



NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

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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, September 8, 2017

NVCOG Representatives: Chris Bielik, First Selectman, Beacon Falls; Len Assard, First Selectman, Bethlehem; Ken Cockayne, Mayor, Bristol; Jerry Sitko, Alternate, Cheshire; Anita Dugatto, Mayor, Derby; Pete Hess, Mayor, Naugatuck; Joanne Pelton, Alternate, Oxford; David Merchant, Mayor, Plymouth; Bob Chatfield, Mayor, Prospect; Jeff Manville, First Selectman, John Monteleone, Alternate, Southbury; Ed Mone, First Selectman, Thomaston; Judy Mancini, Proxy, Waterbury; Ray Primini, Town Council Member, Watertown; Tom Dunn, Mayor, Wolcott; Bill Butterly, First Selectman, Woodbury.

Guests/Other: Senator George Logan; Sara Radacsi, CTDOT; Matt Ouellette, CT Rides, Ellen Graham, Senator Richard Blumenthal's Office; Lou Mangini, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro's Office; Kenny Curran, Senator Chris Murphy's Office; Barbara Kalosky, Maria Vaccarelli, North East Transportation; April Chapman, Kennedy Center; Mark Massaro, Eversource; Jeremy Leifert, Town of Thomaston; Bruce Wittchen, Office of Policy and Management; Randy Collins, CCM, members of the public.

Staff: Rick Dunne, Mark Nielsen, Aaron Budris, Joanna Rogalski, Glenda Prentiss, Trish Bauer, Lauren Rizzo, Christian Meyer, John DiCarlo, Max-Tanguay-Colucci, Karen Svetz, Bill Leverage.

Prior to the start of the meeting, there was a presentation on BETA Group's Pavement Management Program by Najib Habesch and Tony Garro of BETA Group.

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

Treasurer Tom Dunn called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the roll was called. There was no public comment.

2. CNVMPO Activities (*Voting members for these items are limited to the 15 CEOs in the CNVMPO area*)

a. *Approval of TIP Amendment*

- i. Project No. 0084-0114 – Preliminary Design for the Relocation of Route 34 Crossing Housatonic River – Mark Nielsen noted the concerns about this project that had been discussed at the June meeting. Since that time, a letter was received from CTDOT explaining its position and rationale for using public funds for this project. The letter also stated that it was not a legal opinion. After discussions with CTDOT and the towns most impacted by the project, a compromise was obtained to move just the preliminary design funds for the project to allow the state to begin design, initiate some of the environmental assessments, identify the preferred alignment, and come up with concept alternatives. Ed Mone raised questions about the legal responsibility of First Light to financially support the project according to 1919 and 1920 agreements. Rick Dunne said CTDOT had declined to secure a legal opinion. Allocation of funds to complete the final design phase and construct the project would be considered at a later date following completion of preliminary design and public outreach.

Following further discussion, on a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Bill Butterly, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve Resolution 2017-13 allocating federal funds under the National Highway Performance Program – Bridge Replacement in the FFY 2015 TIP to initiate the Preliminary Design phase for the relocation of Route 34 and construction of a new structure to carry Route 34 over the Housatonic River, and add the project to adopted Program of Projects in the Draft FFY 2018-2021 TIP. The MPO will consider endorsing federal aid funds for the Final Design (FD), rights-of-way and construction phases upon completion of the preliminary design, a determination of the preferred alignment and concept for the new road, public outreach, and resolution of the legal question regarding the responsibility of the owner of the Stevenson Dam to construct the new crossing of the Housatonic River.

3. **Chairman’s Comments – Opioid Litigation**

In the absence of Chairman O’Leary, Mayor Hess spoke about the City of Waterbury’s lawsuit against members of the pharmaceutical industry relative to the opioid crisis. Mayor Hess believes that the lawsuit may pave the way to a solution. The lawsuit seeks monetary and punitive damages, but inherent in the lawsuit is the intent to bring things to a head to make progress in this national crisis. The lawsuit focuses on certain studies that claimed that long term opioid use was safe. Mayor Hess stated his belief that Mayor O’Leary would like all NVCOG members to join in support of the lawsuit.

