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Chester, Clinton, Cromwell,
Deep River, Durham, East Haddam,
East Hampton, Essex, Haddam,
Killingworth, Lyme, Middlefield,
Middletown, Old Lyme,
Old Saybrook, Portland, Westbrook

**Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments
and Lower Connecticut River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization**

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, July 25, 2018

RiverCOG Members:

Chester: Lauren Gister *
Clinton: Christine Goupil *
Cromwell: Anthony Salvatore *
Deep River: Angus McDonald, Jr. *
Durham: Laura Francis
East Haddam: Emmett Lyman
East Hampton: Michael Maniscalco *
Essex: Norm Needleman
Haddam: Lizz Milardo *
Killingworth: Cathy Iino*
Lyme: Steve Mattson
Middlefield: Ed Bailey *
Middletown: Daniel Drew
Old Lyme: Bonnie Reemsnyder *
Old Saybrook: Carl Fortuna *
Portland: Susan Bransfield
Westbrook: Noel Bishop *

MPO Members:

Middlesex Chamber of Commerce: Darlene Briggs *
Estuary Transit District: Joe Comerford *
Middletown Area Transit: Lisa Seymour *

Others Present:

Kelly Sterner, Finance Director, Essex
Ellen Graham, Senator Blumenthal's Office
Edgar Wynkoop, CT DOT
Carol Conklin, Regional Election Monitor
Pat Bandzes, Eversource
Larry Laconi, CT Rides
Ed Perzanowski, CT Rides

Staff Present:

Sam Gold
Robert Haramut
Janice Ehle-Meyer

*Members Present

Dan Bourret
Paula Fernald
Margot Burns
Eliza LoPresti
Gabrielle Gelozin
Nat Bush

1. Call to Order, Roll Call/Introductions, Public Speaking

Chairman Bonnie Reemsnyder called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. at the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments Office, 145 Dennison Road, Essex, CT.

Roll call was taken by Sam Gold, Executive Director. There was no public speaking.

2. LCRVMPO Business

- a. Approval of the Minutes of the June 27, 2018 LCRVCOG and LCRVMPO Meeting

Upon motion of Mr. Bishop, seconded by Mr. Salvatore, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2018 meeting.

- b. Transportation Improvement Program

- i. 2018 TIP amendment #15 MTD Facility improvements and repairs, project 042-XXXX

Upon motion of Mr. Bailey, seconded by Mr. McDonald, it was unanimously voted to approve 2018 TIP amendment #15 MTD Facility improvements and repairs, project 042-XXXX.

Discussion: This is for \$75,000 total, \$60,000 of which is Federal; \$15,000 State. Mr. Comerford and Ms. Seymour outlined the improvements to occur: security cameras, addition of a diesel tank, connecting the generator to both the gas and diesel tanks, dealing with related design issues, and addition of fans.

- c. Transportation program updates

- i. FTA 5310 – MARC Community Resources and the Town of Cromwell were both recommended to receive traditional vehicles; St. Luke's and Estuary Transit District were approved for various non-traditional expenses. The only two projects in the region that were not funded were the Estuary Council of Seniors traditional vehicle and The Kennedy Center non-traditional operating assistance.

- ii. LOTCIP – LOTCIP has been funded into the foreseeable future. FY 16/17 money will fund Millbrook in Middletown and Higganum Road in Durham; FY 18 will fund Cromwell and Chester; FY 19 funds should fund the Haddam project and future jobs. At the September meeting, Mr. Haramut will have the draft ranking and selection criteria for further jobs and will plan to send that out in the fall.

- iii. Long range transportation plan – RiverCOG is beginning to update the plan. A draft will need to go to CT DOT and FTA by January 1. Mr. Haramut will be sending out the wish list of projects to each town for updates shortly. Board approval on the plan will need to be obtained by April 12, 2019.

iv. Rt. 66/Rt. 81 Corridor studies – Both studies are moving along through the data collection, existing conditions and public involvement phases. There is a survey for the Rt. 66 study that Mr. Gold asked Mr. Maniscalco and Ms. Bransfield to push out to their communities.

d. Lower Connecticut River Valley Regional Bus Integration Study

Mr. Gold has been working with the CT DOT, MAT and 9-Town Transit to get funding for a bus study to determine how the two providers can better work together and connect to all surrounding services in the State. He was just notified that the State will fund the study and is currently awaiting comments on the draft RFQ from CT DOT. CT DOT's focus is on the merger of the two companies, whereas the RiverCOG and the two providers are focused on operational improvements, quality of passenger service, and connections to other parts of the State. RiverCOG will run the study as the towns are responsible for the two transit districts, and will have to approve and implement any recommendations from the study.

e. Haddam Swing Bridge BUILD Application

Mr. Gold stated that Ms. Milardo, Mr. Lyman and their staff worked hard to get the grant application in last week to US DOT for the BUILD program, which is primarily purposed for transportation projects with an economic development component. The application for a walkway on the Haddam Swing Bridge would be part of the larger overhaul of the bridge already planned for next year. If this project is selected for the grant, 100% of the funds will be Federal, with no local or State match, because of the rural location of the bridge.

f. CT Rides

Larry Laconi, Commuter Program Manager, and Ed Perzanowski, Director of Business Engagement & Program Services, gave an overview on the CT Rides program. As greenhouse gas emissions due to transportation continue to rise, they focus on getting people to use park & ride lots, car and van pools, and to be familiar with transportation options. The program helps employers create custom commute plans and to help form carpools, provides emergency rides home for carpoolers and free consulting services for companies with tele-commuters, free days to try mass transit, and more. There is also a CT Rides app that helps ride-match and tracks transit rewards. CEOs should refer any interested companies or EDCs in their towns to Mr. Laconi or Mr. Perzanowski. It was suggested that CT Rides staff speak with the Chamber.

