



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, December 9, 2022

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

Guests/Other: Sara Radacsi, CTDOT (virtual); Tommy Hyde, Naugatuck Valley Regional Development Corp. (virtual); Betty Bajak, GWTD (virtual); John Field, DEMHS Region 5 (virtual); John Wardzala, The Kennedy Collective (in-person); John Monteleone (in-person); Fred Sell (in-person); Sarah Wall, Avangrid (in-person); Margaret Haffner, The Kennedy Collective (in-person).

Staff: Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Glenda Prentiss, Lauren Rizzo, Ken Byron, Karen Svetz, Richard Crowther, Jr., Ricardo Rodriguez, Christine O'Neill, Josh Lecar, Kevin Ellis, Elliot Wareham, Savannah-Nicole Villalba, Drew Baklik (all in-person), Aaron Budris, Joanna Rogalski, Michael Szpryngel, Keith Rosenfeld, Richard Donovan, Katie Schlick (all virtual).

1. Commencement of Meeting

Secretary Pete Hess called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. There was no public comment.

2. CNVMPO Meeting

- a. *Approval of CNVMPO Resolution 2023-05 – TIP Amendment – Project No. 0304-XXXX, Waterbury Branch Line ADA Accessible – ASAP Award* – Kevin Ellis said this project would install accessible, high-level platforms with related amenities in Beacon Falls, Seymour, and Ansonia. The project year has been changed from 2023 to FYI, which means the project is being moved from outside of the TIP. The project has a total cost of \$37 million, with a federal contribution of \$29.6 million and state match of \$7.4 million. The project was previously endorsed two meetings ago. Mr. Ellis said that this project being moved from outside the TIP means the project will not be done in 2023, but sometime after that. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adopt CNVMPO Resolution 2023-05.

3. NVCOG Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the November 4, 2022 CNVMPO and NVCOG Meeting* – On a motion by Rich Dziekan, seconded by Ed St. John, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 4, 2022 CNVMPO and NVCOG meeting.

- b. *Approval of Agency Financial Reports and Summaries for the Period Ending 10/31/22* – Michael Szpryngel said NVCOG is four months through the fiscal year with a net position of \$193,000. A balanced budget was passed and NVCOG is on target to balance out towards the end of the year. There will be a budget revision for next month’s meeting. NVCOG is on target for all its major funds. 100% of RSG funding was received in October and there are no unexpected funding cuts. Legal expenses are still high for the Kinneytown Dam. Some cost recovery may come through via a grant. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Rich Dziekan, it was unanimously

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

- c. *Approval of NVCOG Meeting Schedule for 2023* – Ed Mone noted that NVCOG meetings are held on the second Friday of the month which does not provide adequate time to prepare an analysis of the prior month’s budget, meaning the financials are always one month in arrears. He asked Mr. Szpryngel if changing the meeting dates out by one week would make it possible for the budget analysis to be more current. Mr. Szpryngel affirmed this would be so. Rick Dunne said the decision to change the meeting schedule was up to the board. Ed St. John said he had no objection, but suggested NVCOG reach out to the board to make sure an adjusted schedule would cause no conflicts for the CEOs. He suggested a survey be done after the meeting to poll the CEOs. On a motion by Jeff Caggiano, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To establish January 13, 2023 as the next regular CNVMPO/NVCOG meeting, with the remainder of the meeting schedule to be determined.

- d. *Approval of NVCOG Holiday Schedule for 2023* – On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Rich Dziekan, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve, as presented, the 2023 NVCOG and CNVMPO holiday schedule.

- e. *Director’s Report* – Rick Dunne recognized Savannah-Nicole Villalba as a returning employee who will be specializing in housing and land use, and Drew Baklik who will be picking up the municipal shared service duties previously performed by John DiCarlo.

