

Disclaimer: These interim minutes of the Western Connecticut Council of Governments ("WestCOG" or "COG") are released and "available for public inspection" and "posted" on WestCOG's website, in accordance with C.G.S. §1-225(a). Said interim minutes are subject to review and approval by the COG members, after which time the final approved minutes will be available and posted in accordance with laws. Accordingly, the interim minutes may contain inaccuracies and do not reflect the final action of the COG.

INTERIM MINUTES

Council/ Housatonic Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization/South Western Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

1 Riverside Rd, Sandy Hook, CT 06482 Phone: 475-323-2057

for the 03/21/2024 Meeting

The Ridgefield Town Hall Annex 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

COG Chairman Rudolph Marconi / Vice Chair- Dan Carter

Treasurer - Jon Zagrodzky / Secretary Julia Pemberton

HVMPO Chairman Julia Pemberton / Vice Chairman Dan Carter

SWRMPO Chairman Toni Boucher/ Vice Chairman Jon Zagrodzky

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Bethel..... First Selectman Dan Carter- COG/HVMPO
Bridgewater..... Absent- COG/HVMPO
Brookfield First Selectman Steve Dunn- COG/HVMPO
Danbury Mayor Roberto Alves- COG/HVMPO
Darien First Selectman Jon Zagrodzky- COG/SWRMPO
Greenwich..... Absent COG/SWRMPO
New Canaan..... First Selectman Dionna Carlson- COG/SWRMPO
New Fairfield First Selectman Melissa Lindsey- COG/HVMPO
New Milford..... Mayor Pete Bass- COG/HVMPO
Newtown First Selectman Jeff Capeci- COG/HVMPO
Norwalk..... Mayor Harry Rilling COG/SWRMPO
Redding..... First Selectwoman Julia Pemberton- COG/HVMPO
Ridgefield..... First Selectman Rudy Marconi COG/HVMPO
Sherman..... Absent COG/HVMPO
Stamford..... Absent COG/SWRMPO
Weston..... Absent- COG/SWRMPO
Westport..... First Selectwoman Jen Tooker COG/SWRMPO
Wilton First Selectman Toni Boucher - COG/SWRMPO
Transit Representative..... Rick Schreiner- HVMPO
Transit Representative..... MattPentz-SWRMPO
CTDOT Olivia Rizzuto (Non-voting MPO member)
MPO Staff..... Francis Pickering (Non-voting MPO member)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Brookfield Community Development Specialist Greg Dembowski, Danbury Government Affairs & Communication Advisor to the Mayor Francesca Capodilupo, Greenwich Planning & Zoning Commission Chairperson Margarita Alban, Ridgefield Director of Planning and Zoning Alice Dew, Stamford Chief of Staff Bridget Fox, Stamford Environmental Sustainability Coordinator Danielle Petretta, WestCOG Staff: Mike Towle, Kristin Hadjstylianos, Todd Fontanella, Kristin Floberg, Mike Wilson, Charles Vidich, Nicole Sullivan, Betsy Paynter, Jaci Reelick, Vicky Ricks, and Cricket Carpenter. Also in attendance were: Executive Director of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns Betsy Gara, Director of Public Policy & Advocacy for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Brian O'Connor, Meg Haffner from the Kennedy Collective, Bryce Chinault from the Yankee Institute, and Debra Franceschini-Gatje.

CALL TO ORDER:

The COG meeting was called to order at 12:08 pm by Ridgefield First Selectman Rudy Marconi. The HVMPO meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m. by Chairwoman Julia Pemberton. The SWRMPO meeting was called to order at 12:08 p.m. by Chairman Toni Boucher.

Public Participation: There were no comments made.

FEATURED PRESENTATION- Betsy Gara, Executive Director of the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST), and Brian O'Connor Director of Public Policy & Advocacy Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) provided an update on the 2024 legislative priorities.

WestCOG Executive Director Francis Pickering provided an overview and led a discussion of Housing Bills in the current legislative session.

Approval of the HVMPO 02/15/2024 meeting minutes: After review and on a motion made by Bethel First Selectman Dan Carter and seconded by Newtown First Selectman Jeff Capeci the minutes of the February 15th, 2024, HVMPO meeting were unanimously approved.

Approval of the SWRMPO 02/15/2024 meeting minutes: After review and on a motion made by Darien First Selectman Jon Zagrodzky and seconded by New Canaan First Selectman Dionna Carlson the minutes of the February 15th, 2024, SWRMPO meeting were unanimously approved.

****Approval of the COG 02/15/2024 Meeting Minutes:** After review and on a motion made by Bethel First Selectman Dan Carter and seconded by New Canaan First Dionna Carlson the minutes of the February 15th, 2024, COG meeting were unanimously approved.

****COG Action Items:**

EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program \ Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) Adoption \ CPRG Grant Application Approvals: WestCOG Deputy Director Mike Towle provided the overview. After review and on a motion made by Ridgefield first Selectman Rudy Marconi and seconded by Wilton First Selectman Toni Boucher the Priority Climate Action Plan, the authorization of Western Connecticut Council of Governments to submit an application for the Climate Friendly Land Use Regulations and Processes project to EPA, the letter of Intent for the Solar Public Housing Project, and the Letter of Commitment for the State of Connecticut's CPRG Project were unanimously approved.

Stamford Chief of Staff Bridget Fox provided an overview of the request for Municipal CPRG Project letters of support with commentary provided by Mike Towle. After review and on a motion made by Ridgefield First Selectman Rudy Marconi and seconded by Wilton First Selectman Toni Boucher the Municipal CPRG Project Letters of Support were unanimously approved.

Congressionally Directed Spending Letters of Support: WestCOG's Mike Towle provided the review. After review and on a motion made by Wilton First Selectman Toni Boucher and seconded by New Milford Mayor Pete Bass the authorization of WestCOG to submit an application for a Regional Firearm Training Facility Equipment for Congressionally Directed Spending and Congressionally Directed Spending Letters of Support for all other municipal projects that pertain to this grant was unanimously approved.

DEMHS Region 1 - CEO Rep Appointment: WestCOG Planner Nicole Sullivan provided the overview. No action was taken on this item. It will appear on a future agenda.

***MPO Action Items:**

2021-2024 HV/SWR TIP Amendments: WestCOG Planner Nicole Sullivan provided the Review. After review and on a motion made by Brookfield First Selectman Steve Dunn and seconded by Bethel First Selectman Dan Carter the 2021-2024 HVMPO TIP Amendments were unanimously approved. After review and on a motion made by Wilton First Selectman Toni Boucher and seconded by Darien First Selectman Jon Zagrodzky the 2021-2024 SWRMPO TIP Amendments were unanimously approved.

MPO Information Items:

Active Transportation Microgrant Solicitation: WestCOG Senior Planner Kristin Floberg provided the review. The first round of applications to this program are due to: Kristin Hadjstylianos kHadjstylianos@westcog.org by March 26th 2024.

Transportation Alternatives Program: WestCOG's Kristin Floberg provided the overview. The application is in two parts. An abbreviated application is due to WestCOG by April 26th, 2024. Full applications are due June 12th, 2024

Draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program: WestCOG's Nicole Sullivan provided the update.

USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All 2024: WestCOG Senior Planner Mike Wilson provided the update.

COG Information Items:

New and Expanding Assistance (Flood Mitigation, Brownfields Support, Dam Safety): Due to the late hour, this item will appear on a future agenda.

Branchville/Georgetown Sewer Feasibility Study: Due to the late hour this update will appear on a future agenda.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be on Thursday, April 18th, 2024.

Adjournment: On a motion duly made the meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.