



NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

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MINUTES

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

and

Central Naugatuck Valley MPO

Virtual Video Conference Meeting (with limited in-person attendance)

10 a.m., Friday, April 9, 2021

NVCOG Representatives: David Cassetti, Mayor, Sheila O'Malley, Alternate, Ansonia; Gerry Smith, First Selectman, Beacon Falls; Len Assard, First Selectman, Bethlehem; Jerry Sitko, Alternate, Cheshire; Rich Dziekan, Mayor, Derby; Ed St. John, First Selectman, Middlebury; Pete Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck; George Temple, First Selectman, Oxford; Bob Chatfield, Mayor, Prospect; Annmarie Drugonis, First Selectwoman, Seymour; Mark Lauretti, Mayor, Shelton; Jeff Manville, First Selectman, Southbury; Ed Mone, First Selectman, Thomaston; Judy Mancini, Proxy, Waterbury; Mark Raimo, Town Manager, Watertown; Tom Dunn, Mayor, Wolcott, Barbara Perkinson, First Selectwoman, Woodbury.

Guests/Other: Attorney Ron Shems; John Field, DEMHS Region 5; Jennine Lupo, Congresswoman Jahana Hayes' office; Sara Radacsi, CTDOT; Hedy Ayers, Samantha LaBonne, Eversource; April Chaplin, Kennedy Center; Lou Mangini, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro's office; Ellen Graham, Senator Richard Blumenthal's office; Representative Cindy Harrison; Ed Davis.

Staff: Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Josh Lecar, Aaron Budris, Joanna Rogalski, Lauren Rizzo, John DiCarlo, Michael Szpryngel, Richard Crowther, Jr., Gabriel Filer, Ricardo Rodriguez, Jeremiah Vargas.

1. Commencement of Meeting (Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Public Comment)

Vice Chairman Mark Lauretti called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. For public comment, Samantha LaBonne said Eversource is hosting its annual emergency response plan meetings for first responders in early May. Additionally, Eversource has kicked off its annual season of giving through community impact grants. Eversource will be reaching out to emergency management directors to review gas critical facilities

2. CNVMPO Meeting (*Voting members for these items are limited to the 15 CEOs in the CNVMPO area*)

a. *Approval of Amendments to the 2021-2024 CNVMPO TIP*

- i. Approval of CNVMPO Resolution 2021-11 – Project No. 0153-0125 – Watertown Recreation Trail
- ii. Approval of CNVMPO Resolution 2021-13 – Project No. 0174-0443 – Traffic Signal Replacement Program

Gabriel Filer said the Watertown project will use Transportation Alternatives Program funds for building a new pedestrian bridge over Steele Brook and improving user experience by connecting two existing greenway segments. The second project will use Surface Transportation Project funds to cover the cost of replacing traffic signals throughout District 4, which encompasses most of the CNVMPO region. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve CNVMPO Resolution 2021-11 and 2021-13.

- b. *Endorsement of NET Transit Safety Targets and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan* – Mark Nielsen explained that FTA requires MPOs to support and endorse the safety efforts of public transportation agencies, in this case North East Transportation (NET), which serves the greater Waterbury area. CTDOT and NET collaborated in the development of this Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and NET will implement it. The aim of the PTSAP is to help manage safety risks and prioritize capital investments through performance-based planning. NVCOG reviewed this PTSAP and found it to be consistent with FTA regulations and recommends accepting and supporting the safety performance targets listed within it. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adopt CNVMPO Resolution 2021-12 accepting and supporting the Transit Safety Performance Targets as listed in the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for North East Transportation Co.

3. NVCOG Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the March 12, 2021 NVCOG & CNVMPO Meeting* – On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Rich Dziekan, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the March 12, 2021 NVCOG and CNVMPO meeting.

