



MINUTES

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

and

Central Naugatuck Valley MPO

NVCOG Conference Room
49 Leavenworth St., 3rd Floor
Waterbury, CT
10 a.m., Friday, May 10, 2019

NVCOG Representatives: Sheila O'Malley, Alternate, Ansonia; Chris Bielik, First Selectman, Beacon Falls; Len Assard, First Selectman, Bethlehem; Ray Rogozinski, Proxy, Bristol; Rob Oris, Jr., Town Council Chair and Mayor, Cheshire; Ed St. John, First Selectman, Middlebury; Pete Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck; Kristyn Rosa, Proxy, Oxford; Dave Merchant, Mayor, Plymouth; Bob Chatfield, Mayor, Prospect; Ed Mone, First Selectman, Thomaston; Judy Mancini, Proxy, Waterbury; Tom Dunn, Mayor, Wolcott; Barbara Perkinson, First Selectman, Woodbury.

Guests/Other: April Chaplin, Kennedy Center; Hedy Ayers, Samantha Sojka, Eversource; Sara Radacsi, CTDOT; Jimmy Tickey, Lt. Governor's Office.

Staff: Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Aaron Budris, Glenda Prentiss, Lauren Rizzo, Christian Meyer, John DiCarlo, Max Tanguay-Colucci, Michael Szpryngel, Gabriel Filer.

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

Secretary Ed Mone called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. Rick Dunne explained that this was not a budget meeting as all information from the State had not yet been received. For public comment, Hedy Ayers of Eversource said the company is working on raising the profile of its economic development efforts and along with other initiatives now has a dedicated economic development section on its website. Samantha Sojka, also of Eversource, reminded everyone that the company provides community impact grants of up to \$2,500 for 501(c) (3) organizations. Ed St. John spoke about the importance of emergency response plans for weather emergencies. Ms. Sojka said community response specialists will be meeting with all the towns. Ms. Ayers added that larger scale ERP meetings will be taking place around the state.

2. **Presentation – New NVCOG Website**

Glenda Prentiss provided an overview of the new NVCOG website (nvcogct.gov) and demonstrated some of its features. The new website will be more secure and reliable and is more modern looking. Ms. Prentiss navigated through and explained the usefulness of various portions of the site. The upgraded website will be going live soon. Rick Dunne praised Ms. Prentiss for having done an excellent job in leading this project.

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

a. *Approval of Amendments to the 2018-2021 CNVMPO TIP*

- i. Add State Project Nos. 0170-3532 and 0170-3545, Replacement and Inventory of Highway Signs – On a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Ray Rogozinski, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve CNVMPO Resolution 2019-10.

- b. *FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program* – Mark Nielsen explained that this is a program that is submitted to federal funding agencies and CTDOT and outlines NVCOG's work program for the

next two years. He explained the four planning tasks of data collection and analysis, transportation planning, program management and administration, and other technical assistance. The planning tasks and studies are intended to address the transportation issues and constraints facing the metropolitan area and help achieve the goals and objectives listed in the MPO's long range transportation plan. Mr. Nielsen displayed a table showing program funding sources and revenues. On a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Chris Bielik, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve CNVMPO Resolution 2019-11 endorsing the FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program for the Naugatuck Valley Planning Region.

4. NVCOG Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the April 12, 2019 NVCOG & CNVMPO Meeting* – On a motion by Chris Bielik, seconded by Pete Hess, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the April 12, 2019 NVCOG and CNVMPO meeting.

Rob Oris, Jr. commented that although he knows these are summary minutes, he would have liked to have seen a summary of what the member town questions were, in a bit of a question form, as part of the conversation with the Lt. Governor. He would have liked to have seen what the member questions were in the summary of minutes and was a bit disappointed in that, but other than that he understands that they are summary minutes.