Mr. Dunne also spoke about restoring funding to the OPM Regional Service Grant. The funds already exist. A new formula had been adopted, and NVCOG will be petitioning to increase the per capita distribution by one dollar, increasing the total amount of funding to all the COGs by formula. Per capita distribution favors the urban regions. The adopted new formula reduced the amount of funding NVCOG has been receiving for the last few years.

Mr. Dunne also said the COGs are expecting an increase in bonded debt for the LOTCIP program.

Mr. Dunne noted that he would be having surgery in early 2023. Although he hopes not to be out of commission for very long, he is confident staff will capably run the agency in his absence.

4. **Authorization for Executive Director Rick Dunne to Execute an MOU with the Western CT Council of Governments and the Northwest Hills Council of Governments regarding Functions and Responsibilities for DEMHS Region 5 under FFY 2022 Homeland Security REPT Grant Program**

Mr. Dunne explained this an annual MOU concerning income and expenditures for the Homeland Security grant. On a motion by Tom Dunn, seconded by Ed Mone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize Executive Director Rick Dunne to execute the MOU with the Western CT Council of Governments and the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, as noted above.

5. **Emergency Management**

Joanna Rogalski introduced John Field, Regional Coordinator for Region 5. Mr. Field said cold weather protocol is being updated and will be shared with the municipalities and emergency management directors. A CEO training session was held in Litchfield. Additional training sessions are being planned and one of them will focus on legal training. A multi-year exercise and training plan is also being developed for the region. November 1 was the deadline for school plan submittals. A number of schools are doing upgrades this year. Tabletop exercises and school security assessments will be held. DEMHS is also working on an EMPG grant. The grants unit is looking at processes and procedures to expedite funding. He also noted it is important that municipalities return their MOAs as soon as possible so as not to delay funding. DEMHS is also working on mutual aid planning for public works. Additional radios are being purchased. Cybersecurity assessments are being conducted through the National Guard. Next week, Eversource is having a webinar with regard to rolling blackouts.

Joanna Rogalski added that in September 2022 the Division of Emergency Management announced the release of Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities and flood mitigation assistance grants. The deadline for these grants has been extended to December 19. Ms. Rogalski is not aware of any towns that have submitted applications for these two grant programs through FEMA, but some of the culvert projects that were noted in the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan were incorporated into the DEEP regional application. Ms. Rogalski also said that snow removal is part of the Region 5 public works mutual aid plan mentioned earlier by Mr. Field. Region 2 has seen an increase in residential fires and the Red Cross is encouraging all renters to purchase renter's insurance.

- a. *Regional Emergency Planning Team Update* – There were no REPT updates.
- b. *Community Emergency Response Team Update* – Ms. Rogalski said DEMHS will be issuing a quarterly newsletter regarding the contributions of the CERT teams. The first issue is expected on January 15, 2023.

6. **NVCOG Planning/Transportation**

- a. *Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update* – Rich Donovan said this plan is a federally mandated long-term vision and goal for the region's transportation system. A portion of

the public engagement component has been completed, with just under 700 responses to a multi-regional survey conducted in conjunction with MetroCOG. The plan must be completed by April 2023. Mr. Donovan expects initial draft documents for public comment will be put forth in mid-January. In February or March, a complete MTP, including air quality analysis, will be brought before the board for adoption by the CNVMPO.

- b. *LOTICIP Update* – Mr. Donovan anticipates CTDOT will be requesting additional funding for each region next year. Additionally, he congratulated the Town of Beacon Falls on its authorization to award the Burton Road project. Mark Nielsen added that NVMCOG is working with CTDOT concerning extra funds left over from completed projects. These funds will be returned to the program.
- c. *Route 8 and Waterbury Branch Line TOD and Alternate Modes Assessment – Public Comment Schedule* – Mark Nielsen said this project is wrapping up. The final report is being released and a public information meeting will be held on December 15 at the Valley Transit District. It will be a hybrid meeting.

