



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

145 Dennison Road Essex, CT 06426 | +1 860 581 8554 | www.rivercog.org

Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments And Lower Connecticut River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

November 22, 2021

RiverCOG Members;

Chester: Lauren Gister *
Clinton: Karl Kilduff *
Cromwell: Anthony Salvatore *
Deep River: Angus McDonald *
Durham: Laura Francis *
East Haddam: Irene Haines *
East Hampton: David Cox *
Essex: Norm Needleman
Haddam: Bob McGarry *
Killingworth: Nancy Gorski *
Lyme: Steve Mattson *
Middlefield: Ed Bailey
Middletown: Joe Samolis *
Old Lyme: Tim Griswold *
Old Saybrook: Carl Fortuna *
Portland: Ryan Curley *
Westbrook: John Hall *

MPO Members:

Middlesex Chamber of Commerce: Darlene Briggs *
Estuary & Middletown Area Transit Districts: Joe Comerford

*present

Others Present:

Cynthia Clegg, Middlesex Community Foundation
Julia McGrath, Congressman Courtney's Office
Laurie McElwee, Kennedy Center
Grayson Wright, CT DOT

Staff Present:

Sam Gold	Kevin Armstrong
Torrance Downes	Janice Ehle/Meyer
Eliza LoPresti	Margot Burns
Robert Haramut	Ben Lovejoy
Megan Jouflas	

RiverCOG

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Introductions

Chairman Salvatore called the meeting to order at 11:00 A.M. The meeting was held via Zoom.

2. Authorization of RiverCOG Chair and Executive Director to Enter Into Agreement For the Department of Agriculture Grant

Ms. Ehle/Meyer reported that the Regional Agriculture Commission has received a draft contract for the Dept of Agriculture grant to purchase shared no-till equipment. The region's farmers will house the equipment. Equipment to be purchased is still to be determined.

Mr. Fortuna moved to authorize the RiverCOG Chair and the Executive Director to enter into agreement with the Department of Agriculture. Second by Mr. Samolis. Vote was unanimous in favor.

3. Request of OPM and DECD to Have RiverCOG Designated as a Regional Economic Development District (REDD)

RiverCOG is a sub-recipient of CARES Act funding, through DECD. We have been asked by the Federal Economic Development Authority (EDA) to create a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). OPM is reading the state statutes such that RiverCOG is required to become a REDD in order to create the CEDS. RiverCOG is the only entity in the region eligible to become a REDD, though in the future another entity such as the Chamber or the MCRC could become the REDD.

Ms. Francis moved to authorize a letter to the Secretaries of OPM and DECD requesting RiverCOG be designated the Regional Economic Development District. Second by Ms. Gister. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Discussion: Letters of support have been requested from the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce and the Middlesex County Revitalization Commission.

4. Authorization of RiverCOG Chair and Executive Director to Enter Into Agreement with DECD For EDA Grant For COVID-19 Recovery Projects

Ms. Francis moved to authorize the Chair of RiverCOG and the Executive Director to enter into agreement with DECD for the EDA grant for COVID-19 recovery projects. Second by Mr. McGarry. Vote was unanimous in favor.

The sub-grantee award letter was received recently. Mr. Gold believes the grant is for \$375,000 which is to be used for four projects: the CEDS (which is the Federal plan the EDA asked us to create), a shared COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator with SCRCOG who will assist towns and DEMHS with projects, a project with MCRC to produce virtual workshops in their entrepreneur space for use by the entire state, and for agricultural use in updating the regional knowyourfarmers.org website to allow for online purchasing of goods.

5. Legislative Agenda Update

Mr. Lovejoy has created a draft incorporating previously discussed ideas and ideas from last year's legislative agenda. If there are any further ideas CEOs are to send them to him or Mr. Gold as soon as possible, as this will be voted on at the December COG meeting.

There was discussion on PFAS and possible funding of clean-up, especially as related to town-owned areas/buildings.

6. Other

a. Election of Interim Treasurer

Mr. Griswold moved to elect Mr. Carl Fortuna interim treasurer, second by Mr. Kilduff. Vote was unanimous in favor.

7. Adjournment

Ms. Francis moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 A.M.; second by Mr. Cox. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eliza LoPresti