- b. *Approval of Agency Financial Report for the Period Ending 3/31/19* – Michael Szpryngel reviewed the NVCOG financial report for the period ending March 31, 2019. NVCOG is 75% through the fiscal year. There have been no unexpected reductions in funding sources and no significant overruns on budgeted expenses. Mr. Rogozinski asked if variance meant year-to-date, Mr. Szpryngel said it meant total budget to date – what has been expended up to this period. Mr. Rogozinski asked if salaries then show 65%, and NVCOG is more than 65% through the fiscal year, did that mean there would be a surplus in salaries. Mr. Szpryngel said the adopted budget for the salaries expected a more robust staffing plan, but NVCOG had not fully staffed. Mr. Dunne explained that NVCOG's funds are not appropriated at the beginning of the year; unlike a city, NVCOG does not receive revenue unless it is billed. If someone does not work, NVCOG does not receive the revenue, so it is not actually a surplus. The revenue will not be realized, but NVCOG projects it at a certain staffing level. NVCOG bills hourly for each employee. Mr. Rogozinski thanked Mr. Dunne for the explanation. On a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Chris Bielik, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the NVCOG financial report for the period ending 3/31/19.

- c. *Review of Brownfields RLF Report* – Mr. Szpryngel said no action is required for this report, but it is presented in order to give NVCOG members a snapshot of the Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund. Mr. Szpryngel said there was not much change from last month's report, just additional principal and interest. Mr. Dunne reminded everyone that the RLF was constitutionally under the control of the Revolving Loan Fund committee. Mr. Mone noted that funds were still available for distribution based on requests that may come in from various communities for brownfields assistance. Mr. Dunne added that loans are also made to private entities as long as they are approved by the municipality.

- d. *Director's Report* – Mr. Dunne said Senate Bill 1141 contains language that would allow towns with enterprise zones to opt out of the benefit since the state had stopped reimbursing the towns two years ago. Enterprise corridor zone communities were not getting that proposed treatment under the language in Senate Bill 1141. Most affected towns were in agreement to have the ability to opt out. Enterprise corridor zones are a little trickier in that it must be a contiguous zone. If one town in the middle opts out, that would break the zone and break the benefit for everyone. Statutorily, the corridor zone is designated by the commissioner; it does not exist by statute only. The statute says the commissioner shall create a minimum of two zones, and there are only two. Mr. Dunne recommended that NVCOG not pursue this issue in this session and wait to see what language comes out. He also noted there is a chance that this bill will not pass and the language for the enterprise zone opt out will not pass. The matter can be pursued next year. With the current statutory language, even if the zones cease to exist, the benefits continue for 10 years. Depending upon interpretation of the language, it seems to mean that new applicants can apply for a period of 10 years, meaning the benefits could conceivably continue for 14 or 15 years. Mr. Dunne said he was not sure that an opt-out would create the ideal situation anyway.

Pete Hess said that if there is no funding, there is no benefit, and thus is a liability. He said it does not mix with existing incentive ordinances. The complication, Mr. Dunne said, is in the absence of total repeal of the statute there does not appear to be any way out of it. The benefits of the zone will continue to run to the recipients even if the zone breaks. Statutorily, it is a different fix than just opting out. Enterprise zones can opt out differently due to the benefits being set up differently. Mr. Hess wanted it noted that he would rather opt out. It was also mentioned that the ideal situation would be for the legislature to provide funding. Mr. Dunne said he believed nothing would be gained by an opt-out this year by not providing the tax benefit. The state would still provide the exemption and the town would still not get reimbursed, at least for those who are already in. Rob Oris, Jr. said there is a property in his business currently going through this with the state through a local town. The process has been ongoing for months. He questioned if what was being suggested was that the state could make an award and the municipality could deny it. Mr. Dunne and Mr. Mone said this was not the case, only that there would be no reimbursement for it. Mr. Oris, Jr. said he understood that the state could not reimburse the local community, but wondered if there was a designated enterprise zone that one could apply for and get approved by the state, meaning a private individual gets the benefit of that tax abatement. Mr. Dunne said he was hesitant to discuss this with anyone who might be considered an applicant and not a municipal official, but that that had not been his meaning. What he meant was that a town might be better off negotiating directly with an applicant on a direct subsidy rather than going through this process. Mr. Oris, Jr. said he was not looking for intercession in his behalf, but wanted to make sure what the process is, as there are constituents in various communities who might have questions, and he would like to be able to advise them. Mr. Mone said many municipalities have their own abatement ordinances which require less red tape than at the state level. Mr. Dunne said that at the state level they care about things being in place for the grand list so that a full five year benefit, not a partial first year benefit, is realized. Mr. Oris, Jr. said as a municipal official it was frustrating to see this as an unfunded mandate by the state. He said these issues continue to burden all communities. He suggested that COGs need to advance that narrative on behalf of all municipalities. He stated he thinks that is happening, but he personally was not aware that the state is not funding, as there are no such zones in Cheshire, other than some outlier locations dealing with abatement issues.