Discussion followed.

4. **NVCOG Administrative Items**

- a. *Approval of the Minutes of the June 9, 2017 NVCOG & CNVMPO Meeting* – On a motion by Ken Cockayne, seconded by Chris Bielik, with Bob Chatfield abstaining, it was

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the June 9, 2017 NVCOG & CNVMPO meeting.

- b. *Approval of Financial Reports* – On a motion by Chris Bielik, seconded by Ed Mone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the financial reports.

- c. *2016 Audit Presentation* – Rick Dunne said this audit was the first full year audit of NVCOG and no findings are considered to be problematic. A meeting with the Executive Committee, which serves as the Audit Committee, will be held to discuss the audit in depth, and all members are welcome to attend. Bill Leverage urged anyone with questions on the financial reports or audit to contact him personally. Mr. Dunne also said that all items required for the 2017 audit have been submitted.

- d. *Discussion/Approval of FY 2018 Budget* – Members discussed a recent Connecticut Conference of Municipalities meeting and frustration with the lack of a state budget.

- e. *Director’s Report* – Rick Dunne said a public hearing on the State Plan of Conservation and Development would be held immediately following the NVCOG/CNVMPO meeting’s adjournment.

Mr. Dunne discussed the state budget crisis and its effect on COGs and member municipalities. He also spoke about the federal Transportation and Housing and Urban Development bill and

mentioned a voice vote amendment had been passed providing for the elimination of the preservation of unobligated transportation funds. Planning dollars that COGs receive could also be disproportionately cut.

Mr. Dunne also spoke about the Local Update of Census Address (LUCA) and said NVCOG is willing to take the lead on this, but will need a technical point person from each municipality.

Ed Mone commented on NVCOG's fund balance and inquired whether NVCOG would be okay financially, at least for the short term. Mr. Dunne asserted this to be the case, with some caveats.

5. **Municipal Shared Services**

- a. *Regional Law Enforcement Meeting Update* – John DiCarlo said the Municipal Shared Services Committee held a meeting in June and had presentations and Q&A with the former chair of the Connecticut Police Chief's Association and the executive director of Northwest Connecticut Public Safety. The consensus was to use a smaller is better approach and have voluntary cooperation between two or more municipalities. Regional dispatch will be explored.

Given the state budget outlook, deep cuts may force towns to take a very serious look at municipal shared services beyond areas that have already been considered. The goal is to facilitate shared services, not for NVCOG to necessarily run them.

- b. *Regional Wastewater Treatment Consolidation Study Update* – Mr. DiCarlo said the selection committee received seven responses to its Request for Proposals and ultimately selected Black & Veatch as the most qualified firm. Scope is currently being negotiated. The study is expected to take 18 months.

6. **NVCOG Planning/Transportation**

- a. *Approval of the "MOU for Coordination of Transportation Planning Activities in the Multi-State New York-New Jersey-Connecticut-Pennsylvania Metropolitan Region"* – Mark Nielsen said NVCOG is a member of the multi-state Metropolitan Area Planning (MAP) Forum. The MAP Forum is a consortium of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and councils of governments (COGs) in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania that voluntarily coordinate transportation planning activities in the multi-state region. It enables affiliated agencies to address shared transportation challenges that stem from the region's unique scale, population density and integrated and interconnected transportation systems. A MOU was signed in 2008, however, because of organizational changes, census boundary changes, and consistent with good planning principles, the MAP Forum members have determined that the MOU should be updated to reflect these changes, especially the consolidation of COGs in Connecticut, as well as allow the participation by additional, adjacent MPOs that were not originally included. On a motion by Ken Cockayne, seconded by Ed Mone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To Adopt Resolution 2018-01 to approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding for Coordination of Transportation Planning Activities in the Multi-State New York-New Jersey-Connecticut-Pennsylvania Metropolitan Region and authorize Rick Dunne, Executive Director, to sign the MAP Forum Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments and to perform, in good faith, and to the extent practicable and appropriate, the activities of voluntary coordination, cooperation and consultation in the transportation planning process amongst themselves, as described in said MOU.

