



# neccog

ashford - brooklyn - canterbury - chaplin - eastford - hampton - killingly - plainfield  
pomfret - putnam - scotland - sterling - thompson - union - voluntown - woodstock

## Meeting Minutes

### Special Meeting - December 4, 2014

9:00 am - Scotland Community Room (firehouse complex) - 47 Brook Road, **Scotland, CT**

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Allan Walker convened the meeting at 9:10 a.m and noted that a quorum was present - Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Pomfret, Scotland, Thompson and Woodstock

1. **Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Endorsement** - The draft plan was discussed by the Executive Director who noted that the Plan is fully complete in terms of Chapters 1,2, and 3 and has now been heard in each of the member towns and is ready of submission to DEEP and FEMA. On a motion from Ms. Nicholson and a second by Mr. Cahill the Plan was approved for submission.
2. **Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program Initiatives** - The Executive Director distributed a summary (attached) of potential RPI grant initiatives.

The discussion was led off by a brief presentation by Eric Lindquist from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) regarding the State's incentives and policy regarding a Uniform Chart of Accounts. Mr. Lindquist explained the special grant program to initiate the transition to UCOA for towns.

The Council reviewed each and decided to authorize the Director to prepare and submit the following grant applications:

- ▶ Three Town Implementation Plan - for Chaplin, Hampton and Scotland
- ▶ Value-Added Agriculture Feasibility Study
- ▶ Regional IT Assistance Pilot
- ▶ Back Office Functions
- ▶ Enhanced Animal Services Facility
- ▶ Regional Household Hazardous Waster Facility
- ▶ Regional Economic Development/Marketing Initiative

Consensus was reached that RPI Applications would be prepared and submitted for the following: Three Town Implementation Plan, Value-Added Agriculture Feasibility Study, Regional IT Assistance Pilot, Enhanced Animal Services Facility, Back Office Functions Feasibility Study, Regional Household Hazardous Waster Facility and Regional Economic Development/Marketing Initiative.

The Director also updated the Council on the issuance of an RFP regarding Pre-Hospital Emergency Care, the Reval Program and the status of the new GIS Viewer and related issues to GIS - noting that a special presentation will be made in January.

Meeting adjourned at 10:35



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The following is background information regarding potential Regional Performance Incentive Grants for discussion at the December 2, 2014 Special Meeting. The RPI proposals listed are not meant to be exhaustive of the RPI grants that could be submitted. The following are based on previous meeting discussions.

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Potential applications include, but are not limited to:

- Uniform Chart of Accounts
- Regional Household Hazardous Waste Facility
- Three-Town (Chaplin, Hampton, Scotland) School Study, Part III
- Value-Added Agricultural Feasibility Study
- Regional Human Resources/Back Office Functions
- Regional Cattery
- Regional IT Assistance
- Regional Insurance Coverage
- Regional Economic Development/Marketing

**Uniform Chart of Accounts**

This proposal would be for a regional grant (amount to be determined) to transition towns to the Uniform Chart of Accounts structure that will soon be required of all municipalities.

Public Acts 11-57 and 13-247 require the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to (1) design, develop and implement a uniform system of accounting for municipal revenues and expenditures and (2) to develop a benchmarking system that includes financial and non-financial data from various sources. Public Act 13-247, Section 257 states that:

*(a) Not later than July 1, 2014, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall, in consultation with the Department of Education, the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and the Council of Small Towns develop and implement a uniform system of accounting for municipal revenues and expenditures, including, but not limited to, board of education and grant agency expenditures and revenue. Such uniform system of accounting shall include a uniform chart of accounts to be used at the municipal level. Such chart of accounts shall include, but not be limited to, all amounts and sources of revenue and donations of cash and real or personal property in the aggregate totaling five hundred dollars or more received by a municipality. The secretary shall make such chart of accounts available on the Internet web site of the Office of Policy and Management. (b) Not later than June 30, 2015, each municipality shall implement the uniform system of accounting for municipal revenues and expenditures developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section by using such uniform system to complete and file annual reports with the Office of Policy and Management as may be required by the secretary in order to increase transparency regarding municipal expenditures and to meet the state's benchmarking goals.*

The new law sets up a structure of reporting and does not require that a town replace their existing chart of accounts with the one developed by OPM. According to OPM:

*A chart of accounts is a uniform system of account numbers used to categorize municipal revenues, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and fund equity. A chart of accounts provides the framework to capture original transactions, organize that data logically, and provide a robust basis for reporting on the results. A well-designed chart of accounts satisfies these requirements by providing the ability to isolate the data*

into segments or “buckets” and, by using tools to combine data from selected segments, to allow for meaningful analysis and reporting.