3. LCRVCOG Business

- a. Authorization of ICMARC to provide RiverCOG employees the option to borrow against retirement accounts and to obtain optional managed account services

ICMARC, which is the employees' 457 & 401a provider, has options for employees to borrow against their own retirement account, up to 50%, and pay themselves interest. There is also an option for managed account services.

Mr. Bishop moved to authorize ICMARC to provide RiverCOG employees the option to borrow against retirement accounts and to obtain managed account services. Second by Ms. Gister. All voted in favor.

Discussion: Mr. Bishop stated that Mr. Gold provided communication about this to the Executive Committee, and they are familiar with the information and are in support of it.

- b. Memorandum of Understanding between the RiverCOG and Lower CT River Land Trust

When RiverCOG took over the Lower CT River Land Trust in January, the bylaws indicated that there should be an agreement between the two clarifying the relationship. Right now the Land Trust has no assets and is not active, but the hope is that it will become so soon. This agreement sets up a structure for the RiverCOG to get paid for the work it does on behalf of the Land Trust. Mr. Gold asked for review and comments on the document. Chair Reemsnyder stated that the Executive Committee has reviewed the agreement and had some questions and comments. Mr. Gold discussed that the Land Trust needs to raise some money for its officer and liability insurance. There are some commitments for donations thus far. The auditor will be asked the questions about what needs to be tracked on the non-profit side.

c. Presentation by Prime3GS on Digital Document System Project and Essex's Experience in the Trial Implementation

Cancelled - this presentation will be held in the fall.

d. Regional Election Monitor Report

Many registrars are seeing a double party primary for the first time; each registrar is individually responsible for taking care of all business for their party's primary rather than working together as they normally do during a typical election. Seven of the COG towns have one or two new registrars; Ms. Conklin has prioritized spending time with them. The registrars had opportunity to attend classes for their new election management software (EMS) which is now mandated for usage by the State as of this upcoming primary. The Regional Monitors helped with the software training. The state is asking the registrars to have their results in within 24 hours (rather than 48) because of anticipated high numbers of recounts. Ms. Conklin explained that statewide there is a high turnover for registrars right now due to recent certification requirements. She asked the CEOs to try not to minimize this position in their budgets as even part-time registrars that only work a few hours a week still have to have the same amount of knowledge as a full-time registrar.

Mr. Maniscalco asked about a specific FOI request that his office received from a reporter that wanted to recount ballots. He denied the request, the hearing officer found in East Hampton's favor, and it is now being appealed; he believes the impact of a member of the public counting votes could have wide implications. Ms. Conklin has not heard of this happening in another town.

Ms. Conklin answered questions about the EMS software and courses; they were for the Town Clerks, Assistant Town Clerks and moderators in addition to the Registrars. The EMS is statistical and for reporting. This is leading toward e-poll books, which would be the process to replace paper voter lists.

Mr. Bishop thanked Mr. Gold for his leadership on the shared position, as Ms. Conklin has helped in his town. Chair Reemsnyder stated that Ms. Conklin has been very dedicated to her position and thanked her for her focus. There was brief discussion on the upcoming technical requirements to aid election safety.

4. Chairman's and Executive Director's Reports

Chairman Reemsnyder reported that the Executive Committee has completed the Executive Director's evaluation. Mr. Gold also created a self-evaluation. The Committee gave Mr. Gold a positive review; he resolved a lot over the past year. Chairman Reemsnyder thanked Mr. Gold for his hard work along with the rest of the staff and interns.

Mr. Gold reported that some of the CEOs have been meeting as part of a shared services committee to discuss regionalization. A report of all the regional services that are supported and participated in will be included in an inventory report ; this will be used to highlight our region as a leader in the State and to

have some sort of control over the conversation at the State level. Future topics to be looked into include shared HR services and temporary land use staffing.

Mr. Gold thanked the interns, whose time at the COG will be winding up within the next few weeks.

7. Other Business

a. DEMHS Update

Mr. Downes was not present; this item is tabled until the next meeting.

Ms. Ehle/Meyer discussed recycling in CT. China is still taking recycling, but it has to have 0.05% (or less) contamination, which is almost impossible to obtain. DEEP has had no response. Different subcommittees are trying to figure out what is going on. A company in Windsor will take clean glass, but single stream recycling may need to change. Some pilot projects are occurring for glass and compost.

Ms. Iino stated that MIRA told her they are still selling recyclables. Ms. Milardo, who is on the MIRA board, stated that they are still selling, but the markets have changed and soon we will have to start paying for recycling instead of receiving money for it. Discussion was held on MIRA and the RFP they are moving forward with, and what the future may hold for recycling in CT. Ms. Iino asked about collecting plastic wrap at the Essex facility. Ms. Ehle/Meyer will see what she can find out.

Mr. Bishop and the rest of the CEOs expressed their support for Ms. Milardo and the Town of Haddam, who's recent Selectman's meeting made national news due to one Selectman protesting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Nat Bush and Gabby Gelozin, the Sustainable CT Fellows, reminded everyone that a Q&A session will be held in the COG office on Tuesday, July 31 at 9:00. Certification deadline is August 24.

8. Adjournment

Upon motion of Ms. Gister, seconded by Mr. Fortuna, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eliza LoPresti
Recording Secretary