- b. *Long Range Transportation Plan* – Mr. Nielsen said updates to this plan, which US DOT requires to be updated every four years, are underway. The current plan expires in March 2019. The draft outline is multi-modal, financially constrained, includes vision for future transportation systems, reflects a 20 year horizon, and should be completed by December 2018.
- c. *Pedestrian Safety Plan* – Mr. Nielsen said a regional pedestrian safety plan is being worked on. It looks at all roads and pedestrian facilities of member towns. The final draft is nearly complete and there will be public involvement.
- d. *Connectivity Program* – The Community Connectivity Grant program provides municipalities with state funds to implement low cost safety improvements and counter-measures to help improve safety and better connect bicycle and pedestrian travel. While the program is directly with municipalities, NVCOG reached out to member cities and towns offering technical assistance in identifying possible projects and preparing applications. Mr. Nielsen provided a summary of technical assistance provided to Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Oxford, Plymouth, Woodbury, Thomaston, Bethlehem, Seymour and Derby.
- e. *LOTCHIP Status & Update* – Mr. Nielsen said a slight reduction in annual allocation is expected. Mr. Dunne commented that the reduction was a swap that was agreed to between federal and state funds. The program is being run under state funds. CTDOT is requesting less in funding statewide because there are regions that have not spent any monies. NVCOG is fully programmed and Mr. Dunne believes the agency is entitled to a certain amount of funding under that swap, but CTDOT is proposing to give NVCOG less because other regions are not spending as much. He stated that NVCOG should receive its fully funded amount and the issue will be revisited. Mr. Nielsen said NVCOG would continue to program as much as it can. Seven projects should be completed by the end of this year and 10 projects are currently in design.
 - i. Project Endorsement – Naugatuck River Greenway Phase II – On a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Pete Hess, it was unanimously

VOTED: To endorse the preparation and submittal of a project application for Naugatuck River Greenway Phase II by the Borough of Naugatuck on recommendation by the NVCOG's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee.
- f. *FTA Section 5310 Awards* – Mr. Nielsen said six of NVCOG's seven grant applications had been approved for this program.
- g. *Regional Plan of Conservation & Development* – Joanna Rogalski reported that this plan is currently being worked on. Main point of contact for the report is the Regional Planning Committee. NVCOG will be requesting time at municipal Planning and Zoning meetings for discussion about the plan.
- h. *Greater Waterbury Transit District Update* – Christian Meyer said NVCOG continues to consolidate its role of support to the Greater Waterbury Transit District (GWTD). NVCOG will host their meeting on Tuesday, September 12, 2017. The biggest challenge to the board is participation. Mr. Meyer asked participating NVCOG members to encourage their representatives to attend.

7. Emergency Planning

- a. *Authorization for the NVCOG Executive Director to Enter Into an MOU for DEMHS Region 5 under the FFY 2017 Homeland Security REPT Grant Program* – Joanna Rogalski explained that each year Region 5 enters into a memorandum of understanding regarding the duties and responsibilities of each COG involved with the emergency planning team. On a motion by Ed Mone, seconded by Bob Chatfield, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize NVCOG Executive Director Rick Dunne to enter into a MOU with the Western CT COG and the Northwest Hills COG regarding function and responsibilities for DEMHS Region 5 under the FFY 2017 Homeland Security REPT Grant Program.

- b. *Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning* – Ms. Rogalski noted that each municipality is required to have a hazard mitigation plan in place. NVCOG is looking to gather all these plans and apply for a FEMA grant to have a regional and/or sub-regional plans. She will be contacting each municipality about this in the future. Mark Nielsen added that FEMA regulations require pre-disaster mitigation plans be updated every five years.

8. Other

Rick Dunne asked that all NVCOG planning staff attend the OPM public hearing on the draft State Plan of Conservation and Development to take place at the adjournment of the CNVMPO/NVCOG meeting.

9. Adjournment

At 11:19 a.m., on a motion by Bob Chatfield, seconded by Len Assard, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by
Lauren Rizzo
Administrative Services Coordinator
for
Ken Cockayne
Secretary