The UCOA standardized account-code structure allows every municipality to use the same account codes and methods for tracking revenue and expenses in their daily accounting. This not only allows for an apples-to-apples comparison between municipalities, but also helps municipalities in their financial decision-making processes to ensure that their investments are driven toward improving services and gaining efficiencies.

The UCOA provides transparency, uniformity, accountability, and comparability of financial information for municipalities. UCOA data provides invaluable financial information that stakeholders at every level can use to make informed investment decisions.

A Uniform Chart of Accounts will standardize the way municipalities account for resources budgeted and expended and provide greater accountability to assist decision-makers at all levels. A UCOA provides:

- *Transparency* – Clear, detectable view of how dollars are invested in logical detail;
- *Uniformity* – Conforming to the same principles, standards or rules used from community to community to ensure consistency;
- *Accountability* – Precise rules for capturing and reporting data aligned to specific goals and objectives; and
- *Comparability* – Uniformity of method and content to allow comparison between different, but like entities.

The benefits include:

- *Uniformity of format and application;*
- *Isolation of data in segments creating granularity of data;*
- *Power of combining segments to address specific questions;*
- *Comparability of data;*
- *Numbering methodology enhances ad-hoc reporting and data warehouse searches; and*
- *Allows for more effective analysis when combined with non-accounting data.*

### **Municipal Reporting System<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Uniform Reporting for Municipalities:**

Public Act 13-247 requires municipalities to implement uniform reporting by June 30, 2015, by using such uniform system of reporting developed to complete and file annual reports with OPM as may be required by the Secretary of OPM. The uniform system developed involves the use of the UCOA and its accompanying Accounting Manual. The accounting manual for municipalities is in the process of being created and should be released in the near future. It will reflect the phase-in implementation approach that OPM, working with the advisory committee has decided on. It will also include information for those municipalities that intend on using the UCOA within their accounting systems. The enclosed draft UCOA may undergo changes based upon your feedback and/or to coordinate with the information provided in the accounting manual.

Please note that **although uniform reporting will be required, this does not mean each municipality is required to replace its current chart of accounts with the new UCOA.** Municipalities will meet the uniform reporting requirements by simply reporting in accordance with the UCOA developed and the accompanying accounting manual. A municipality currently undergoing an accounting system implementation or changing its underlying chart of accounts is encouraged to use the UCOA for its new chart of accounts.

#### **Implementation – Phased Approach & Mapping**

##### *Phased Approach*

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<sup>1</sup> Connecticut Office of Policy and Management - <https://ctucoa.wordpress.com/municipal-reporting-system/>

*The state is implementing municipal reporting using a phased approach. Creating a reporting system that includes benchmarking and comparative analytics is a journey, which takes time to establish benchmarks and ensure the system is capturing comparative, quality data. The Phased approach will allow the State to capture information at a high-level, analyze the information for quality and provide it back to stakeholders for their own purposes – and will allow the comparison of more detailed information over time as the system matures.*

*In the first year of implementation, OPM will only require municipal financial information at the Function level for the General Fund only (i.e., General Government, Public Safety, Public Works). OPM will also require non-financial information to be used for comparative and analytical purposes, the majority of which are derived from other sources at the State level.*

*In subsequent Phases, or years, OPM will require more detail. For example, in Year-2, the State will require information revenue and expense information at the Department level (i.e., Town Clerk, Police) for the General Fund and all other “governmental funds”. In Year 3, object codes will be required.*



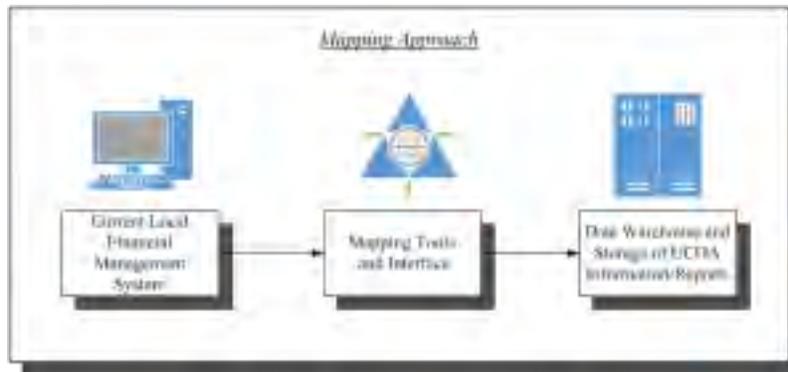
### **Mapping**

*Mapping, simply stated, is a crosswalk of an underlying chart of accounts in a local accounting system to the UCOA, which resides in a data warehouse.*