7. Environmental Planning

a. *Sustainable Materials Management Update*

- i. *Waste Crisis Story Map* – Christine O’Neill explained the waste crisis Connecticut is experiencing. CT DEEP has funded waste production pilot programs for towns across Connecticut including Ansonia, Seymour, and Woodbury. The pilots consist of unit-based pricing and organics diversion. NVMCOG received its own grant to help educate the region about the waste crisis. The Waste Crisis Story Map brings together a narrative, images, video, and maps. The story map is available on the NVMCOG website. Informational flyers about the waste crisis story map were distributed to the CEOs in their agenda packets. Ms. O’Neill asked that the towns publicize and distribute the flyers.

Mayor Caggiano said he thinks the story map is a great idea, but he would not be able to share it due to text on the flyer that states “incineration causes toxic pollution.” He noted that continuous emission monitoring programs are in place. He suggested that a revision be made that explains that incineration plants are being closed which accounts for Connecticut not having room for its trash. He believes the negative environmental impacts of incineration may or may not be true, but in its current format, he would be unable to promote the story map or flyer. Mayor Dunn and First Selectman St. John agreed, saying testing has proven the incineration plants are safe. Mayor Hess offered that the plants are monitored by EPA and are regularly inspected. Ms. O’Neill said the text would be adjusted and clarified accordingly, based on the feedback received, and the story map would be taken offline for the time being.

- ii. *Ansonia Pilot Program Launch* – Katie Schlick said Ansonia’s pilot program launched on December 5. Color coded trash and food scrap bags were distributed to Ansonia residents. Separating food scraps from trash is one way to reduce the amount of trash that must be hauled away by municipalities. The food scraps will be turned into clean energy at an industrial composter. Ms.

Schlick said these pilot programs have been successful throughout the country and the world. Woodbury and Seymour will have program launches in February.

- b. *Household Hazardous Waste Update* – Christine O’Neill said the household hazardous waste selection committee went through an RFP process to identify a vendor. The apparent low bidder is MXI, the company that currently runs the collections.
- c. *CT DEEP Climate Resilience Regional Application* – Aaron Budris reminded everyone of the new CT DEEP climate resilience fund grant program that is intended to create a project pipeline of resilience projects. The project will not fund design or construction but will fund all the steps needed to create a successful application for federal programs. NVCOG submitted a regional application intended to advance nine culvert replacement and storm water projects that were previously identified in the hazard mitigation plans. If awarded, NVCOG would contract with a consultant who would work with municipalities to develop preliminary plans, target funding sources, and develop applications to state and federal funding sources to implement them. Consolidating the contracting and project management for these nine projects at NVCOG will save the municipalities substantial time and effort. The work completed under the project will lead to successful applications to implement them.
- d. *Recreational Trails Program* – Mr. Budris said he had sent a memo to the CEOs concerning the new round of DEEP recreational trails funding. It will fund an array of trail projects including planning and construction of new trails or maintenance and restoration of existing trails. The deadline for applications is March 1. NVCOG can assist with applications and support letters.

Before moving to executive session, Mr. Hess asked if there was any other business. Mayor Dunn advised that there is an antagonistic group visiting town halls filming and advocating for freedom of information, first amendment, and other rights.

- e. *Kinneytown Dam Update (Executive Session)* – At 11:08 a.m., on a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Rich Dziekan, it was unanimously

VOTED: To enter into executive session subject to adjournment.

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



**CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

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RESOLUTION 2023-05

**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 within the Waterbury Urbanized Area and is required to maintain a fiscally constrained program of priority projects; and

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)*; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Department of Transportation is requesting amendment of the FFY 2021-2024 TIP as shown in the attached page; and

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

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;

BE IT RESOLVED that Central Naugatuck Valley MPO approves the amendments of the FFY 2021-2024 TIP to allocate ASAP discretionary funding to the attached project.

This resolution shall become effective as of December 9, 2022.

I do hereby certify that the resolution adopted by the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO at a public meeting held on December 9, 2022, at which a quorum was present and that the same is a correct and true transcript from the original thereof.



N. Warren Hess, III, Secretary

December 9, 2022

Date