



Received
Asst. Town Clerk
Susan J. Deane
MAR 09 2022
1:19 P.M.

NOTICE OF REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

DATE: Thursday, March 10, 2022
TIME: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
LOCATION: **Dial-In: 1-646-558-8656**
Meeting ID: 857 3195 5756
Passcode: 910913

AGENDA

(Chairman Don Stein; Vice Chairman Henry Todd; Secretary Charlie Perotti; Treasurer Mike Criss)

- 10:00 AM Determination of Quorum, Call to Order, and Opportunity for Public Comment. **Don Stein, Chairman.**
- 10:05 AM Report of the Executive Director, **Rob Phillips, NHCOC**
- NHCOC Survey Results/Staffing Plan (*Survey Results - Attachment A*)
 - Future NHCOC Meeting Participation Format Discussion
 - Local Certifications – Regional NHMP
 - EcDev Update – Consultant Betsy Paynter
- 10:20 AM **Municipal Forum:** Information Sharing Round Table
- 10:40 AM Update on Activities of the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (NRWIB), **Catherine Awwad, NRWIB**
- 10:50AM Introduction to Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity, **Jocelyn Ayer, Director** (*Attachment B*)
- 11:05AM DEMHS Update, **John Field, DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator**
- 11:20AM Committee Updates:
- a) Legislative Committee, **Michael Criss, Chairman, COG Legislative Committee**
 - b) **ACTION** - Request for Approval of NHCOC's Legislative Priorities for the 2022 Legislative Session (*Attachment C*).
- 11:35AM Administrative Items:
- a) **ACTION** - Approval of Minutes for February 10, 2022 (*Attachment D*)
 - b) **ACTION** - Approval of Financial Statement for January (*Attachment E*)
 - c) **ACTION** - PWEC 2022 Rates (*to be provided*)
- 11:45AM Other Business as Raised by Members and Adjournment.