*In Year 1 implementation, each municipality will provide an electronic file of its general ledger to BlumShapiro on behalf of OPM. BlumShapiro will map or crosswalk that file to the UCOA in the Mapping Tool. The Municipal COA/UCOA map will then forever reside in the Mapping Tool. Since the reporting information is at the Functional level for the General Fund only, it is anticipated that OPM may map the vast majority of municipal charts of accounts with no additional municipal personnel involvement.*

*Once the mapping is completed, each year a municipality will send its general ledger file to a secure site and the Mapping Tool will crosswalk its accounts to the UCOA. The map will only need to be updated for any account additions or deletions. Phase I will also include a web-based form for manual data entry, should a municipality prefer a manual approach to sending financial information to the state.*

*Under this approach, each municipality may continue to use its own, historical chart of accounts in its current accounting system with no changes to its local or internal accounting and reporting. However, and as stated above, a municipality currently undergoing an accounting system implementation or changing its underlying chart of accounts is encouraged to use the UCOA for its new chart of accounts.*



### **UCOA File – How to Review the UCOA**

The UCOA is a standardized account-code structure that allows every municipality to use the same account codes and methods for reporting revenue and expenses from their daily accounting systems. The UCOA draft is in Microsoft Excel as a combined Municipal and Board of Education chart of accounts for those towns and districts with a combined accounting system. Worksheets are labeled and color-coded to separate Municipal from BOE specific segments of the UCOA.

The UCOA files include the UCOA structure and account codes for UCOA segments from Funds through Object and Project codes.

### **Timing and Next Steps**

Please also note that, due to the mapping approach, implementation of the UCOA does not need to occur prior to July 1, 2014 to be able to report municipal information for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015. So long as the local charts of accounts are mapped to the UCOA Mapping Tool prior to September 30, 2015, the legislated reporting deadlines will have been met. OPM anticipates completing Phase I implementation well within these timeframes.

Within the next several months, OPM, with input from other stakeholders, will finalize the UCOA, complete the accounting manual and complete the planning to implement the Phase I approach.

**The UCOA is presented at the link below for your information.** If you have any comments or suggestions on the UCOA detailed structure, please send them to:

Bill Plummer, Local Government Program Manager for Municipal Finance Services, Office of Policy and Management at 860-418-6367 or [bill.plummer@ct.gov](mailto:bill.plummer@ct.gov). Or, you may send them to: [UCOA@blumshapiro.com](mailto:UCOA@blumshapiro.com)

### **[UCOA\\_Combined\\_Draft\\_October\\_2013](#)**

#### **Household Hazardous Waste Facility to be built in Brooklyn**

This initiative seeks \$690,000 to put in place a regional household hazardous waste (HHW) collection center at the Town of Brooklyn Public Works Center (located in the southern part of town - not far from Routes 169 and 205).

The proposed facility would be full enclosed (a first for Connecticut) - giving it the potential (legislative changes would be required) to operate on a year-round basis. The towns of Ashford, Chaplin, Hampton, Eastford, Scotland and Union have use of the regional HHW collection site (operated by Midnortheast Recycling Operating Committee) located in Willington (57 Hancock Road). The proposed Brooklyn site would offer reasonable access to those not currently using the Willington site. Additionally, if the facility is allowed to operate year-round - it would provide an option for HHW disposal for all residents in the Region. The following is a cost estimate for the facility:

Cost	Estimate	Notes
Land	\$0	project will be located on municipal property
Engineering	\$0	regional engineer
Site Work	\$200,748	Based on Engineer's review of Brooklyn site
Pre-Fabricated Metal Building	\$200,000	based on a 50' x 100' structure
Building Slab and Related Work	\$50,000	current price of concrete and prep work
HHW Compliant Buildings (3)	\$75,000	hhw storage units
Waste Oil, Gas and Anti-Freeze Storage	\$10,000	three units with 350 gallon capacity
Plumbing	\$7,500	conservative estimate
Safety Equipment	\$10,000	eye wash, shower, fire suppression, etc
Signage	\$5,000	directional, information and facility
Oil/Water Separator	\$2,000	
Septic or Containment Tank	\$2,500	
Security System	\$10,000	video and conventional system
<b>Estimated total</b>	<b>\$572,748</b>	
Contingency	\$57,275	10% of construction costs
<b>Construction Total Request</b>	<b>\$630,023</b>	
<b>Operation Funds, Year One</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	
<b>Total Grant Request</b>	<b>\$690,023</b>	

**Three-Town (Chaplin, Hampton, Scotland) School Study, Part III**

This initiative seeks \$150,000 in RPI funds to cover the initial costs of implementing the course of action determined/recommended in Phase I and II regarding the future configuration of the respective towns school systems and their facilities.