For the legislative update portion of the Director's Report, Mr. Dunne said he was limiting his discussion to the budget, and that there are two funding issues: OPM funding for the Regional Service Grant, and the match to federal transportation planning dollars, which has worked as an 80/10/10 match since the 1980s when it had been negotiated with the towns. Staff at CTDOT sent the COGs a notice saying that the match would now be 80/8/12 this year. At a meeting yesterday consisting of MPOs, OPM, and CTDOT, Mr. Dunne said he had stated that CTDOT does not have the authority to make changes to the match, that doing so is a policy change, and that CTDOT is shifting the state's investment in federal transportation planning from dedicated transportation revenue to the local property tax. This moves things over to the municipalities, as due to the shift, COGs will be forced to increase local dues to cover this cost share. He explained that this would be unsustainable and unfair, and leaves very little money to match anything beyond transportation. NVCOG does not receive any federal transportation dollars any longer for local projects, it all goes into state roadways. MPOs are certifying the state's federal program, all the MPOs do that, participating in one certified program, but CTDOT is proposing the MPOs contribute 12% of the dollars that certify the program. The matter is currently in OPM's hands, being discussed at the high policy level. Beyond the 80/8/12 match issue, Mr. Dunne noted that CTDOT is now funding carryover money at zero. This is a different argument because CTDOT got the match from the legislature for those prior years in those prior budgets. CTDOT is carrying that money forward but has spent that money on its own priorities, basically usurping the MPO's match money.

For the budget and dues established for the coming year, Ed Mone inquired what would happen if the 80/8/12 match goes into effect. Mr. Dunne said NVCOG would be able to cover its expenses by not filling one or two open positions that are shown in the approved organizational chart. Mr. Dunne says he hopes to present a budget for adoption at either the June or July meeting.

5. Municipal Shared Services – Household Hazardous Waste Program Update

John DiCarlo provided an update on the Household Hazardous Waste program. The program expanded from 11 to 17 towns. The first event on April 27 in Woodbury exceeded previous turnout records with nearly 900 cars. The event ran smoothly, although site limitations have been noted. Turnout increase wasn't significantly impacted by the new towns, however, there are indications it will increase as residents become more familiar with the new system. The next collection is in Wolcott on July 13. A site walk will be scheduled with the HHW vendor to ensure any backup onto nearby streets is minimized.

6. NVCOG Planning/Transportation

a. *LOTICIP*

i. Program Progress Report – Christian Meyer noted that two projects are entering the construction phase. Two additional projects are wrapping up with final design. Three more projects are coming out of the commitment to fund phase with CTDOT. Solicitation for the LOTICIP program is ongoing.

b. *Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-aside Projects – Update and Status* – Mark Nielsen said project proposals are being solicited under this program. These are non-traditional type projects such as for multi-use trails. A May 9 deadline was set for receiving preliminary applications. Funds are allocated via urbanized area, of which NVCOG belongs to four. NVCOG will be working closely with its partner COGs. Applications have been received from Thomaston, Seymour, Beacon Falls, Watertown, and Oxford.

- c. *Route 8/Waterbury Branch Line Alternate Modes Study Update* – Mr. Nielsen said this is an ongoing major planning study looking at alternative transportation modes within the Waterbury/Route 8 branch corridor, primarily looking at how service can be improved on the Waterbury branch line. It will also examine how those improvements can be used to be a catalytic change for the downtown areas that host Waterbury branch line train stations. A stakeholder meeting was held earlier in the week. More details on this study may be found on www.nvcogct.gov. Mr. Nielsen said the project is expected to be wrapped up by the end of the year.

