

MINUTES OF THE 11/17/10 MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
AT SCCOG OFFICE, NORWICH, CT

PRESENT: Council Representatives: Gregg Schuster, Colchester; Paul Formica, East Lyme; Richard Matters, Franklin; Fred Allyn, Ledyard; Thomas Sparkman, Lisbon; Joseph Jaskiewicz, Montville; Rob Pero, New London; Nicholas Mullane, North Stonington; Robert Congdon, Preston; Kevin Lyden, Salem; Cathy Osten, Sprague; Daniel Steward, Waterford. Council Alternates: Mark Oefinger, Town of Groton; Martin Berliner, New London; Alan Bergren, Norwich; Timothy Bowles, Preston. Military Liaison: Captain Marc Denno, US Naval SUBASE. Staff: James Butler; Richard Guggenheim. Other: Bob Ross, State Office of Military Affairs; Jeff Nelson, Governor's Eastern Office; Jenny Contois, Congressman Courtney's Office; John Markowicz, seCTer; Deb Monahan, TVCCA; Chuck Seeman, UCFS; Bev Goulet, Norwich Human Services; Charles Jaskiewicz, Norwich Board of Education; Peter Talarico, Thomas Borden, Grayson Wright, CONNDOT; Chris Clark, Mohegan Tribal Utilities.

1. Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was present.
3. Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Matters led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Act on Minutes 10/20/10:

The Executive Director stated that he had received a phone message from Mr. Anthony this morning asking that the October minutes be corrected to reflect that he was present at that meeting.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of 10/20/10 with the correction that Mr. Anthony be added to the list of attendees. (Mullane, Osten). So voted unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report:

MOTION: To approve the November Treasurer's Report (Congdon, Osten). So voted unanimously.

6. Public Comment:

Charles Jaskiewicz of the Norwich Board of Education updated the COG on the adoption of a regional unified school calendar. He said a number of boards of education have agreed to adopt this calendar, and that there is momentum statewide to adopt such a calendar, and that he has discussed this with Governor-elect Malloy who favors it. Mr. Jaskiewicz reported some of the savings that are estimated to occur with the adoption of a unified calendar. He noted that the SCCOG endorsed the concept a couple of months ago, and asked that the SCCOG consider taking an action approving it.

Mr. Lyden noted that all of the savings that might be realized from adoption of a unified school calendar would be realized in board of education budgets, emphasizing the importance of the need to eliminate the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR).

7. Guest Speakers: Timothy Bowles, Chuck Seeman, Deb Monahan, and Bev Goulet re: Regional Social Services Coordinating Council

Mr. Bowles introduced himself and made reference to the 1992 Strategic Plan for Economic Development, which contained a table showing a Regional Social Services Coordinating Council. Mr. Bowles talked about why such a council is important at this time when cutbacks in funding to social service agencies are occurring, and suggested that the council should be related to the Council of Governments. He asked the SCCOG to consider as is allowed by its Bylaws, the formation of a subcommittee to study the issue of forming a regional social services coordinating council.

Mr. Seeman of the UCFS supported this position, and distributed a handout that showed the decline of funding for his agencies' programs over recent years.

Ms. Monahan of the TVCCA said the time was now for a regional social or human services coordinating council. She said that her agency would soon be providing each town with a report on services rendered.

Ms. Goulet, from the Norwich Human Services Department, distributed a list showing distressed municipalities in Connecticut, with three being located in the region. She too favored the creation of a regional coordinating council.

The Executive Director suggested that this request did not necessarily require the formation of a study committee, and that it could be reviewed and a recommendation made by the SCCOG Executive Committee. He asked the proponents to submit who they would like to see serve on such a council, what they want this council to do, their ideas on how it would relate to the SCCOG, and whether or not it would require SCCOG financial and/or staff support.

Mr. Allyn said he would be interested in knowing that in addition to advocating for more social services funding, how such a group might result in the regionalization of social services.

8. Communications:

The Executive Director noted that these were included in the agenda packet.

The Executive Director asked if the SCOG would add an item to the agenda under New Business. He said staff met yesterday at CONNDOT, and has received an update on the status of projects previously approved by SCCOG for FY 2011 STP-U funding, and that he is bringing this to the COG today because there is urgency in assuring these projects be obligated during this fiscal year.

