



# NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

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## MINUTES

### Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

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

10 a.m., Friday, December 11, 2020

**NVCOG Representatives:** Sheila O'Malley, Alternate, Ansonia; Len Assard, First Selectman, Bethlehem; Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Mayor, Bristol; Jerry Sitko, Alternate, Cheshire; Rich Dziekan, Mayor, Derby; Ed St. John, First Selectman, Middlebury; Pete Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck; George Temple, First Selectman, Oxford; David Merchant, Mayor, Plymouth; Bob Chatfield, Mayor, Prospect; Annmarie Drugonis, First Selectwoman, Seymour; Mark Lauretti, Mayor, Shelton; Jeff Manville, First Selectman, Southbury; Ed Mone, First Selectman, Thomaston; Neil O'Leary, Mayor, Waterbury; Tom Dunn, Mayor, Wolcott; Barbara Perkinson, First Selectwoman, Woodbury.

**Guests/Other:** Jason Martinez, United Way of Greater Waterbury; John Field, DEMHS Region 5; Pauline Yoder, CRCOG; David Murphy, Milone & MacBroom; Sara Radacsi, CTDOT; Hedy Ayers, Eversource; Lou Mangini, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro's Office; April Chaplin, Kennedy Center; Lillian McKenzie, Senator Chris Murphy's Office; Ellen Graham, Senator Richard Blumenthal's Office; Mike Mapo, CTPost; John Monteleone.

**Staff:** Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Aaron Budris, Joanna Rogalski, Christian Meyer, John DiCarlo, Michael Szpryngel, Richard Crowther, Jr., Olivia Brandi.

Prior to the start of the meeting, there was a presentation by Jason Martinez of United Way of Greater Waterbury on ALICE in Connecticut: A Financial Hardship Study.

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

Chairman Neil O'Leary called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance, and the roll was called.

*Public Comment:* Hedy Ayers of Eversource announced that her colleague Samantha LaBonne had recently given birth to a healthy baby boy.

#### 2. NVCOG Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the November 13, 2020 NVCOG & CNVMPO Meeting* – On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 13, 2020 NVCOG & CNVMPO meeting.

- b. *Approval of Agency Financial Reports and Summaries for Period Ending 10/31/20* – Michael Szpryngel reported that NVCOG is 33% through the fiscal year with an operating surplus of \$123,000, which he anticipates to slowly decrease as the year progresses. There have been no major changes in budget revenue sources and no significant overages or expenses. Mr. Szpryngel noted that due to the postponed Executive Committee meeting, he did not have the opportunity to discuss the audit RFP, audit results, and preliminary budget with the Executive Committee, but would be presenting these items to the full board in January. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the agency financial reports and summaries for the period ending 10/31/20.

c. *Director's Report*

- Update on COVID-19 Recovery Funding – Rick Dunne said he would be discussing the first two items in greater detail in the Executive Committee meeting which was scheduled to start following adjournment of this meeting. There has been a delay in the Federal Economic Development Administration approval of the statewide application to fund COVID recovery activities going forward for the next two years. Mr. Dunne is now part of a committee working with the state to hopefully have this resolved within a few weeks.
- NVCOG Board Vacancies – Mr. Dunne said a vote to fill the vacancies would be put before the full NVCOG board in January.

Additionally, Mr. Dunne said he had just received word the county equivalency proposal from Federal Congress department will be published in the Federal Register on Monday. It is possible the governor may have a press release concerning this.

Chairman O'Leary asked Mr. Dunne to elaborate on the board vacancies. Mr. Dunne said there are two vacancies. One is a vacancy on the executive board that was created when Kurt Miller resigned from his position in Seymour. According to the bylaws, it is the Chair's selection to fill the vacancy on the executive board, however, Chairman O'Leary has asked for this item to be placed on the executive board agenda. It will be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting and a recommendation and vote will be put before the full NVCOG board in January. The second vacancy is for a member of the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) committee. Mr. Dunne explained that NVCOG functions as a fiduciary with EPA. The RLF committee is made up of five members, which had included former First Selectman Miller. It is up to the board in general to fill the vacancy or it may be delegated to the Chair. Chairman O'Leary asked that anyone with an interest in filling either of the vacancies email Mr. Dunne.

- MIRA – John DiCarlo said earlier this year MIRA (Materials Innovation Recycling Authority) sent NVCOG a list of 15 NVCOG municipalities that have their solid waste processed at its Hartford incinerator plant. While many towns do not have a contract with MIRA per se, they still have their materials processed there. MIRA has announced that it will close the plant by July 2022. If there is no state option for processing, it will have a significant impact on the towns. Mr. DiCarlo said while there is no action to take today, he wanted everyone to be aware that this could become a problem in the future. Ed Mone offered comments about the impacts, financial and otherwise, that this closing could cause. Discussion took place as to whether a subcommittee should be formed to address the issue. Ed Mone and Ed St. John would be willing to serve on such as subcommittee. John DiCarlo will contact the towns about forming a working committee.

