of the Waterbury Development Corp., for land revitalization and technical assistance for engineering and design of a project within the Mad River corridor, specifically 835 South Main Street in Waterbury. The EPA awarded \$150,000 towards this project. He noted that, as Mr. Dunne had mentioned earlier, NVCOG was awarded \$3.9 million in supplemental RLF funding which can be used for remediation and clean-up planning for brownfields. A solicitation will be released within the next two weeks.
- b. *Approval of NVCOG Nomination Slate for CT Brownfield Land Bank Board of Directors* – Christine O’Neill presented the NVCOG nomination slate for the CT Brownfield Land Bank. She said all nominees have confirmed their interest. NVCOG plans to present this list to the CT BLB at its next meeting. The current board of directors will vote on this slate and, upon election, the terms of the new directors will become effective immediately. On a motion by Rich Dziekan, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the NVCOG nomination slate for the CT Brownfield Land Bank Board of Directors.

- c. *Virtual Solar Training Sessions* – Ms. O’Neill said NVCOG will be holding two virtual solar training sessions. The June 1 session will address planning and zoning regulations for solar, and the second session on June 8 will address inspection and permitting.
- d. *Composter Sale* – Aaron Budris said pickup of compost bins and rain barrels will take place on May 21, 2022, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Seymour Community Center, and from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Bethlehem Fire Department. Orders must be placed by May 19.
- e. *Kinneytown Dam Update* – Rick Dunne said a letter from DEEP has been filed with FERC identifying deficiencies with the current operator. FERC also issued another finding last week that identified conditions at the Kinneytown Dam as a significant hazard.

7. **Other**

There was no other business.

8. **Adjournment**

At 11:07 a.m., on a motion by Rich Dziekan, seconded by Joe Kilduff, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by
Lauren Rizzo, Administrative Services Coordinator
for
Pete Hess, Secretary