



# NECCOG

Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments

Ashford - Brooklyn - Canterbury - Chaplin - Eastford - Hampton - Killingly - Plainfield -  
Pomfret - Putnam - Scotland - Sterling - Thompson - Union - Voluntown - Woodstock

Results through Regionalism

## Meeting Minutes

# March 2025 Regular Meeting

March 28, 2025 - 9:00 am Canterbury Town Hall & ZOOM

Representation from the following towns: Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Eastford, Hampton  
Killingly, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Union, Voluntown.

### 1. Open Meeting - 9:03 Maureen Nicholson, Madam Chair

- a. Welcome remarks
- b. Previous Minutes approved
  - Motion made by Barney Seney, second by Allan Cahill.
- c. Public Participation-
  - Adam Richardson, Office of Congressman Joe Courtney- Has visited several local businesses, Jolley Concrete and Day Kimball to speak about Medicaid. Social Security checks are continuing to be issued as usual. Individuals are only required to visit Social Security offices in person if there has been a change to their address, name or banking information. Please reach out for questions.
  - Luigi Sartori, NDDH- The funding structure for COVID-19 vaccine immunization reimbursement has changed.
  - Sherry Vogt- Veterans Cemetery (Personal cell phone 860-315-2666.) - Connecticut is seeking a new 50-acre parcel for a veteran's cemetery, as the current Middletown site will reach capacity in about two and a half years. A planned expansion fell through due to local concerns, but the state has secured \$3.2 million for land acquisition and is asking towns—especially west of Route 395—to help identify suitable land with road access, minimal wetlands, and space to support three burials per day. The new site must allow for a chapel and equipment shed but won't require new roads. Burial eligibility follows federal guidelines: veterans with at least 90 days of active-duty service, their spouses, and dependent children under 18—or those with disabilities diagnosed before 18—are eligible. Plots, headstones, and opening/closing are free, but families cover a \$900 grave liner. This effort ensures veterans, and their families have a dignified resting place close to home.

### 2. Program Updates Report -

#### a. OPM Parcel/ CAMA Grant

- Municipalities with a CAMA to parcel match rate below 98% should be prioritized for the funding Every CAMA entry must have a corresponding parcel in the parcel layer.  
The highest priority is to ensure that parcel data is up to date. For municipalities that have not submitted updated data, funds should be used to bring their parcel data file to the most current status possible and ensure that the 37 attribute fields included in the Connecticut State Parcel Layer are as fully populated as possible for the municipality by addressing any issues or inconsistencies in the data. Verifying that exempt parcels, such as rights-of-way and public lands, are correctly identified, and that all identified

properties have a corresponding parcel in the GIS and are correctly linked to CAMA. Municipalities with a match rate lower than 99% should be prioritized.

**b. Safe Streets for ALL**

Draft Plan: 12/31/2025

Completed Plan: 3/31/2026 Plan

Adopted by NECCOG: 5/30/2026

**c. CT Active Transportation Plan Regional Tours**

- Each COG should identify a full day that they are available to host the Project Team between 4/28/2025 and 5/9/2025.
- The Project Team (CTDOT and Consultants) wants to get the best understanding of real-world local issues and concerns by seeing and experiencing them with people who have local knowledge. This will allow the Project Team to gain a first-hand understanding of the issues associated with safety or comfort, demand for new or upgraded facilities, or connections to the existing or proposed local active transportation network

**d. Community Connectivity Grant**

- In October, the State Bond Commission approved \$12 million for 2025 Community Connectivity projects. The funding will cover construction activities ranging from \$100,000 to \$800,000. Grant applications are available on the program's [webpage](#) and will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 21, 2025

**3. Director's Report**

**a. Animal Control**

- The ruling in the major Woodstock case was in our favor, granting custody of the animals and a monetary award to cover expenses for caring for around 100 animals. However, the defendant has filed an appeal, and we are awaiting the judge's decision, with the next hearing set for March 3rd. Despite operating with just 12 employees in the animal control department, our team has been working long hours to care for nearly 140 animals, including fostering 20 dogs to other facilities.
- The second Woodstock case is still progressing through the courts.
- Additional cameras have been installed in Norwich and are preparing to purchase body cameras and vests for our ACOs, while continuing to improve procedures and housekeeping at both locations.

