



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

DRAFT MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

October 26, 2022 – 9:00 am

RiverCOG Members;

Chester: Charlene Janecek *
Clinton: Karl Kilduff *
Cromwell: Anthony Salvatore *
Deep River: Angus McDonald *
Durham: George Eames
East Haddam: Irene Haines *
East Hampton: David Cox *
Essex: Carey Duques *
Haddam: Bob McGarry *
Killingworth: Nancy Gorski *
Lyme: David Lahm *
Middlefield: Jim Irish & Bob Yamartino *
Middletown: Ben Florsheim *
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:

Julia McGrath & Murray, Rep. Courtney's Office
David Murphy, UCONN CIRCA
Robert Devlin, CT's Inspector General
Frank Capozzi, CT IG Office
Sam Carmody, Eversource
Paul Lukaszewski, BASE Technologies
Cathy Lezon, Eversource
Mary Buchanan, UCONN CIRCA
TJ Magnoli, Eversource
Kevin Tedesco, CT DOT

Staff Present:

Sam Gold
Eliza LoPresti

RiverCOG

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

1. **Call to Order, Roll Call, Introductions**

Chairman Salvatore called the meeting to order at 9:01 A.M. The meeting was held via Zoom.

A motion was made by Mr. Cox to add agenda item 4d, FY21 TIP Amendment 21; seconded by Mr. Hall. Vote was unanimous in favor.

2. **Public Speaking**

- a. **Paul Lukaszewski, BASE Technologies:** Mr. Lukaszewski gave a presentation on the services that BASE Technology offers such as hardware, scanning services, managed printing service, and fax and voice over IP service, plus more. His presentation is included as an addendum to these minutes.
- b. **Cathy Lezon – Eversource:** Ms. Lezon explained that Eversource has programs for those customers that may be struggling to pay. A document outlining the various ways that Eversource can help was forwarded to the members the day before the meeting.

3. **Presentations**

- a. **Office of the Inspector General:** Robert Devlin, Connecticut’s Inspector General, discussed the newly established office of the Inspector General. They investigate officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths. They will investigate use of force any time an officer shoots a gun, regardless of the outcome. Officer-involved shootings can happen in any community, and will generate intense, immediate interest by the media and public. They would like messaging to be centralized from their office, and they employ a public information officer. They request that all CEOs refer media inquiry to them to avoid inconsistent or confusing messages. Inspector Frank Capozzi mentioned that he met with all police department Chiefs already. They are also available to meet with community groups if so desired.

Mr. Griswold asked if towns with resident state troopers also interface with their office; the answer is yes. Chairman Salvatore asked how long an investigation takes after a shooting. It was explained that there are many variables and each incident is so different it’s hard to tell but they aim to have a report within 120 days of completion of an investigation. The investigation itself can take a long time. One thing they are hoping to implement is that if an officer-involved shooting is a clear cut, justified case, they can return to duty immediately.

- b. **UCONN CIRCA Resilient 2.0 – David Murphy:** Dave Murphy and Mary Buchanan of the Resilient CT program presented mapping that came out of looking at towns’ climate needs and conducting an update of the hazard mitigation planning for the RiverCOG towns. They’ve developed a climate change vulnerability index for flood and heat to be used within the state.

They presented updates on the heat mapping. They are about to start looking for projects from the RiverCOG towns.

They presented maps that show heat exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity. These make up the vulnerability map for the region. Mr. Murphy stressed that the heat vulnerability map is not just a map of impervious surfaces, but a compilation of the three mapping factors discussed. He also pointed out that this kind of mapping can be used to justify projects for applications for DEEP funding that was recently announced.

Mr. Griswold asked if there will be individual presentations to boards and commissions; Mr. Murphy replied that it's possible and that they will work with Ms. Burns to make those happen. Mr. Gold asked about the use of street trees, greening routes, or other reflective materials to reduce heat islands; Mr. Murphy replied yes and that they will be looking for opportunities to do so when shopping for projects.

4. LCRVMPO Business

a. Approval of Minutes of September 28, 2022 LCRVCOG & LCRVMPO Meeting

Mr. McDonald moved to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2022 meeting; second by Mr. Cox. Vote was unanimous in favor.

b. Draft 2023 Meeting Dates – Discuss In-Person Meeting Options

Every third meeting will be an in-person meeting held in RiverCOG's office in Essex.

