

## Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2014

**Meeting convened** at 10:02 by Chairman Walker

The Chair noted that a **quorum** was present - Mr. Gray, Mr. Hallbergh, Mr. Walker, Mr. Sweet, Ms. Nicholson, Mr. Ives, Mr. Falzarano, Mr. Brodeur, Mr. Cahill, Mr. Piper, Mr. Syme, Mr. Lenky, Mr. Rose and Mr. Sirpenski

Also present were Mr. Filchak and Ms. Hanson, Selectman from Voluntown

Mr. Walker **welcomed** Mr. Sirpenski and Ms. Hanson from Voluntown as the 16th member-town for NECCOG.

Mr. Walker opened up the floor to **public participation**:

- ▶ Mr. Sarantopoulos stated that he would like NECCOG to examine Binding Arbitration and look at the overall increase to salaries and benefits - giving power back to municipalities
- ▶ Mr. Very from the Thompson Board of Finance expressed concern about an inappropriate/non-noticed meeting regarding the Northeast Probate Court held after the most recent NECCOG meeting. He stated that Thompson has a large stake (financially and otherwise) in the Court's placement and believed that all meetings must be properly noticed.
- ▶ Ms. Paswell, a volunteer at the NECCOG Animal Shelter expressed concerns regarding the heating unit, air conditioning and the use of Spay/Neuter vouchers. Mr. Filchak explained that the heating system had been replaced about 4-5 years ago and that if the air conditioning units did not work - they would be replaced when the warm weather arrives.
- ▶ Ms. Schley asked about the washing machine and its status, the hot water incident of a few weeks earlier, the placement of dogs during the night - amount of time they are left locked down being excessive and not in the best interests of the dogs, Material Safety Sheets, floor thermometers, and a ripped heating duct. Mr. Filchak began to address the issues raised and did note that a special meeting was scheduled to address in detail concerns raised regarding the shelter and the Program in general. Mr. Sweet raised a point of order that the discussion was not relevant to the meeting at hand and asked that all such questions be tabled to the special meeting.

Mr. Filchak presented the monthly **Director's Report**: The Director noted that the Reval Program is entering its final phase and that the Council needs to decide if it wishes to continue the program into a second cycle. He reported that Voluntown, after positive town meeting action, has joined NECCOG. He briefly discussed the Route 169 National Scenic Byway Management update and the need to get local involvement. The Hazard Mitigation Plan was discussed and the need to conduct local outreach meetings. The Director noted that a new GIS Viewer is under construction and that we have begun discussion regarding the transfer of data to the NECCOG system for the four new towns. The Director updated the Council on the Nutmeg Network and the opportunities for future collaborations and cost savings. He discussed the Animal Services Program - noting a bill that would allow for the costs of holding animals to be covered and he also showed a copy of the planned expansion of the shelter. Finally, the Director reviewed the RPI grants and reminded the members that their endorsements of the proposals were due no later than March 31.

After a brief discussion Mr. Syme moved that NECCOG send a letter to State leadership regarding the **MBR** and its adverse impacts on municipalities. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hallbergh - motion passed unanimously.

**Regional Referrals** - Motion by Mr. Sweet to Block vote, second by Ms. Nicholson - passed unanimously

- a. Town of Thompson - Delete Article IX, Section 2 in its Entirety - Aquifer Protection Program
- b. Town of Ashford - Replace Existing Zoning Regulations with New Zoning Regulations
- c. Town of Willington - Proposed Subdivision at Municipal Boundary Regulation Change -11.08.04, Gasoline Pumps and 19.04.01, Public Signs

**STIP Amendments** -- Motion by Mr. Sweet to Block vote, second by Ms. Nicholson - passed unanimously

- a. Project # 0170-3303, Statewide - REPLACE OVERHEAD SIGN SUPPORTS - Phase PD, 2014 - \$190,000 - New Project
- b. Project # 0170-3303, Statewide - REPLACE OVERHEAD SIGN SUPPORTS - Phase FD, 2014 - \$10,000 - New Project
- c. Project # 0170-3303, Statewide - REPLACE OVERHEAD SIGN SUPPORTS - Phase PD, 2014 - \$4m - New Project
- d. Project # 0170-3066, Statewide - REPAIR OR REPLACE DETERIORATED OVERHEAD SIGN SUPPORTS ON NHS ROUTES - Phase CON, \$3.5m - INCRE. EST FROM FED. 1.6M & MOVE FUNDS FROM NHS TO NHPP

**Transit Officer Selection** - motion by Mr. Ives and Second by Mr. Falzarano to have Mr. Lenky as Chair, Mr. Falzarano as Vice-Chair, Mr. Ives as Treasurer and Mr. Hallbergh as Secretary - passed unanimously

**Resolution 2-1-14** Accepting the Town of Voluntown as a member of the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments, waiving the annual assessment fee for 2013-14 motion by Ms. Nicholson to accept as presented, second by Mr. Cahill - passed unanimously

**Paramedic Intercept and Ambulance Service of the Region Discussion** - Members engaged in an extensive discussion of the topic - including the need to conduct the study outlined in the pending NECCOG RPI grant. Members suggested that if the grant is not awarded that NECCOG fund the study.

**Special Education** - Discussion and possible action regarding the State's obligation to cover excess costs to towns - Members had an extensive discussion on the topic including the prospect of the cost following the student and raising the reimbursements to the towns. On a motion from Ms. Nicholson and a second from Mr. Hallbergh it was decided to send a letter to State leadership expressing NECCOG's concerns.

Acceptance of the 2012-13 **NECCOG Annual Audit** - Motion by Mr. Sweet to accept, second by Ms. Nicholson - motion passed unanimously

Acceptance of the 2012-13 **NECTD Annual Audit** - Motion by Mr. Ives to accept, second by Mr. Falzarano - motion passed unanimously

**Selectmen's Roundtable** - short discussion regarding taking a regional approach to audits - no action

**Adjourn** - motion by Mr. Piper, second by Mr. Sweet