The Towns of Chaplin, Hampton and Scotland have recently (2014) undertaken a study “to conduct this Comprehensive Enrollment Analysis and Facility Utilization Study of their individual elementary school districts as well as Regional School District 11. The goal of this study is to inform the three communities as they explore potential alternative school operations.” During the course of the study a decision was made to analyze five alternatives: 1) maintain the status quo, 2) regionalize PK-12, 3) regionalize PK-8 and tuition out high school students, 4) establish a cooperative agreement to operate existing elementary schools and maintain Parish Hill, 5) dissolve region 11, bring 7th and 8th grades back to the existing elementary schools and tuition out high school. The three town did secure a RPI grant (\$36,750) to conduct the study outlined above. Unfortunately, the actual grant award took longer than anticipated and the initial phase of the study began without the use of the grant funds. The towns are using the grant to further the regional School System Analysis previously begun by the three towns in order to better

understand focus their options for school organization and operations in light of recent enrollment declines and to implement educational changes to benefit the towns. Phase II of the study will discuss options and recommendations based on the information gathered (Phase I) and input from participants in order to finalize a course of action for the three towns for their school system. Additionally, Phase II will: (1) address any new issues that are identified; (2) address disposition of any building; and, (3) determine the process in which votes should be taken and their standing within Connecticut law. The results of Phase II will produce a framework for implementation of the recommended educational changes.

Phase III monies will be used for the actual implementation of the recommendations that result for the work of the initial two phases.

**Value-Added Agricultural Feasibility Study**

This proposal is for \$50,000 to conduct a feasibility study detailing the viability of establishing a value added processing/production incubator center for agricultural producers in northeastern Connecticut.

The proposed study will examine:

- Innovation: Are agricultural producers and processors in the Region interested in developing new enterprises?
- Cooperation: Is there a willingness to utilize shared facilities and resources to develop these enterprises?
- Support: Is there support to create and sustain a system of shared facilities and resources?
- Barriers: What are the barriers to establishing this type of venture?
- Structure: What are the options and/or optimal structure to make this facility successful?
- Cost: What are the real costs of establishing and operating such a center? What are the technology needs for the proposed business Other equipment needed When and where can the technology and equipment be obtained What does the technology and equipment cost. Will the technology achieve intended income and production levels. Estimate the size and type of production facility needed, including the estimated capital requirements for facilities, equipment and inventories.

The study will additionally:

- Conduct a market analysis to demonstrate the viability of the proposed approach.
- Conduct a producer survey to determine the willingness of local agricultural producers to participate and utilize the facility.
- Examine the possible economic impact such a facility could have on the Region.
- Determine the capacity and potential to produce raw products. Can regional production sustain production needs?
- Determine the Region's competitive advantages and disadvantages and the potential to exploit those advantages or overcome any disadvantages.

The proposed study is needed to enhance the viability of agriculture in the Region and protect its rural character. Northeastern Connecticut has nearly 300 farms (and at least that many within 25 miles of the region) producing a range of agricultural products. For the most part these farm operations are small and sell directly to the consumer. Each of these farms share a common thread - they are trying to make a living at a very challenging endeavor - production agriculture. To succeed they must raise their crop or animal and successfully bring it to market covering their costs of production and hopefully realizing a fair rate of return.

One well documented approach to enhancing farmer viability is with “value-added agriculture.” New England and the Northeast United States represents one of the largest most affluent markets in the world. More than ever there is a strong desire on the part of consumers to know where there food comes from. Our framers have the opportunity to capitalize on this and exploit the Northeast marketplace with a value-added approach. A successful avenue for assisting farmers developing value-added products is through an agricultural business incubator. Business incubators, for any number of types of business - including agriculture, is a proven method to success.