- b. *Approval of Agency Financial Reports and Summaries for the Period Ending 02/28/21* – Michael Szpryngel said the report reflects a deficit of about \$21,000. Mr. Szpryngel expects the deficit to be approximately \$5,000 when he has completed year-end projections. The reasons for the deficit are that the actual indirect rate has been outperforming the rate that was approved, and NVCOG is not generating as much fringe and overhead reimbursement for the grants that cover additional costs. Items such as software and accounting are showing significantly higher expenses as it becomes time to renew yearly subscriptions and the accounting is finished for the year. The category of Legal is about 82% overbudget, due to activities with Kinneytown Dam. Rick Dunne noted that legal expenses for the Kinneytown Dam were approved and authorized by the Executive Board to come from fund balance if a net accounting deficit is run for the year. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the financial reports and summaries for the period ending 02/28/21.

- c. *Director's Report* – Rick Dunne provided staffing updates and introduced Josh Lecar as the newly hired Assistant Director of Planning, and Ed Davis as NVCOG's virtual CIO who will be handling IT training and network systems. Mr. Davis is a contractor.

Mr. Dunne said CTCOG will be taking up discussion of the distribution of recovery funds that are federally designated as county funds. The state's plan is to distribute county funds on a per capita basis to the municipalities, but this leaves the nine COGs without a funding source for the coordinating responsibilities to staff and carry out the Governor's directives. CTCOG would like to see OPM allocate 1% or 2% of the funds to the COGs.

Mr. Dunne said appropriations and earmark request inquiries have been fielded by NVCOG and NVCOG has issued endorsement letters to a number of towns for projects that are being submitted through members of the congressional delegation.

He also said a prospective infrastructure and transportation bill is coming up. NVCOG has a number of long-range identified projects such as the regional wastewater consolidation, TOD improvements on the Waterbury Branch Line, and a CTfastrak extension. While NVCOG is focusing on regional projects, any NVCOG municipality that has a project that would fit the parameters of this future infrastructure bill should submit the projects to NVCOG so they can be assembled and submitted jointly.

Mr. Dunne then moved on to the state legislative agenda. A hot-list of bills was sent to NVCOG members earlier in the week. NVCOG is tracking a number of bills, such as an enterprise zone in Plymouth and the regional economic development pilot program in the Naugatuck Valley. NVCOG has received feedback on the zoning bills and affordable housing bills in the state and is monitoring them. Discussion on zoning and affordable housing ensued.

Mr. Dunne said NVCOG is also tracking the cannabis bill from a local and zoning standpoint. George Temple said he is opposed to the bill and Jeff Manville said he thought any tax revenues received from the sale of cannabis should be earmarked for addiction programs. Mr. Dunne said NVCOG staff is happy to carry whatever message the members direct, but as a work product, the agency will stay focused on local impact issues.

Mr. Dunne said a bill approved by the Legislature's Transportation Committee designates improvements for the Waterbury Branch Line. There is another bill before the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee that would allow for the purchase of needed rolling stock. There is strong support for improvements to the line and 30-minute service can be expected starting in 2024 for the morning and evening peaks, with one hour service the rest of the day.

There is a bill in the Planning & Development Committee that finalizes and reforms the rules around Councils of Governments. It will formalize the formula under which COGs are funded by the state. Under this formula, NVCOG may see a slight reduction in funding. Mr. Dunne said he is comfortable with the number and thinks the distribution is fair.

4. Municipal Shared Services

John DiCarlo said the first of three annual household hazardous waste events for the 15 participating towns will be held on April 17 in Naugatuck. He also said MIRA held its annual town meeting that included the participation of representatives of dozens of towns throughout the state. The MIRA Hartford facility will be closing in July 2022, which will impact disposal and corresponding costs throughout the state. Several NVCOG CEOs are interested in forming a working group to engage with the legislature to craft a sustainable policy for disposal. Anyone interested in joining should contact Mr. DiCarlo.

5. Emergency Management Update

- a. *COVID-19 Response Update* –John Field of DEMHS Region 5 said FEMA mobile vaccine units are now in the state. A unit will be in Waterbury for four days, starting on April 20.

Through Griffin Health, vans will be going out to very specific neighborhoods delivering vaccines on a daily basis. There has been a reduction in testing, most likely due to the number of vaccines being administered. DEMHS continues to work with FEMA and OPM concerning reimbursements for Covid and Tropical Storm Isaias. The legislature approved the extension of the governor's emergency powers to May 20. He noted that some weekly update calls have now been changed to monthly calls.