3. **Regional and Municipal Shared Services Update**

- a. *CRCOG Cybersecurity Program* – John DiCarlo gave an overview of this program and introduced Pauline Yoder of CRCOG (Capitol Region Council of Governments). Ms. Yoder

gave a presentation on the suite of cybersecurity services available to towns through CRCOG's vendor. The cybersecurity program is designed to enhance and augment existing IT services.

- b. *Household Hazardous Waste Program Attendance Policy* – John DiCarlo said the HHW Committee has recommended a change to the HHW attendance policy. As background, each participating town is to send a staff member to each event to staff the line and make financial decisions on behalf of the town if a resident brings in anything extraordinary in terms of volume or disposal costs. The HHW committee proposed and unanimously voted that the attendance protocol be that each town must send a municipal representative who can be primarily standing outside for a 6.5-hour shift and be empowered to make financial decisions on behalf of the municipality; if a town does not send a representative, the NVCOG staffer in charge of the event will be responsible for making any financial decisions in that regard for that municipality. There will also be a small financial impact. Currently there is a population-based administrative fee that is split among the towns. This population-based formula would automatically double for the following fiscal year for any town that doesn't send a representative for two consecutive events. CEOs will be provided attendance sheets and receive two warnings before any financial penalty is incurred. Responding to a question from Ed Mone, Mr. DiCarlo clarified that this applies not just to a representative from the town hosting the event, but that all HHW events must have a representative from all participating town. On a motion by Jeff Manville, seconded by Tom Dunn, with Ed Mone voting nay, it was

VOTED: To approve the attendance protocol unanimously approved by the NVCOG HHW Committee on 11-17-20.

#### 4. **Emergency Management Update**

- a. *COVID-19 Response Update* – Joanna Rogalski introduced Region 5 Regional Recovery Coordinator John Field.

- *Long Term Recovery Update* – John Field said the governor continues to have weekly meetings and updates and holds municipal conference calls every other week. CT DPH now has an additional call that includes municipal and local public health officials. There is a webinar that includes training and enforcement recommendations. There is an initiative to ensure that there is sufficient and adequate testing throughout the entire state. PPE distribution will take place next Friday for Region 5 health care workers and EMS responders. Region 5 continues to address food insecurities and is working with non-profits. Mr. Field reviewed executive orders. The arrival of the first COVID-19 vaccine is expected next week, this is the Pfizer vaccine, and a distribution schedule has been developed. The military will be responsible for getting all dosages out to all states within four days.

Ms. Rogalski said the Long Term Recovery Steering Committee met last Wednesday and discussed unmet needs. An unmet needs form was developed and will be rolled out next week.

- b. *Regional Emergency Planning Team Update* – Ms. Rogalski said there are a few outstanding MOUs due for Region 5. Those concerned were contacted.

- c. *Community Emergency Response Team Update* – Ms. Rogalski reported there is new guidance on virtual basic training. As vaccine locations open to the public, CERT volunteers could direct traffic. John Field should be contacted for further information.

**5. NVCOG Planning/Transportation**

- a. *LOTICIP Program Update* – Christian Meyer reported that over the course of the calendar year, capital improvement projects have continued to progress. He reviewed charts displaying spending and allocation. Mr. Meyer said allocation spending is an indicator of the value and demand for this type of project, with spending being a strong indicator that the projects are getting built.
- b. *Transit Safety Performance Measures* – Mr. Meyer explained that CTtransit Waterbury Division has adopted performance measure targets for the safety of its operators and riders. Targets will be reviewed annually.

**6. Environmental Planning**

- a. *Resilient CT Update* – Joanna Rogalski introduced David Murphy who provided an update on Resilient CT Phase Two, administered through UConn CIRCA and funded through a Federal Housing and Urban Development Grant. Mr. Murphy reviewed slides detailing tasks and progress.
- b. *Kinneytown Dam Update* – Aaron Budris provided a recap of conditions at the Kinneytown Dam. FERC opened a docket and contacted the facility owner. Save the Sound and the Naugatuck River Revival Group submitted documents and evidence to the FERC docket and NVCOG engaged Attorney Ron Shems. Next steps include a federal delegation briefing by NVCOG staff, a possible Fish and Wildlife Service meeting, a CEO meeting with CT DEEP, and an additional FERC filing.

**7. Other**

Chairman O’Leary acknowledged and welcomed new Seymour First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis. Bob Chatfield offered congratulation to Mayor Boughton of Danbury on his pending appointment as Commissioner of the state Department of Revenue Services.

**8. Adjournment**

At 11:23 a.m., on a motion by Neil O’Leary, seconded by Ed Mone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

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