



NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

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

MINUTES

Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

and

Central Naugatuck Valley MPO

Virtual Video Conference Meeting

10 a.m., Thursday, April 9, 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, Andrew Baklik, Alternate, Derby; Ed St. John, First Selectman, Middlebury; Pete Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck; George Temple, First Selectman, Oxford; David Merchant, Mayor, Plymouth; Kurt Miller, First Selectman, 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 Selectman, Woodbury.

Guests/Other: Attorney John Marini, Attorney Courtney George, Marino, Zabel and Schellenberg, PLLC; John Field, Regional Emergency Response Team, Region 5; Hedy Ayers, Samantha LaBonne, Eversource; April Chaplin, Meg Haffner, The Kennedy Center; David Krechevsky, Greater Waterbury Chamber; Lou Mangini, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro's Office; Jennine Lupo, Congresswoman Jahana Hayes' Office.

Staff: Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Aaron Budris, Joanna Rogalski, Glenda Prentiss, Trish Bauer, Lauren Rizzo, Christian Meyer, John DiCarlo, Karen Svetz, Michael Szpryngel, Richard Crowther, Jr., Gabriel Filer, Keith Rosenfeld, Olivia Brandi, Ricardo Rodriguez, Lesley Barewin.

Prior to the start of the meeting, there was a presentation by Attorney John Marini and Attorney Courtney George on the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.

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

Chairman Neil O'Leary called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called.

For public comment, Samantha LaBonne of Eversource said the utility is continuing with all essential work and implementing programs to help those customers, both residential and commercial, who may be experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has also made donations to non-profit organizations. Ms. LaBonne also said there has been an increase in scam activities regarding utility service.

2. **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 No. 0170-3562 – Statewide Transportation Demand Management (NY-NJ-CT Moderate)
- ii. Add State Project No. 0170-3563 – Statewide Transportation Demand Management (Greater CT Moderate)

Both projects involve CTrides, a program that offers employers resources to promote teleworking and set up carpools and vanpools for employees in order to decrease the number of work trips, thereby decreasing traffic congestion and pollution.

Ed Mone asked how this benefits the NVCOG municipalities. He said that many TIP amendments seem to re-appropriate funding to different areas of the state. Mark Nielsen said these two ongoing state programs provide ridesharing benefits to individuals, reducing the number of vehicles on the road. Mr. Nielsen further explained that the state is divided into two non-attainment areas, and NVCOG is a part of both areas. The program benefits all municipalities within those two areas. On a motion by Tom Dunn, seconded by Jeff Manville, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve CNVMPO Resolution 2020-06 regarding amendments to the 2018-2021 CNVMPO TIP.

3. **NVCOG Administrative Items**

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the March 13, 2020 CNVMPO and NVCOG Meeting* – On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Jeff Manville, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the March 13, 2020 CNVMPO and NVCOG meeting.

- b. *Approval of Agency Financial Reports and Summaries for Period Ending 2/29/20* – Michael Szpryngel reported that NVCOG is 75% through the fiscal year and its net position is \$119,911. There have been no unexpected reductions in funding sources. There is an overrun of approximately \$500 for office equipment. EPA/DECD funds are at 129% and 114% respectively; funds are available to cover the overage. Any funds under budgeted are a result of a more robust staffing plan. All funds that are over their budgeted amounts have adequate funds in administrative G&A to account for overages. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Jerry Sitko, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the agency financial reports and summaries for the period ending 2/29/20.

- c. *Approval of FTA Capital Program Certifications & Assurances FY20* – Rick Dunne explained these Certifications & Assurances must be approved each year for the FTA's Transit Asset Management System. On a motion by Tom Dunn, seconded by Ed Mone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adopt NVCOG Resolution 2020-11 – FTA Assistance – Certifications & Assurances FY 2020.

- d. *Director's Report*

- Legislative Update – Rick Dunne said if there is a legislative session, he expects it will be short, and include only “must pass” bills.
- Overview of Agency Remote Operations – Mr. Dunne said remote work is going smoothly for NVCOG. All staff members are working full days remotely and may be reached by email or phone.