- Long Term Recovery Update – Joanna Rogalski said Covid cases have been increasing in Region 5. The major need of people who are going through quarantine or recovery from Covid is food security. The need is being met. Arts and culture components hope to reprogram to outdoor venues. A statewide database is needed for finance and philanthropy for all non-profit grant opportunities.
- b. *Regional Emergency Planning Team Update* – Ms. Rogalski said the April 19 meeting has been rescheduled to July 19. Variable message sign inspections took place as planned.
- c. *Community Emergency Response Team Update* – A training day will take place in the form of a half-day virtual event to increase participation. The Naugatuck CERT received a certificate of appreciation from the Western CT Agency on Aging.

6. NVCOG Planning/Transportation

- a. *LOTCHIP Update* – Mark Nielsen reviewed slides that showed NVCOG's allocation compared to expenditures. Expected to advance to construction are LOTCHIP projects in Thomaston, Waterbury, Oxford, Plymouth, and Prospect. The total value of the projects is \$17.9 million. A project in Beacon Falls is being added to the list to address a road closure.
- b. *Corridor Planning Solicitation* – Mr. Nielsen said project proposals had been solicited. The program includes a local match component. Two corridor studies are currently underway. Preliminary proposals for this round of funding are due by the end of April. The Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) will review and rank the projects. The board will be asked to endorse the list of projects.

7. Environmental Planning

- a. *Revolving Loan Fund Update* – Ricardo Rodriguez said that within the last two weeks NVCOG has awarded slightly over \$1M in local brownfields projects. The funds come from NVCOG's Revolving Loan Fund program income and a 2016 EPA Assessment Grant. Awards went to the City of Waterbury for remedial activities on three sites, the Borough of Naugatuck for clean-up and remedial activities at two sites, and the City of Derby for clean-up, planning and remediation at two sites. EPA's Davis-Bacon interviews will be required on all projects. Additionally, the Regional Brownfields Partnership committee awarded funds to complete a Phase 3 Environmental Assessment in Derby. In early May, NVCOG expects to hear back from the EPA as to the status of its 2020 Assessment Grant application. A supplemental RLF application request will also be submitted.
- b. *Composter & Rain Barrel Update* – Aaron Budris said Brand Builders, the company NVCOG is working with on this effort, has set up an online store. Residents are invited to purchase

items at the online store and Brand Builders will distribute those items at pick-up events in the region on June 19 in Cheshire and Southbury.

- c. *Kinneytown Dam Update* – Aaron Budris said that since the last NVCOG meeting, the Kinneytown coalition partners met with CT DEEP. A strong case was made for CT DEEP to take a more active role in the FERC proceeding. There were also two important FERC docket filings. On March 19 Hydroland Omega LLC assumed ownership, and late last week the Department of Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) submitted a letter in response to the dam owners March 1 letter, in which the dam owner suggested minor alterations to the dam structure and operations to improve fish passage. FWS refuted Hydroland’s claims that those proposed actions would solve the fish passage issues, and it also declared its intent to conduct an engineering study at the dam. Next steps will be to review CEII dam safety document, once received, and the submission of additional FERC dockets if warranted. Rick Dunne added that support from the congressional offices had been instrumental in FWS involvement.
- d. *Executive Session – Kinneytown Dam* – On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Ed St. John, with invitations extended to Attorney Ron Shems, Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Josh Lecar, and Aaron Budris, it was unanimously

VOTED: To enter into Executive Session subject to adjournment.

The Executive Session adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Lauren Rizzo
Administrative Services Coordinator
for
Ed Mone, Secretary



**CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

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RESOLUTION 2021-11

AMENDMENT

**FFY 2021-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY MPO**

WHEREAS, the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO is authorized by the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)* and related US Department of Transportation regulations to prepare, endorse, and periodically amend a short range Transportation Improvement Program for the 15-town MPO area within the Waterbury Urbanized Area and is required to maintain a fiscally-constrained program of priority projects.

