

MINUTES OF THE 3/1/10 SCCOG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
SCCOG Office, Norwich, CT

Present: Richard Matters, Robert Congdon, Dan Steward, Paul Formica, Mark Oefinger, Thomas Sparkman

Staff: James Butler, Richard Guggenheim

Other: Chris Clark

Chairman Matters called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

1. Draft STP-Urban Program Project Selection Policy

The Executive Director introduced the topic, and said that this had been discussed at the last COG meeting. The document drafted by staff is to serve as a guideline for future SCCOG distribution of funding under this program. The Assistant Director stated that the SCCOG annually receives around \$2.5 Million under this program. He then walked the Executive Committee through the document. The Executive Committee requested several changes and then agreed to forward this document to the full COG for discussion and possible action.

2. FY 2010 TIP/STIP Amendments

MOTION: To recommend to the full COG the approval of the FY 2010 TIP/STIP Amendments (Oefinger, Sparkman). So voted unanimously.

3. Request for SCCOG Staff Assistance re: Water Matters

The Executive Director reported that at the last SCCOG Regional Water Committee meeting, there were several requests for SCCOG staff assistance. One was from North Stonington First Selectman Nick Mullane, who has suggested that SCCOG staff be involved with the implementation of the Drinking Water Quality Management Plan. The second was by Chris Clark, from the Mohegan Tribal Utility Commission, who suggested that SCCOG staff review individual water company water supply plans to see if there are any common themes and areas that can be pursued in the creation of a regional water network. The Executive Director distributed a scope of work for SCCOG staff generated by Greg Leonard, General Manager of the Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority. Mr. Clark explained his idea that the time is ripe for the SCCOG to begin to take a leadership role in terms of regional water supply planning. He said he thinks that SCCOG staff could provide a great service to the SCCOG and its member municipalities in performing this and other work. The Executive Director stated that while he agreed with Mr. Clark, he was concerned because of the recent loss of the COG's SGIA for regional planning and the lack of any other funding stream for this purpose.

Mr. Congdon stated that a key is to get the three large municipally owned water utilities to the table, and that the SCCOG taking on a leadership role on the issue of regional

water supply and delivery may allow that to happen. He suggested that SCCOG chief elected officials and staff have meetings with the three utilities as a first step. Mr. Oefinger agreed that it was logical for SCCOG to take on a lead role at this time. Mr. Formica also voiced his agreement for this to happen. The consensus of the Executive Committee was that the Executive Director should schedule these meetings with Mr. Matters, Formica, and Congdon in attendance, and that staff commit the time needed to begin reviewing the water supply plans and to perform other tasks as needed to position the SCCOG as a leader in regional water matters.

#### 4. Relocation of March 17<sup>th</sup> SCCOG Meeting

The Executive Director reported that he had been contacted by the Manager of the Transportation Strategy Board to see if the TSB could hold their March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting in New London. This is the same date as the next SCCOG meeting, and since the TSB meeting begins at 10:00 a.m., if the meetings were held in the same location, SCCOG members could attend the TSB meeting after their meeting. The owner of Union Station has agreed to host both meetings in the lobby of the train station. It was noted that the relocation of the meeting and the following of the SCCOG meeting by the TSB meeting, would require the SCCOG to reschedule Mr. Sielman's presentation on virtual town meetings and to cancel the next Regional Water Committee meeting. The Executive Committee agreed to relocate the March 17<sup>th</sup> SCCOG meeting to Union Station in New London.

#### 5. Request to Meet with SCCOG: M. Paulhus regarding Municipal Pensions and Retirement Plans

The Executive Committee declined a request by former Windham First Selectman Mike Paulhus to meet with them to discuss municipal pensions and retirement programs that his new company was offering.

#### 6. Other

The Executive Director announced that CONNDOT has agreed to present a workshop on STP-Urban funding to municipal officials at the SCCOG on either March 11<sup>th</sup> or March 19<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Committee selected March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Steward updated the SCCOG on the deliberations of the Route 11 Greenway Authority Commission. He distributed a white paper prepared by SCCOG staff that outlined the status of funding for the greenway and the bike/pedway study. He asked staff to provide this and a discussion of options for the Route 11 GAC to the full COG and to make this an agenda item at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Steward reported that the Municipal Employees Retirement System is considering a significant increase in the required employer contribution, and that this will be the subject of a public hearing on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

The Executive Director distributed a copy of a letter sent by the Connecticut Association of Regional Planning Organizations (CARPO) to the Governor, requesting the restoration of the State Grant-In-Aid for regional planning.

The Executive Director reported on the status of the Health Savings Account which is now the basis of SCCOG employees' health insurance plan. He stated that some employees required the plan be fully funded before the end of the year, as opposed to the SCCOG contributing the funds on a monthly basis, because of their personal medical situation. He has established a policy whereby the employee can make a written request with documentation for the addition of funds in advance of the SCCOG's schedule to deposit into their account. He also stated that he had elected to fully fund the HSA of the new GIS Coordinator, because if they were under the old insurance plan where the SCCOG paid only its share of the premium, any new employee would have full health insurance coverage upon joining the COG. The Executive Committee discussed their own experience with HSAs and agreed with the approach taken by the Executive Director.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James S. Butler, Executive Director