



Meeting Minutes

April 1, 2016

Member towns represented: Brooklyn, Canterbury, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly (including the Town Manager), Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Voluntown and Woodstock

Russell Gray, NECCOG Chair opened the meeting at 9:02am

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Previous meeting minutes, December, January, and March 4 Meeting Minutes - Motion by Mr. Ives and a second by Mr. Piper - **approved as presented**
- Public Participation: **none**

Directors Report- John Filchak

- **Regional Reval** contracts are signed, those towns participating have your signed copy in front of you for your files.
- **RPI grants** submitted back in December - yesterday was deadline for individual town's endorsements, we didn't get complete endorsement from all towns but we got majority - not optimistic given states budget.
- **Route 169 Byway Plan** - three public hearings coming up next week on 169 byway plan, Brooklyn, Woodstock then Lisbon.
- **Human Service Initiative** kicks-off on the 26th of this month, we will have various human service providers in here to begin discussion, based on research Hoween Flexer has done for us 72 mil dollars a year spent across the 16 towns. Anyone thoughts on what is most pressing in region? Talk to me or Hoween or attend the meeting.
- **CEDS Plan** - three meetings on Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy were not well attended except for the final one, goal is by November we will submit to state which will allow towns leverage for federal or state money.
- **CERT Homeland Security Citizen Corps** training will take place on April 30 and everyone is invited. If you would like to know more, you may contact Jim Larkin.
- **Transportation Projects** - There's only a few transportation projects we are working on currently, including two sidewalk projects.
- **Animal Services** - Shoutout to Charlene's Portrait photo studio for their annual pet photo contest in which they raised over one thousand dollars in cash and gift cards for our animal services program that will be going to dogs and cats directly. Of our 93 Sterling cars, we are now down to 6 from the original intake. About twenty were euthanized and the rest have been adopted. We have 2 dogs and 6 cats right now. Newest member is the town of Plainfield for animal services.
- We are in discussions with **Northwest COG** and later this month a meeting will tried to be solidified.

Mr. Brodeur asked about the Anything new on regional election monitor? The Director responded that we had only one response, Secretary of State's office is looking for more candidates for us, no final decision, metro COG in Bridgeport area, they've decided to defy the law and told sec of state they don't agree with it and wont comply. Not sure of that end result.

Mr. Syme asked if we had a job description - answer - yes.

Mr. Sweet asked if it was a one-day job - answer, a couple of days and a little under 10,000 dollars.

Mr. Brodeur - We've been asked for data for access to ballots, process for referenda 12 categories, etc. Consensus was that it seems like they are attempting to see f the issues are widespread or listed to just a few towns.

Mr Gray stated they he and others had got a note from KB ambulance to set up meeting. KB responded that the meetings were a response to a recent state decision. That they wanted to get out there and let the towns know what we are capable of now and in the future. Just a brief discussion of who we are and what we are. Mr. Filchak stressed that NECCOG has a current paramedic contract in place and will be issuing a new RFP soon.

Discussion and Action Items:

1. Regional Referrals

- a. Town of Putnam Plan of Conservation and Development Update
- b. Town of Eastford Plan of Conservation and Development Update

Motion by Mr. Ives and Second by Mr. Sweet both items were approved as presented - with no regional impact

3. STIP Amendments - none

4. NECTD Procurement Policy, Update - withdrawn

5. Pending legislation

Mr. Gray asked State Representative Doug Dubinsky, who happened to be in attendance, to remark (if he was so inclined) on the budget or other legislation. Representative Dubinsky stated right now legislature is in a state of extreme confusion with regard to budget. On Tuesday a deficit mitigation plan passed cutting 200 million of our budget for this current year. He indicated that there may be additional holes for this current year and that we won't know until April. Mr. Ives stated that his biggest concern is next year. Representative Dubitsky agreed. Mr. Sweet asked if the new budget will hold town aid as currently in place or is part of budget deficit solution also reducing municipal aide? Representative Dubitsky stated that at this point municipal aide has been protected - however, going forward there is no guarantee that municipal aid will not be reduced. Mr. Sweet stressed that towns didn't create this problem. Mr. Falzarano noted that the City of Hartford is in a major fiscal crisis and asked if they will get another bail out - just like SB1 - and why should small towns fund big cities? Representative Dubitsky replied that he did not know - butI wished that he knew, That he certainly shared the worry that it will be state stepping in and paying up. The Executive Director noted that he had provided a copy of an OLR report on the Hospital Tax to provide background and this very important issue and the legislation that our local legislators are pursuing to protect Day Kimball and Windham hospitals.

6. Regional Police Force discussion

Mr. Griffiths stated that he asked for this agenda item and discussion since Killingly is exploring various police protection options and wanted to open the discussion up to the entire region. Mr. Piper asked if they are looking at essentially a county type police force. Mr. Griffiths replied that they are open to many options. Mr. Cahill asked how many members participate in the Resident Trooper Program. Based on the responses - Brooklyn, Chaplin and Killingly are the only participants. The Executive Director discussed the logic of exploring options and getting the facts by retaining an expert consultant - he

went on to discuss that he had looked into USDA funding for such a study. There was some discussion as to the future of the Resident Trooper program and the ultimate costs to towns - additionally the ability of Troop D in the future to assist our towns.

Selectmen's Roundtable

The Executive Director discussed two federal Tiger Grants for bridges on the Airline Trail in Pomfret and for the Visitor's Center in Thompson. Mr. Sweet expressed his displeasure with the idea of the Visitor's Center - that it was an old issue and should not be pursued by NECCOG.

Mr. Cahill shared that there will be a hearing in Hampton on a possible State Police Shooting Range in the near future. He also wanted to know if the Airline Trail is considered a state park and why they should not be paying PILOT.

Each of the members in attendance indicated that their budgets are unchanged since the last meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Gray, second by Mr. Walker - approved unanimously at 10:27am