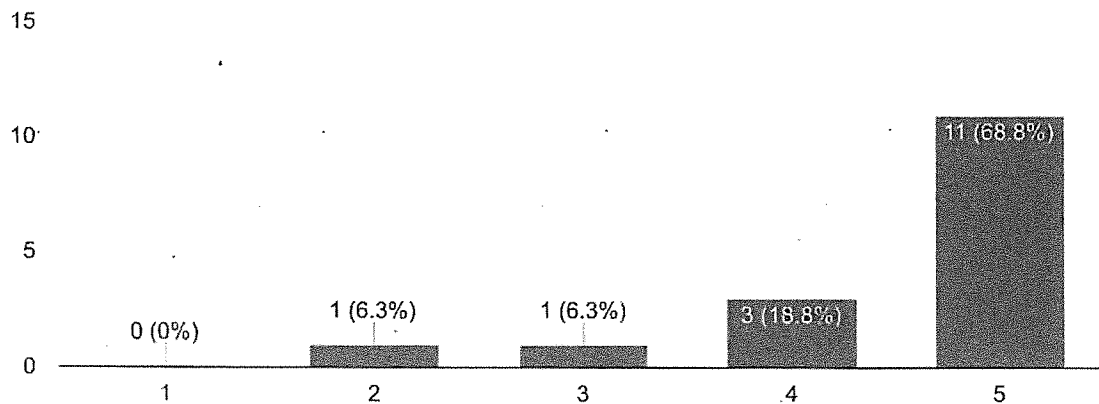
NHCOG Strategic Planning for the Region

16 responses

SECTION ONE - REGIONAL RESOURCE SHARING AND ADMINISTRATION

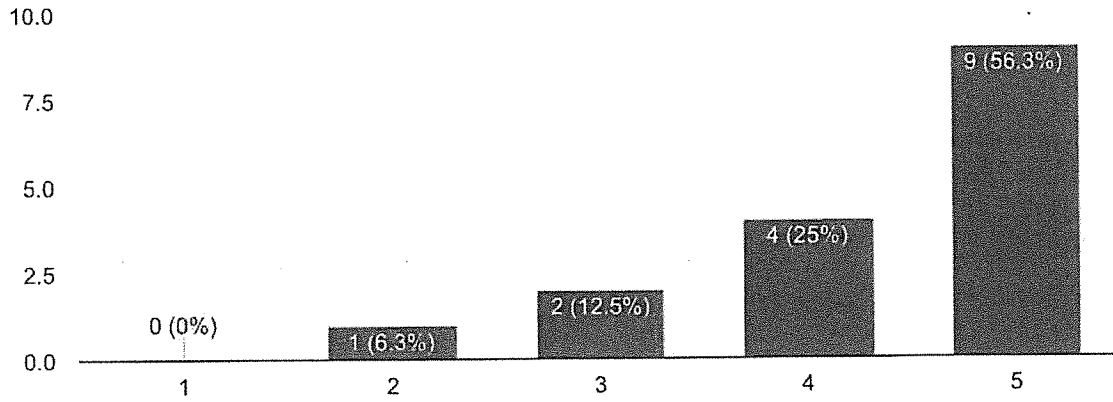
How valuable to you is the NHCOG facilitation of monthly council meetings that feature speakers and program updates?

16 responses



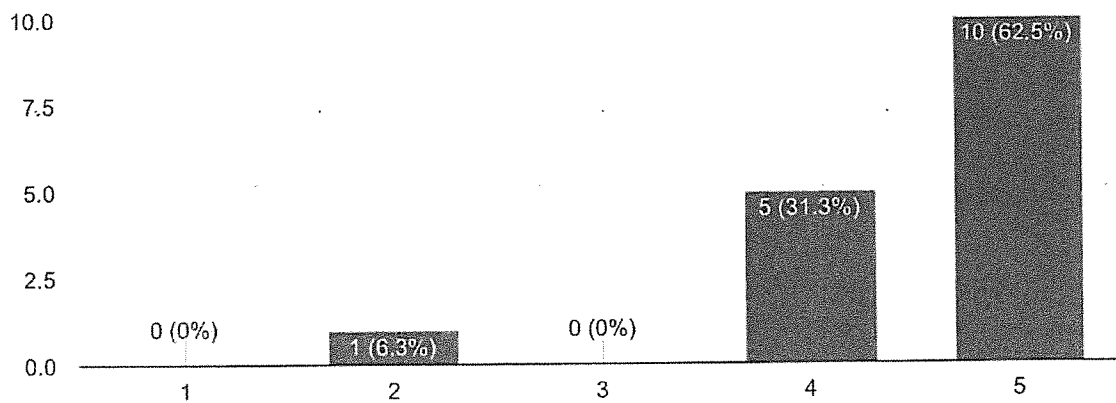
How valuable is the facilitation of legislative updates, development of regional policy positions, and provision of member updates on recent legislative sessions?

16 responses



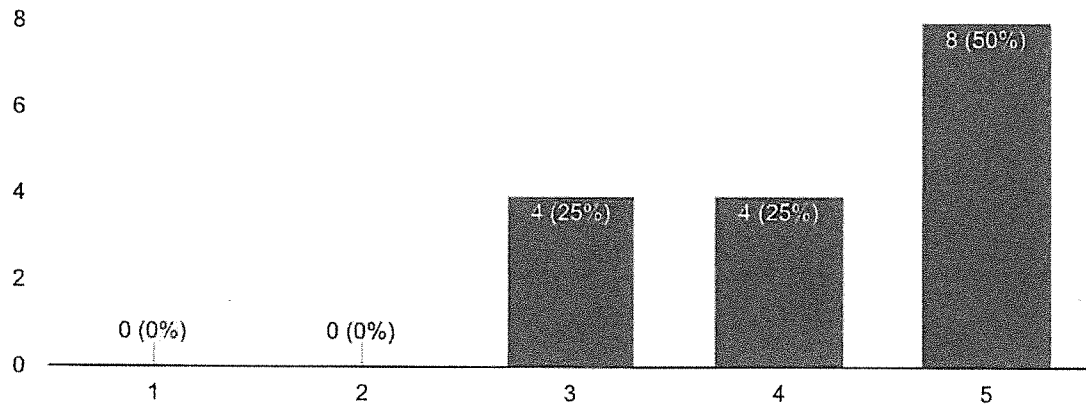
How important is the oversight of the Public Works Equipment Collaborative and regional purchase of Public Works equipment and supplies (eg salt, blades, crack sealing, hot patch, etc)