Mr. McDonald moved to adopt the 2023 meeting dates for the fourth Wednesday of each month unless a noticed special meeting is called; seconded by Mr. Cox.

Discussion: Mr. Cox noted that he would rather move the schedule as presented since there is not a meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

Mr. McDonald withdrew the motion; Mr. Cox withdrew the second.

Mr. McDonald moved to approve the 2023 meeting dates as proposed; seconded by Mr. Cox. Vote was unanimous in favor.

c. 21 TIP Amendment #20 (motion)

District 2, 0172-0524, STPA, X6, Replace highway illumination at various locations, PD, FY23, \$360,000, (80/20), New project

District 2, 0172-0524, STPA, X6, Replace highway illumination at various locations, FD, FY23, \$500,000, (80/20), New project

District 1, 0171-0493, STPA, X7, Replace traffic control signals at various locations, PD, FY23, \$824,000, (100/0), New project

District 1, 0171-0493, STPA, X7, Replace traffic control signals at various locations, FD, FY24, \$707,000, (100/0), New project

District 1, 0171-0493, STPA, X7, Replace traffic control signals at various locations, ROW, FY24, \$190,000, (100/0), New project

District 2, 0172-0525, STPA, X7, Replace traffic control signals at various locations, PD, FY23, \$645,000, (100/0), New project

District 2, 0172-0525, STPA, X7, Replace traffic control signals at various locations, FD, FY24, \$554,000, (100/0), New project

District 2, 0172-0525, STPA, X7, Replace traffic control signals at various locations, ROW, FY24, \$150,000, (100/0), New project

Mr. Cox moved to approve 21 TIP Amendment #20; seconded by Mr. McGarry. Vote was unanimous in favor.

d. 21 TIP Amendment #21 (motion)

Meriden/Middletown, 0079-0240, NHPP, CC, I-91/I-691/RT 15 Interchange improvements SB and EB to SB, CON, FY24, \$0, AC Entry, New project

Meriden/Middletown, 0079-0240, NHPP, CC, I-91/I-691/RT 15 Interchange improvements SB and EB to SB, CON, FY24, \$6,250,000, (80/20), AC Conversion, New project

Meriden/Middletown, 0079-0240, NHPP, CC, I-91/I-691/RT 15 Interchange improvements SB and EB to SB, CON, FYI, \$147,750,000, (80/20), AC Conversion, New project

Meriden/Middletown, 0079-0240, STPNH, CC, I-91/I-691/RT 15 Interchange improvements SB and EB to SB, CON, FY24, \$0, AC Entry, New project

Meriden/Middletown, 0079-0240, STPNH, CC, I-91/I-691/RT 15 Interchange improvements SB and EB to SB, CON, FYI, \$15,000,000, (80/20), AC Conversion, New project

Meriden/Middletown, 0079-0240, STATE, CC, I-91/I-691/RT 15 Interchange improvements NB and EB to NB, CON, FY23, \$85,000,000, (0/100), New project

Mr. Hall moved to approve 21 TIP Amendment #21; seconded by Mr. Cox. Vote was unanimous in favor.

e. Endorse FY 23 Safety Targets

These are state set targets that the MPO typically adopts rather than creating our own.

Mr. Cox moved to endorse the FY23 Safety Targets; second by Mr. McDonald. Vote was unanimous in favor.

f. Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP)

This is a new program that mirrors LOTCIP for rural regions. In our region Lyme, East Haddam, Haddam, and Killingworth are eligible to apply. The applications will be ranked by the end of February, RiverCOG is allowed to submit two applications for our region. The applications are competitive within the COG, then competitive within the state.

g. Other Transportation Updates (MTP, ALT Study, etc.)

The draft of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is coming along. There will hopefully be a RFQ going out for the Air Line Trail shortly, we are waiting on information on local match.

h. Update from Estuary Transit District

CT DOT has begun work on the facility master plan, it's been funded, an engineering firm has been selected, and the scope is being worked on now. The state is setting up their first meeting with the property owner for the site for the new shoreline facility, which will be in the site previously identified twice by the transit district as the desired site in Westbrook. The state had gotten a grant for two electric buses for ETD, but since the bus fire in Hamden is still under investigation, all orders with the manufacturer are on hold, pending that outcome. ETD will receive two diesel buses in the meantime. Ms. Duques asked if they are moving from the Essex facility to the Westbrook facility; they are relocating due to the fact that they are currently leasing and the new facility will have capability for bus maintenance, a bus wash and more.