**b. Transit District**

- WRTD demonstrated their maintenance inspection platform, ZONAR. The team is evaluating options to automate fleet tracking, scheduling, and maintenance. The selected platform will include a rider-facing bus location tool. Bi-monthly meetings are held with Lisa Rivers, State Bus Transit Chief, to discuss key topics including the facility renovation. The Director spoke with Peter Montana, CT Transit Facilities Project Manager — the contractor is expected to begin the facility assessment any day.

**c. Regional Town Administrator**

- Jordan Lumpkins joined on March 17 and has begun meeting with Town Leaders, staff, and board members to better understand the needs of each participating town. Mary Calorio will begin in May. Several other towns are currently assessing their needs for shared administration. NECCOG has the capacity to support additional towns and can expand if needed. For specific needs such as HR or Grant Administration, please contact the Director.

**d. Regional Revaluations**

- All Towns have signed the contracts, and work will begin in Woodstock. The payment schedule has been sent to all Town Leaders, with the first of five equal payments due July 1, 2025.

**e. Outreach**

- Monthly appearances on WINY resumed on October 9, 2024. The Director's regular time will be the first Friday of each month at 9 a.m.
- The Director continues meeting with towns individually.
- We are reaching out to Towns not currently in the GIS program, which offers substantial value as it is partially grant-subsidized.
- Jim Larkin and the Director presented to Pomfret regarding the completion of the POCD update.

**f. Other**

- Legislative - Many are frustrated with the Governor's budget and its impact on Towns, Health Districts, and Schools. However, most Towns across the State are facing similar budget challenges. This is just the start of the budget season, and the Governor's proposal is not the final version. While Connecticut has been stable in recent years, uncertainty surrounding the national economy and federal spending remains.
- The budget is the increased funding for regional programs, with \$250k annually allocated to each COG for climate resiliency efforts, including inventory, assessment, and mapping of drainage systems, hazard mitigation, waste management, recycling, GIS, and more. This funding comes from the Regional Incentive Fund.
- The Director has been attending several CT COG leaders' meetings focused on the upcoming State budget. A number of COG-related initiatives to expand services are being discussed, some with potential funding support.

**4. Discussion and Action Items**

**a. Regional Referrals**

- i. Town of Putnam- Zoning Change, Applicant requests to change the Zone of the property from R-40 to Industrial in order to develop the parcel into General Warehousing & Storage, Open Lot Storage of Building Materials & Machinery, Open Storage of Earth Material, and Heavy Truck & Tractor Trailer Repair.
- ii. Town of Mansfield-
  - i. PZC Initiated Amendments to Article 4 Section 190-33 of Zoning Regulations to establish Multi-Family Performance Standards Planned (PZC File #907-63)
  - ii. PZC initiated Amendments to Article 8 §190-65 of the Zoning Regulations related to Agriculture (PZC File #907-65)
  - iii. PZC Initiated Amendments to Article 4 §190-20 of the Zoning Regulations related to home occupations (PZC File #907-66)

Motion to approve as presented by Barney Seney second by Chris Lippke.

**b. Other Agenda Items (requires 2/3 vote)**

**5. CEO Roundtable**

- Trouble finding people willing to serve as tree wardens, especially when it comes to completing the required certification. Despite the classes being available, there's a lack of interest in attending, which is making it hard for towns to meet state requirements.
- Ashford is facing budget pressure due to a rise in Region 19 student enrollment, resulting in a 9.67% increase in its share, while other towns saw flat or lower numbers. Budget limits capped the school increase at 2.5% and general government at 2.43%. Major cuts were made, including reducing the Parks & Rec Director to part-time.
- A new state law (Public Act 25-2) removed property tax exemptions for many permanently and totally disabled veterans, impacting thousands more than expected. In Ashford, several veterans lost exemptions, prompting frustration. Local legislators who supported the bill, including Senator Gordon and Rep. Boyd, are expected to face criticism at an upcoming legislative update.

**6. Adjourn- 10:43**

Motion made Barney Seney second by Maureen Nicholson.