16 responses



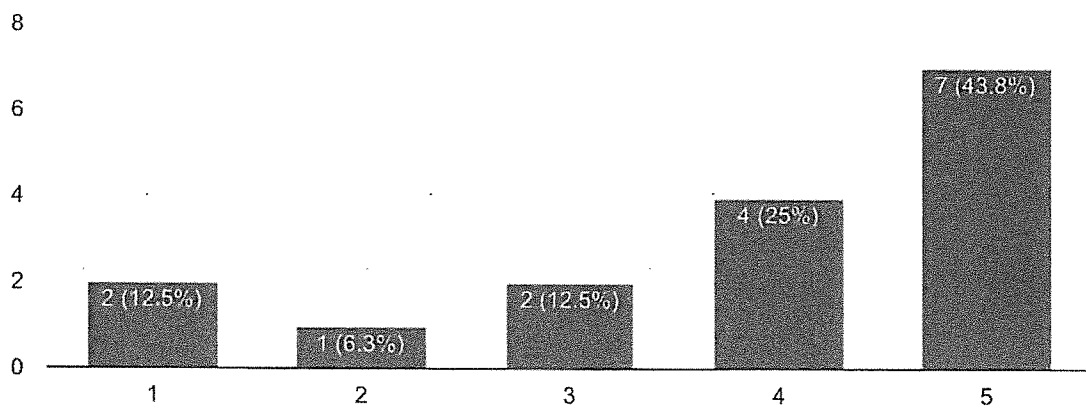
The value of assistance with Regional Engineering Services which entails a possible rate reduction through the bidding process

16 responses



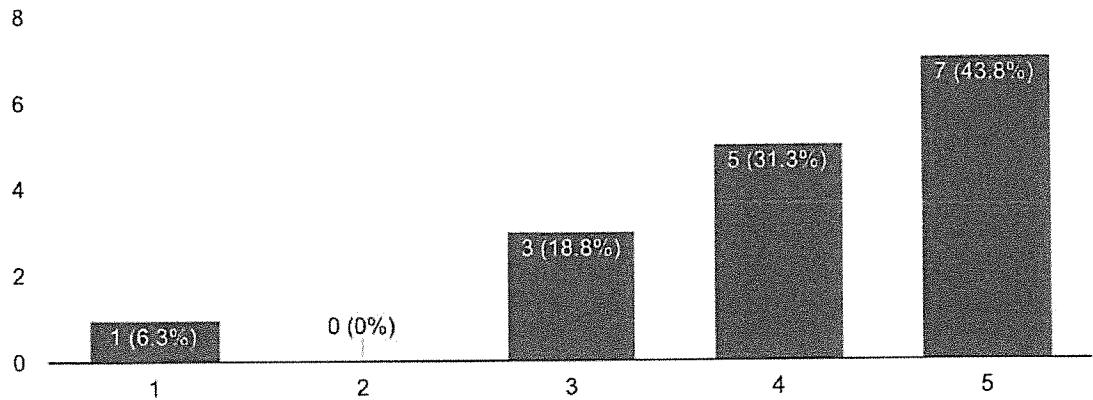
The coordination of meetings of the Northwest Hills Recycling Advisory Committee (RAC)