MOTION: To add the STP-U Funding for FY 2011 to the agenda under New Business (Congdon, Maranell). So voted unanimously.

9. Committee and Liaison Reports

A. Executive Committee

1. FY 2011 TIP/STP Amendments

The Executive Director reported that the Executive Committee recommended in favor of approval of these projects pending receipt of additional detail about the location of the projects, and that detail was included in the agenda packet and distributed to each SCCOG member's place at the table.

2. SCCOG Nomination to seCTer Board of Directors

The Executive Committee has nominated Nick Mullane to serve another term representing the SCCOG on the seCTer Board of Directors.

3. Other

The Executive Director stated the Executive Committee considered and acted upon a number of smaller items and that these are reported in the Committee's written report contained in the agenda packet.

B. Legislative Committee

Mr. Schuster said that the Legislative Committee has finalized the adopted 2011 SCCOG Legislative Agenda, and this was distributed to each SCCOG member present. He said the SCCOG has invited the region's legislative delegation to discuss the agenda to a meeting on November 24th, at 8:30 a.m.

C. Tribal Liaison Representatives

No report.

D. Military Command Representative:

Captain Denno reported on preparations for the celebration for the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812; he asked anyone having ideas concerning improvements to the SUBASE to send these directly to him.

E. Office of Congressman Courtney

Ms. Contois reported the Congressman had just returned from Washington where there is a lot of uncertainty in this lame duck session of Congress.

F. seCTer

Mr. Markowicz said that seCTer's Annual Meeting would be held tomorrow; work has begun on updating the CEDS and that the CEDS Strategy Committee will meet December 8th at the SCCOG office; reported on the seCTer Retreat; said that seCTer recently signed an agreement with DECD regarding a small business assistance program; and said that Friday the Chamber of Commerce is hosting a military appreciation breakfast.

G. Eastern CT Tourism District

Mr. Markowicz reported on the Greater Mystic Visitors Bureau and the public/private partnership with the tourism district; he urged any town not having a designee to the tourism district to appoint one as there are a number of vacancies.

H. SEAT

No report.

I. Governor's Eastern Office

Mr. Nelson reported that the Governor's office is starting to close up shop and is focusing their efforts on transitioning with the new Governor-elect. He then thanked the SCCOG for their work and for how he was treated during the past years in his capacity as the Governor's Eastern Office representative. The SCCOG members present applauded Mr. Nelson and wished him well.

10. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director reported that the addendum to the RITC study has been completed by the consultant and forwarded to CONNDOT. He said he is now awaiting CONNDOT's response to the recommendation that CONNDOT become involved with the management and operation of the train station, and that he is prepared to work with the City of New London to see the recommendations of the study and addendum to the study implemented.

The Executive Director stated that as requested by Mr. Mullane at the last COG meeting, he has re-surveyed by e-mail all COG CEOs as to their interest in a regional ethics commission, and to their willingness to participate as an unbiased participant on another town's ethics panel. He said that to date he has received 8 responses, with 4 interested in a regional ethics panel and 4 not interested, and 4 willing to serve on another town's ethics panel, 3 not willing, and 1 to be determined. He said based on this response or lack thereof, he concludes that there is not enough interest in a regional ethics panel at this time, but said that anyone who has not responded that wishes to do so should contact him.

11. Old Business

A. Regional Emergency Planning Team

Mr. Sparkman stated that the REPT will meet December 1st, at the NECCOG office in Dayville. The Executive Director reminded that it is important that the REPT have a quorum to adopt the budget, and reminded that chief elected officials can appoint designees in writing to attend and vote in their place.

B. Regional Water

The Executive Director stated that SCCOG's Regional Water Committee would next meet on Monday, December 6th, at 9:30 a.m. He then introduced Chris Clark, of the Mohegan Tribal Utility Department, who has been working with the SCCOG and the three major municipal utilities in the region to develop a plan for future water connections and sources in the region. Recently, Mr. Clark and other representatives of the major municipal utilities, have been meeting individually with chief elected officials to ask them about their town's needs and priorities for new water sources.