7. **Authorization for the Executive Director to Enter into a Memorandum of Agreement between Sustainable CT, Inc. and NVCOG regarding the Sustainable CT Fellowship Program with an Effective Date of May 21, 2019 and Termination Date of September 1, 2019**

Mark Nielsen reminded the membership that last year NVCOG had hosted a fellow through the Sustainable CT, Inc. and Eastern Connecticut State University program. This year NVCOG will host two interns through the program (this is at no cost to NVCOG). The fellows will work with the towns on sustainable plans and projects leading toward certification under the program. NVCOG needs to enter into an agreement with Eastern Connecticut State University with typical terms and conditions. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Ray Rogozinski, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the executive director to enter into a memorandum of agreement between Sustainable CT, Inc. and NVCOG regarding the Sustainable CT fellowship program, with an effective date of May 21, 2019 and termination date of September 1, 2019.

8. **Naugatuck River Greenway Signage Update**

Aaron Budris said that a few years back NVCOG had received a grant to purchase signage for the Naugatuck River Greenway. The original concept was to put out wayfinding signs to get potential trail users to trailheads that are open in the towns. CTDOT, however, is opposed to directional signage for linear trails on state routes. The scope was thus altered to purchase trailhead signs that will be placed at existing trailheads announcing to people, for example, that although they may be on the Derby greenway or the Ansonia river walk, the trail is part of a larger trail network. Interpretive signs were also designed and purchased to tell the story of the Naugatuck River and how the greenway and the greenway trail fit into the future vision of what the river can mean to communities. Mr. Budris will be working with the towns' public works and parks departments to get the signs installed.

Ed St. John said that Middlebury has had a greenway in excess of 20 years, and noted that maintenance is an issue with greenways. Mr. St. John said the town has gone through the grant process to obtain funds to assist with safety and maintenance issues. He wondered whether grants could be done on a regional basis for the towns that have greenways. Rick Dunne said towns that took federal highway funds to build trails agreed to do maintenance when they accepted the funds to build them. He said there may be other sources that might be tapped. If the towns with greenways wanted to pool together and use municipal money, that money might be able to be paired up with funds that are obtained elsewhere.

9. **Title VI Update Public Comment Period**

Gabriel Filer said NVCOG is updating its Title VI policy for 2019. NVCOG is required to submit a revised Title VI policy once every three years. The purpose of updating the policy is to ensure that non-English speakers and low-income populations have access to regional transit programs. Public meetings will be held on May 14 and May 16. The public comment period is expected to end on June 14. Copies of the 2019 Title VI draft are available on the NVCOG website.

10. Other

Rob Oris, Jr. asked, per the Lt. Governor's statement last month that the Governor had asked her to reach out to municipalities, whether she had contacted any NVCOG communities. Some NVCOG members said they had received calls while others are still waiting.

11. Adjournment

At 11:06 a.m., on a motion by Tom Dunn, seconded by Dave Merchant, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

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



**CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

49 Leavenworth Street, 3rd Floor, Waterbury, CT 06702 - 203-757-0535 - 203-735-8688

RESOLUTION 2019-11

**ADOPTION
FY 2020-2021 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY MPO**

WHEREAS, the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO is required to conduct the federal metropolitan transportation planning process in accordance with federal planning regulation.

WHEREAS, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments is the designated host agency for the Central Naugatuck Valley MPO and has prepared the *FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program* in accordance with the federal planning guidelines.

WHEREAS, the draft UPWP lists and describes the planning tasks to be completed over the next two fiscal years and has developed task allocation budgets to accomplish such tasks.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Central Naugatuck Valley Region MPO approves, endorses and authorizes the *Unified Planning Work Program*, as prepared by NVCOG and negotiated with the State Department of Transportation, as the CNVMPO's Transportation Work Plan for FY 2020 and FY 2021.

This resolution shall become effective as of May 10, 2019.

I do hereby certify that the resolution adopted by the CNVMPO at a public meeting held on May 10, 2019, at which a quorum was present and that the same is a correct and true transcript from the original thereof.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Mone, Secretary

5/10/19
Date