The need for a more viable and expansive regional agriculture is not only to the benefit of the farmer as a business. The benefit extends to the economy of the Region. Profitable farms are ones that keep lands open and maintain that sense of “rural character” that most residents cherish. The Region experienced a rapid loss in farm lands in the late 1980s, 90’s and the first part of this century - primarily from residential development.

**Regional Human Resources/Back Office Functions**

This proposal seeks \$45,000 to conduct a feasibility analysis of towns “back-office functions” and their potential to be shared jointly or regionally. Support functions for towns, like human resource and financial management, technology and telecommunications, audit services insurance; and legal services can provide substantial savings opportunities in terms of both software and personnel costs.

The opportunity to expand administrative capacity while also saving money is real and should be examined. In one report reviewed, it was stated that: “Each of these units [municipalities] performs accounting, auditing, accounts payable, payroll, and human resource management functions differently. There are typically a number of personnel responsible for these functions in larger units of government, whereas smaller municipal examples ... tend to have one to two part or full-time administrative support personnel conducting all of these functions...Generally speaking, smaller jurisdictions, most of which have few employees, do not have a full-time staff member for handling human resource management and financial administration....Many local government administrative personnel lack capacity or direction from their executives to pursue administrative savings through proactive financial management tools....Whether it is due to lack of time, alternative priorities, or a limited understanding of the benefits that can be accrued by both employers and employees through intentional financial management, workforce administration, and other administrative functions, many local governments voiced a need for greater resources in this area....Shared administration and improved “back office” management could assist in eliminating the opportunity costs associated with these concerns, because administrative personnel would be more likely to be retained across administrations and build institutional knowledge needed for strong local government operations. Finally, more intentional efforts to share the burdens of administration regionally could lead to increased regional consistency in functions, allowing for opportunities for shared resources and information to be identified and pursued.

One Example, which has been in place since 2005, is a regional town accounting program offered through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments in Massachusetts.

*The Town Accounting Program is a fee-for-service program initiated by the FRCOG in 2005 to respond to the needs of several Franklin County communities for professional accounting services. Services include warrant input, journal entries, assistance with reconciliation of cash and receivables, year-end closing entries, Free Cash certification, assistance with tax recap and Schedule A preparation.*

*The FRCOG currently has agreements with fourteen communities, including Ashfield, Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Conway, Gill, Leverett, New Salem, Rowe, Shelburne, Sunderland, Wendell, Whately, and Williamsburg. In conjunction with the FRCOG, thirteen participating towns have entered agreements to become users of the FundWare accounting software. All these towns are fully converted to the new accounting software. For town departments with high-speed internet access, accounting files are able to be viewed from the web. Additional town office staff have been trained to access their town's data on an inquiry-only basis in order to research account activity and vendor history.*

#### **Regional IT Assistance**

This proposal would seek \$100,000 to pilot a regional IT program similar in structure to our current Engineering or Animal Services programs. NECCOG would hire an in-house person to work on IT matters exclusively for its member/participating towns. Work would include:

- Compile/update inventory of all information technology related assets, assess system architecture and current processes, and make recommendations for improved town and region IT system performance.
- Performs basic support functions including installing PCs, laptops, PDAs, printers, peripherals, and office automation software; diagnosing and correcting desktop application problems, configuring laptops and desktops for standard applications and identifying and correcting end user hardware problems, and performing advanced troubleshooting. Assist with software and hardware purchases. Assist in development of software/hardware policies and procedures.
- Managing computer systems and networks to include complex application, database, messaging, web and other servers and associated hardware, software, communications, operating systems necessary for the quality, security, performance, availability, recoverability, and reliability of the system. Ensure scheduled preventive maintenance for equipment is properly and promptly performed; maintain the maintenance records on the equipment; develop operations, administrative, and quality assurance back-up plans and procedural documentation. Setup new users and edit or remove existing users on server. Server performance and capacity management services with reporting when specified thresholds are reached. Configuration management, including changes, upgrades, patches, etc. Support of financial software and other specialized software as it relates to the server(s) and associated hardware. Management of user logins and security. Coordinate repair and maintenance work with contracted repair vendors and ensure repairs are conducted in a timely fashion.
- Scope of activity includes all network equipment including switches, firewalls, routers, and other security devices. Primary installation and maintenance of printers, network copiers/scanners, etc. Primary maintenance including regular analysis, routine configuration changes, and installation of patches and upgrades. Alert notifications to designated personnel in the event of failure. Complete proactive monitoring of network equipment including bandwidth utilization, and other performance indicators, with reporting when specified thresholds are reached. Network performance and capacity management services, and network troubleshooting. Maintain network documentation and procedures.
- Maintenance of virus detection programs on servers, email and all other computers and laptops. Perform security audits as requested and notify personnel immediately of suspected breaches of security or instruction detection. Configure town systems to enable remote

access in a secure environment and provide remote access administration as requested by designated personnel.