5. LCRVCOG Business

a. Discussion on 2023 Legislative Agenda

The draft legislative agenda will be on the agenda for adoption at the special meeting of Nov. 30th. Ideas should be sent to Mr. Gold and/or Mr. Lovejoy. We will be looking at CCM and COST's agendas as well and consulting with the executive committee further.

b. Regional Housing Committee

Creation of the committee is implementation of a recommendation from the regional housing plan that was adopted in August. This would be a committee of the COG. A draft bylaw amendment was sent out prior to the meeting. All were asked to look it over and reach out to Ms. Jouflas. There will be a vote to adopt the bylaw amendment at the special meeting of Nov. 30th.

c. HHW Update

The season is now complete for 2022. We shredded a record 34,500 pounds of paper at the shredding events. The new locations for HHW and shredding are working out well. All HHW events are now held at satellite locations throughout the region and all residents can attend, which seems to be pleasing a lot of people. Ms. Ehle/Meyer is still looking for space to hold an event in the tri-town area for 2023. Prices for household counts have come down a little bit. The cost for the total season was only about \$400 over what was budgeted.

Ms. Ehle/Meyer had previously distributed a memo about extending the contract with the HHW vendor, MXI. This is the first of two year-long extensions built into the original contract.

Mr. Griswold moved to approve the one-year contract extension with MXI Environmental Services for the Household Hazardous Waste 2023 season. Second by Mr. Cox. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Discussion: Mr. Gold noted that next year we can renew for another year but then we will have to go out for RFP.

d. Regional Agricultural Council Update

The RAC is looking for a trailer for their no till equipment. There was one that they considered but there was an issue with the ramp. Chairman Salvatore asked what size is needed; it should be a 14' deck over trailer. A farmer in Durham used the equipment but the program needs more farmers to use it.

RiverCOG is receiving an award from the CT River Coastal Conservation, recognizing them for having the RAC and working with regional farmers.

e. Update on CEDS

Stakeholder outreach occurred at the end of September. There was a steering committee meeting in which they started some prioritizing. The public outreach wasn't that well attended so now a survey is being administered and we are getting live input at transit stops.

f. Update on Regional Housing Plan

This update was included under item 5b (Regional Housing Committee).

g. Lower Connecticut River Land Trust

The LCRLT will kick off the Trail Adventure program on November 1. Board members are needed; two are stepping down, including the President. Ms. Burns asked all to please consider joining the board.

h. Aquatic Invasive Species Update

Ms. Burns will talk more at the November meeting about growing the invasive species management program and the need to maintain the health of the river and tools needed to do that, such as a boat.

A meeting was held about hydrilla, in which CRCOG participated. They will hopefully be working with us on a partnership about this. The Army Corps is looking for locations to do a pilot project.

i. DEMHS Update

We are currently running five open grants for DEMHS region 2. Work has begun on NHASH major regional assets such as a firefighting foam cannon. Mr. Lovejoy is working on obtaining all needed MOAs. Guidance for the cyber security grant has not yet been released. There is a possible extension of a grant due to supply chain issues. Major projects for now are spending of the bomb squad fund and acquiring soft target protection barriers for the region.

6. Chairman & Executive Director's Reports

Mr. Gold reported that he was at the annual MPO conference in Minneapolis and learning about discretionary grant programs in the U.S.

We had an RFP for reupholstery or replacement of our 18 conference room chairs. The least expensive and most environmentally friendly option is reupholstery for a total of \$2,700.

Mr. McGarry moved to approve expenditure of \$2,700 to reupholster RiverCOG's conference room chairs; second by Mr. Cox. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Chairman Salvatore hoped to see everyone at the CCM conference happening the following week.

7. Other Business

There will be a special meeting on November 30th, 9:00, via Zoom. The legislative meeting will be in person on December 14th at 11:30 at the Old Lyme Town Hall, with our legislators.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Cox moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 am; seconded by Ms. Haines. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eliza LoPresti