Mr. Clark presented a map to the SCCOG, depicting the region's draft regional water planning priorities. He said this map has been reviewed and endorsed by the SCCOG's Regional Water Committee. He recently presented it to the Southeastern CT Water Authority and has asked them for their ideas. The region has been divided into three sub-regions for planning purposes. Mr. Clark walked the SCCOG through the priorities in each sub-region. He emphasized that this was still a work in progress.

Mr. Congdon stated that many SCCOG members have been working to see created a regional water network for what seems like forever. He said the SCCOG has determined that the three major municipal utilities need to be involved in this discussion, so the SCCOG formed the most recent iteration of the Regional Water Committee. He said the SCCOG owes a great deal to Chris Clark, and his employer the Mohegan Tribe which has allowed Mr. Clark's participation, for pulling this all together. Mr. Congdon recommended SCCOG endorsement of this plan.

Mr. Clark acknowledged the contributions of Al Dion formerly of the City of Groton Utilities and now representing Norwich Public Utilities, Herb Cummings of the City of Groton Utilities, and Joe Lanzafame of the City of New London Water and Water Pollution Control Authority.

MOTION: To endorse the proposed Regional Water Priority Planning Document dated 10/20/10 (Congdon, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

12. New Business

A. FY 2011 TIP/STIP Amendments

- 0170-2771, Various, Statewide, Non-NHS Roadway pavement Management Analysis, PE, 2011, \$1,100,000, New Project.
- 0170-2773, Various, Statewide, Replace &/or Repair Overhead Sign Supports, PE, 2011, \$2,000,000, New Project.
- 0170-2854, Various, Statewide, Design of Traffic Signals at Various Locations for 8 Construction prc., PE, 2011, \$800,000, New Project.
- 0170-2993, Various, Statewide, BR Insp. On/Off FAHS by Staff, PE, 2011, \$6,400,000, New Project.
- 0170-2993, Various, Statewide, BR Insp. On/Off FAHS by Staff, PE, 2012, \$6,500,000, New Project.

MOTION: To approve the FY 2011 TIP/STIP amendments (Sparkman, Steward). So voted unanimously.

B. STP-U Funding for FY 2011

The Executive Director distributed a table staff had received from CONNDOT at a meeting yesterday, showing their proposed reallocation of funding for STP-U funded projects that the SCCOG allocated FY 2011 funding for at their last meeting. He explained that the new cost figures are based on meetings with the towns, and the development of more refined cost estimates by the Project Development Unit of CONNDOT. He introduced Peter Talarico and Tom Borden of CONNDOT who were in attendance to answer any questions. He reminded the SCCOG that staff had previously advised that the projects' cost, scope, and target year is a continuously moving target, and that CONNDOT will now be meeting with staff at least every six months to discuss where the region's projects are as they move toward project obligation. The purpose for bringing the proposed changes directly to the COG today was to allow the COG to be informed and to act today if possible, so that these projects can all be obligated before the end of the fiscal year. He said yesterday he had attempted to personally contact each CEO who had a project that was changing in cost or scope, and left messages where he was unsuccessful in reaching a CEO. He then walked the COG through the status of the FY 2011 STP-U funded projects in Griswold, New London, Norwich, Salem, Sprague, Stonington, and Montville. He emphasized that the cost figures and year of project completion could change again as the towns continue to work with CONNDOT in developing their projects.

Mr. Borden explained how his unit works and provided an explanation as to how projects increase in scope.

MOTION: To approve of the allocation of STP-U funding in FY 2011 as shown on a table proposed by CONNDOT dated November 2010, and received by staff on 11/16/10 (Osten, Jaskiewicz). So voted unanimously.

The Executive Director reminded that SCCOG members have received an additional solicitation for projects to be funded with STP-U funding in outlying years which is due in December, and that CONNDOT has advised SCCOG that the majority of these should be capital road projects, as opposed to pavement rehab and sidewalk projects, the funding for

which will be limited to a maximum percentage of SCCOG's annual funding under this funding source in future program years.

Mr. Berliner noted his impending retirement as City Manager in New London, and said this will likely be the last COG meeting he attends. He thanked the COG, the Executive Director, and the staff for all their hard work and assistance over the years. The SCCOG applauded Mr. Berliner and wished him a happy retirement.

13. Next Meeting: December 15, 2010.

14. Adjournment:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 9:54 a.m. (Allyn, Jaskiewicz). So voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Formica, Secretary

