



Executive Directors Report – February 2025

1) **Animal Control**

- The major case in Woodstock ruling was in our favor including releasing the custody of the animals to us and a monetary award to cover our expenses for caring for the 100 or so animals. Unfortunately, the defendant has filed an appeal, and we will await the judge's determination, next hearing is set for March 3rd. We are doing the best we can with the 12 employees we have in the animal control department, as you can imagine, the staff have been working many hours to properly care for the nearly 140 animals. We have fostered some (about 20) of the dogs out to other animal control facilities.
- The second large Woodstock case is still working through the courts
- We have increased camera security in Norwich and are about to purchase body cameras and vests for our ACO's. The team is rapidly improving procedures and housekeeping in both locations.

2) **Transit District**

- We met with SEAT in January to review how their operation runs, it was very enlightening. In December we met with WRTD. In early February we had an in person visit by the DOT transportation bureau chief and the heads of bus transportation and capital for CT. It was a very productive meeting. They are very supportive of our organization. We spoke about the building, fleet, and micro transit. Our transit team is evaluating platforms to run and track the fleet better, there are a lot of options.

3) **Regional Town Administrator**

- After months of working on the profile and search we ended the recruitment phase by hiring two outstanding individuals to join the NECCOG team. Mary Calorio and Jordan Lumpkins will be our first Regional Town Administrators. Both will work for the first three towns: Canterbury, Pomfret and Chaplin. We will utilize Mary's expertise partly in the Transit area and Jordan will help us with Grants and Economic Development for the rest of the NECCOG towns.

4) **Regional Revaluation**

- After many adjustments and negotiations, we are signing the contract. We were able to change the payment schedule with Vision to avoid two payments in the first year (due to the State pulling up Towns early).

5) **Outreach**

- My monthly appearances continued on WINY, my regular time is 9am first Fridays of the Month.
- I have met with a few of you individually, thank you all for the time, I know you are all very busy.

- I have been attending many of the CT COG leaders meetings and getting to know my counterparts.
- In late January, our CEDS team (Jim, Delia, David) made a presentation as the Non-Profit Alliance of Northeast Connecticut. Everyone was very impressed with the portal, lots of good data, a great tool for each of our Towns. I attended COST, Eastern Tourism District, Chamber of Commerce meetings this month.

6) Legislative Update

- I know most of you are expressing frustration with the Governor's budget and its impact on our Towns, the Health District, and Schools. First, you are not alone, most of the Towns in the State are grappling with a similar budget squeeze. Remember this is the opening of the budget season, the legislative budget process has just started, the Governor's budget is not the final budget. While CT has been in pretty good shape in recent years, there is great uncertainty over the national and global economy, and federal spending.
- The one bright spot in the budget is more funding for regional programs, specifically there is \$250k yearly for each COG to work on climate resiliency (inventory, assessment and mapping of drainage systems, haz mit), waste management, recycling, GIS etc.. The funding comes from the Regional Incentive fund.