16 responses



Serving as the lead on Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days

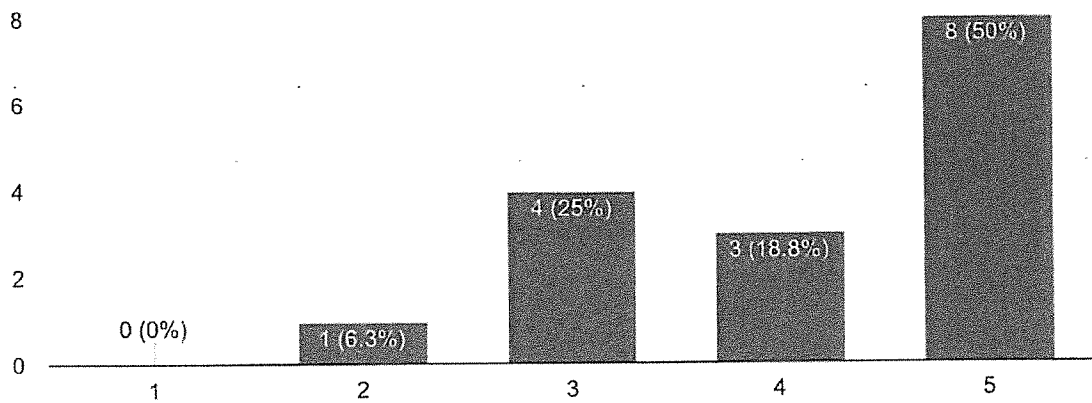
16 responses



SECTION TWO - TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SERVICES

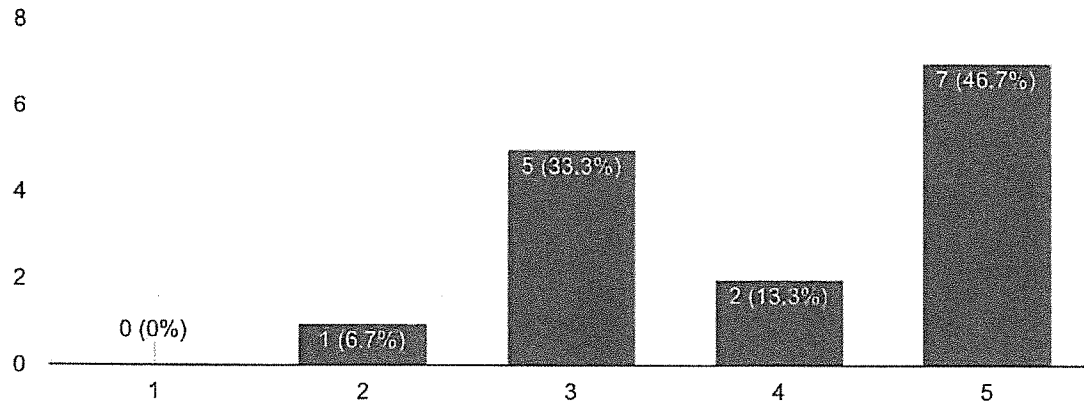
Oversight, and Development of, the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Transportation Safety Plan?

16 responses



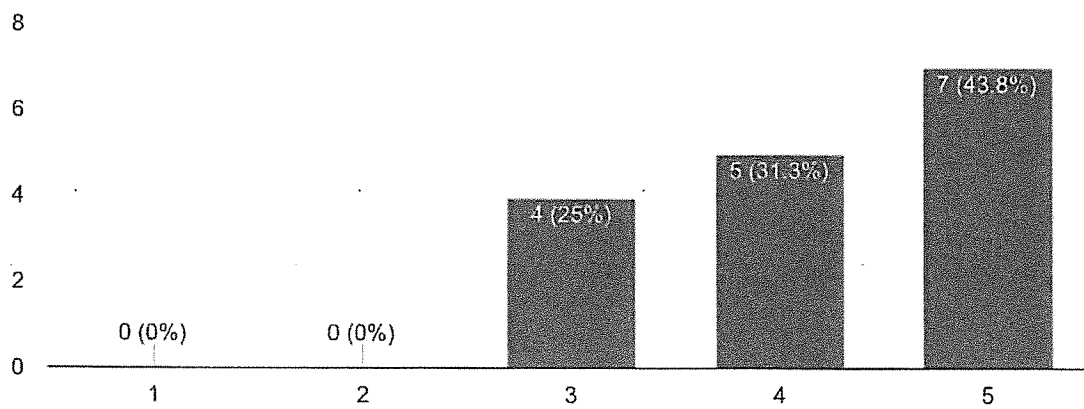
Coordination and Value of NHCOG's Rural Independent Transportation System (RITS) Program?

15 responses



Assistance and Administration of the LOTCIP and Rural Collector Programs?