4. **Discussion of the Report “Compendium of Statutory and Regulatory Mandates on Municipalities in Connecticut” by the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR)** – Rick Dunne said brief discussion on this had begun last month, but had not been fully explored as Mayor O’Leary (the ACIR Chair) had not been able to attend the meeting. Mr. O’Leary

said this was a statutorily mandated report to OPM and the governor's office and has to do with mandates that are passed on by the legislature each session. This comprehensive report outlines the effects of unfunded mandates. It outlines deficiencies, including the short turnaround time between when legislators request a fiscal analysis be submitted to OFA and the time the legislators vote (less than 24 hours). The ACIR committee felt this issue was one where they could have the greatest impact. Education underfunding was another important topic the ACIR committee addressed.

5. **Regional and Municipal Shared Services** – John DiCarlo said each municipality and each independent police department was asked to take part in a survey to catalog areas where they currently collaborate with other towns. They were also asked about areas in which they would like to collaborate. Surveys were received from six municipalities and five police departments. Mr. DiCarlo will resend the survey next week to garner greater participation.

6. **NVCOG Planning/Transportation**

- a. *LOTICIP Update* – Christian Meyer said the LOTICIP program is still ongoing. Governor Lamont recently signed House Bill No. 5518 which included LOTICIP SFY 2020 and 2021 program authorizations. NVCOG's allocation is \$8,844,500 for each year, and bonding has been approved for the NVCOG SFY 2020 program of projects. NVCOG has a total of 35 projects either completed, under construction, under design, under application review at CTDOT, or in the preliminary planning stage.
- b. *Approval of NVCOG Resolution 2020-12 to Select the Lowest Qualified Bidder to Perform a Third Party Review for the Safe Pedestrian Mobility Enhancement Project in Prospect* – Karen Svetz reported that, as with all LOTICIP projects, proposals were requested from the on-call list of engineers for a third party review. This project is for the safe pedestrian mobility enhancement project in Prospect, and the lowest qualified bidder was VHB, Inc. She requested approval for NVCOG to enter into an agreement with VHB, Inc. for the service. On a motion by Tom Dunn, seconded by Len Assard, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approved NVCOG Resolution 2020-12 to select VHB, Inc. as the lowest qualified bidder to perform a third party review for the safe pedestrian mobility enhancement project in Prospect.

7. **Emergency Management**

- a. *Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Update* – Joanna Rogalski said the Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan is proceeding. There were six responses to the RFP. The consultant selection committee is currently reviewing the proposals. A decision is expected to be made by the end of April.

8. **Board Discussion of COVID-19 Policy Response (the Board was joined by John Field, Regional Coordinator, Regional Emergency Response Team, Region 5)**

Ed St. John opened the discussion by stating the safety and health of residents and first responders is of great importance. He noted that there is the potential for a cash flow problem in July or August and that tax collections may be delayed. He recommended the towns have contingency plans in place. Pete Hess spoke about possible disruption of virtual meetings by members of the public and recommended IT support to manage the meetings. Len Assard said he was contacted

by the EPA about potential use of the Bethlehem Fairgrounds as a staging area and distribution center but had not heard anything further from them. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) quantities and availability were discussed, as was the ICU capacity at Waterbury hospitals, where COVID-19 admissions seem to have somewhat slowed.

John Field said the state had gone into full virtual activation mode approximately two weeks ago. The state response framework is being followed, and the governor conducts daily unified command calls and twice weekly municipal briefings. The National Guard is active in setting up for surge capacity overflows. The president approved the state's emergency declaration, qualifying it for FEMA reimbursement, and applicant briefs have begun. Region 5's emergency support plan has been activated. The regional coordination center is operational and is working with the incident management team. Whenever possible, issues are being addressed on the regional level. The amount of PPE remains "critical" and has been broken down into three levels of need. Surge overflow centers and priority testing for COVID-19 are being identified. Homeless decompression sheltering was also addressed.

Additionally, Jeff Manville said he is concerned about the mental health of citizens who are dealing with isolation issues. He noted that the longer isolation continues, a fragmentation of civility may become apparent. Mr. O'Leary said behavioral health non-profits are seeing an increase in referrals.

9. Other

There was no other business.

10. Adjournment

At 11:23 a.m., on a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Tom Dunn, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

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