- Engineering, planning, and design services for major system enhancements, including installations and upgrades of new or existing systems. Examples include major server upgrades, storage system upgrades, redesign of backup systems, etc. Provide technical leadership for server technology issues. Make recommendations for future purchasing and technology needs. Install new servers, software and hardware and transfer data when acquired. Strategic planning, design, and installation/upgrade of core network systems. Examples include major network upgrades, provider changes, IP schema redesign, installation of “core” network devices, etc.

#### **Enhanced Regional Animal Services Facility**

This proposal would seek \$400,000 to modify the existing regional animal care facility located in Dayville with several new additions to enhance the proper care and placement of domestic animals.

A major component to the facility modifications would be a regional cattery (general population room for 50 cats; quarantine room for up to six cats; isolation room for cats first entering the facility - the first of its kind in Connecticut. The cattery would include proper housing, communal viewing/play area, health/wellness care and adoption facilities. The proposal includes an adoption room. Currently, the facility has no indoor place dedicated to adoptions of dogs or cats. Additionally, this proposal would add four isolation kennels for dogs first entering the facility (minimizes disease transmission) and a bathing/examination room to improve animal health and presentation.

The cattery elements are needed because the number of cat related issues and abandoned cats is significant. While the NECCOG Animal Services Program does not formally take cats (except when there is an injury/sick cat or human bite) we end up with significant numbers of cats. The facility has had as many as eighty-four cats due to animals being dropped off, evictions and other circumstances. NECCOG’s current ability to house and care for these animals is on a makeshift basis and we regularly hold about 30 cats. The addition of the cattery will improve cat health and adoptions.

Additionally, NECCOG’s facility lacks isolation rooms for animals just entering the facility. These rooms help to prevent the spread of communicable disease and reduce costs. The current facility lacks sufficient quarantine space for cats and dogs. Such space is a regular need for the program. The current facility lacks an indoor adoption room. Such a room would enhance adoptions for all animals. Finally, the current facility lacks a proper cleaning/examination room where the animals may be examined, bathed and prepared for adoption.

#### **Regional Insurance Coverage**

This proposal, a feasibility study, is estimated at \$45,000. NECCOG would retain a qualified firm to analyze the region in terms of municipal insurance sharing opportunities, including:

- ▶ Potential to save money?
- ▶ Potential to provide equal or better service levels?
- ▶ Governance structure or operational process that assures participating local governments share control?

□ **Regional Economic Development/Marketing**

This initiative, proposed at \$125,000, would involve the development of an integrated marketing strategy/campaign to retain business and their jobs and seek to attract new business to our region. Specifically, this initiative would:

- ▶ Hire, through NECCOG, a regional economic marketing coordinator
- ▶ Conduct a marketing assessment for the Region that includes:
  - ✓ Review of current materials.
  - ✓ Overview of best practices in economic development.
  - ✓ Comparative evaluation of the study area to that of peer communities.
  - ✓ Recommend future marketing strategy including brand development, deployment, and metrics of success and communications strategy.
- ▶ Develop a Regional Marketing Plan that, at a minimum, includes:
  - ✓ Identifies an overarching brand, internal and external message and a tagline
  - ✓ Carefully matches the prospering businesses and industries to the Region and strategies to attract them
  - ✓ Outlines the strategies to increase the visibility and position the Region well at the state, regional and nation levels
  - ✓ Implementation elements - budget, metrics, reporting
- ▶ Develop and implement an umbrella campaign (branding the Region) to market the region to New England, Nationally and Globally.

Economic marketing of the Region is limited and not coordinated. The approach (if it can be defined as such) to marketing the region fragmented and fractured - each town acting individually. In large part this is due to our property tax system and the constant pressure to grow each towns respective grand list. While this initiative will not solve the dilemma of the property tax and how it manifests itself to the competition between towns - it can provide the opportunity where each of the towns could benefit from a common approach to economic growth.

The intent is not to have this person act as a regional economic development person that solicits businesses. Some of our towns have staff to do this and each (to some degree) is trying to grow their respective grand list. The intent is to have a resource person to assist each town (when needed/requested) and a common resource to market the Region.