WHEREAS, the CNVMPO endorsed the *FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program for the Central Naugatuck Valley Planning Region (TIP)* at its October 9, 2020, meeting; and the US Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration) have approved the *State FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*.

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Department of Transportation is requesting amendment of the FFY 2021-2024 TIP to allocate Transportation Alternatives Program Other (TAPO) grant funds for projects 0153-0125.

WHEREAS, the proposed projects do not necessitate a new Air Quality Conformity Determination.

WHEREAS, the public notification and review of these amendments was consistent with and followed the procedures set forth in the MPO's public involvement guidelines, and the proposed amendments are consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan for the Central Naugatuck Valley planning region.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Central Naugatuck Valley MPO approves the amendment of the FFY 2021-2024 TIP to allocate federal aid funds as listed and described in the attachment to this resolution.

This resolution shall become effective as of April 9, 2021.

I do hereby certify that the resolution adopted by the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO at a public meeting held on April 9, 2021 at which a quorum was present and that the same is a correct and true transcript from the original thereof.

Ed Mone, Secretary

April 9, 2021

Date



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RESOLUTION 2021-12

ENDORSEMENT

**TARGETS FOR TRANSIT SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES ESTABLISHED
BY THE NORTH EAST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY**

WHEREAS, the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO (CNVMPO) has been designated by the Governor of the State Connecticut as the Metropolitan Planning Organization responsible, together with the State, for the comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative transportation planning process for the Naugatuck Valley planning region; and

WHEREAS, the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule (49 CFR Part 673) requires certain operators of public transportation systems that receive federal funds under FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Grants to develop safety plans that include the processes and procedures to implement Safety Management Systems (SMS) by December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the **North East Transportation, Co.** has established seven (7) safety performance targets based on four (4) safety performance measure categories (fatalities, injuries, safety events, and system reliability):

- (1) Fatalities (total number of reportable fatalities)
- (2) Fatalities (fatality rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
- (3) Injuries (total number of reportable injuries)
- (4) Injuries (injury rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
- (5) Safety Events (total number of reportable safety events)
- (6) Safety Events (safety event rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
- (7) System Reliability (mean distance between mechanical failures by mode)

WHEREAS, the **North East Transportation, Co.** coordinated the establishment of these targets with the CNVMPO at a consultative meeting on December 2, 2020 and;

WHEREAS the CNVMPO may establish targets by agreeing to plan and program projects that contribute toward the accomplishment of the aforementioned North East Transportation, Co. targets, or establish its own target within 180 days of North East Transportation, Co. establishing and reporting its targets,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the CNVMPO Policy Board has agreed to support the **North East Transportation, Co.** 2020 targets for the transit safety performance targets, as attached herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the CNVMPO Policy Board will plan and program projects that contribute to the accomplishment of said targets.

This resolution shall become effective as of April 9, 2021.

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Ed Mone, Secretary

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RESOLUTION 2021-13

AMENDMENT

**FFY 2021-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY MPO**

WHEREAS, the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO is authorized by the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act)* and related US Department of Transportation regulations to prepare, endorse, and periodically amend a short range Transportation Improvement Program for the 15-town MPO area within the Waterbury Urbanized Area and is required to maintain a fiscally-constrained program of priority projects.

WHEREAS, the CNVMPO endorsed the *FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program for the Central Naugatuck Valley Planning Region (TIP)* at its October 9, 2020, meeting; and the US Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration) have approved the *State FFY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*.

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Department of Transportation is requesting amendment of the FFY 2021-2024 TIP to allocate Surface Transportation Program – Anywhere grant funds for projects 0174-0443.

WHEREAS, the proposed projects do not necessitate a new Air Quality Conformity Determination.

WHEREAS, the public notification and review of these amendments was consistent with and followed the procedures set forth in the MPO's public involvement guidelines, and the proposed amendments are consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan for the Central Naugatuck Valley planning region.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Central Naugatuck Valley MPO approves the amendment of the FFY 2021-2024 TIP to allocate federal aid funds as listed and described in the attachment to this resolution.

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Ed Mone, Secretary

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Date