16 responses

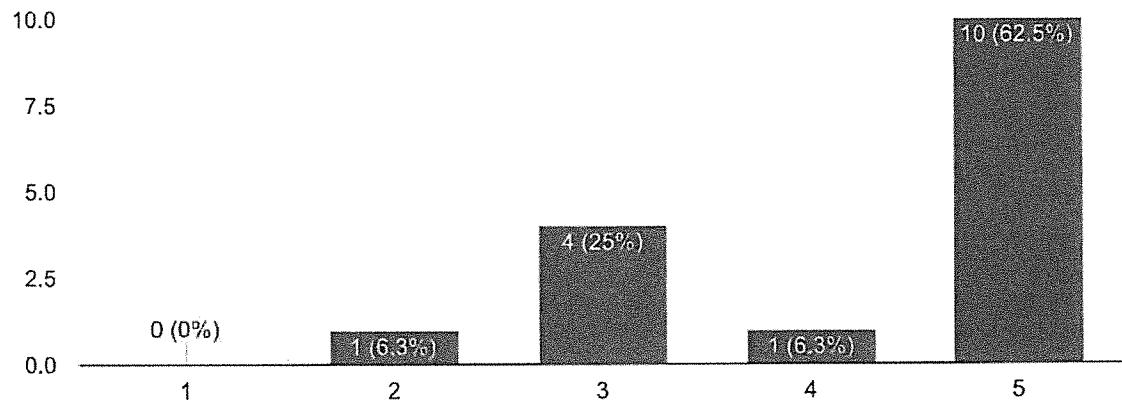


SECTION THREE - COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



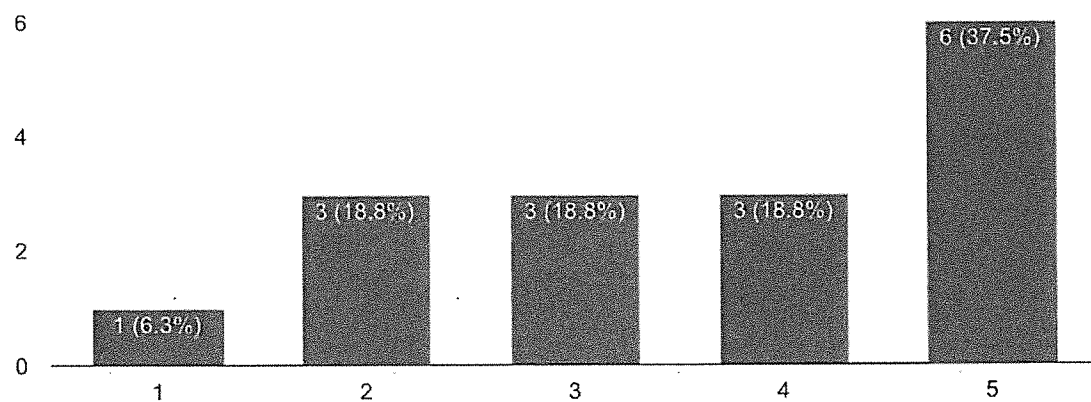
Rural Broadband Initiative

16 responses



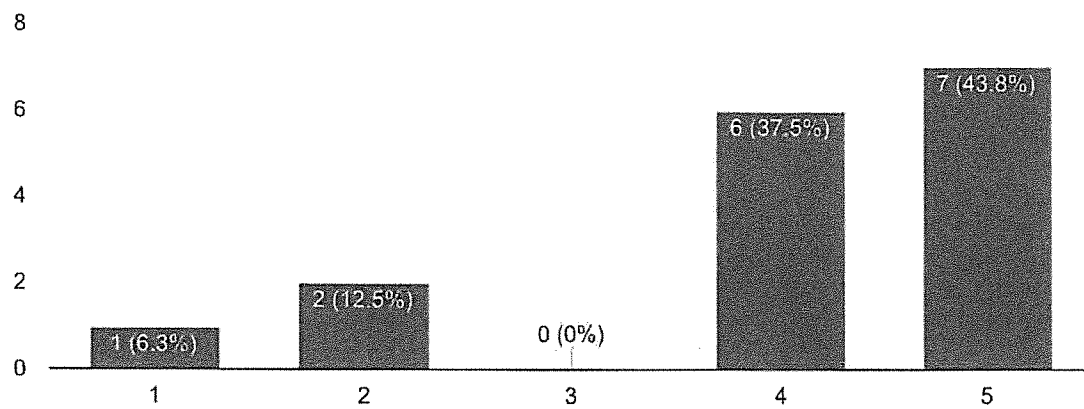
Regional Food Hub

16 responses



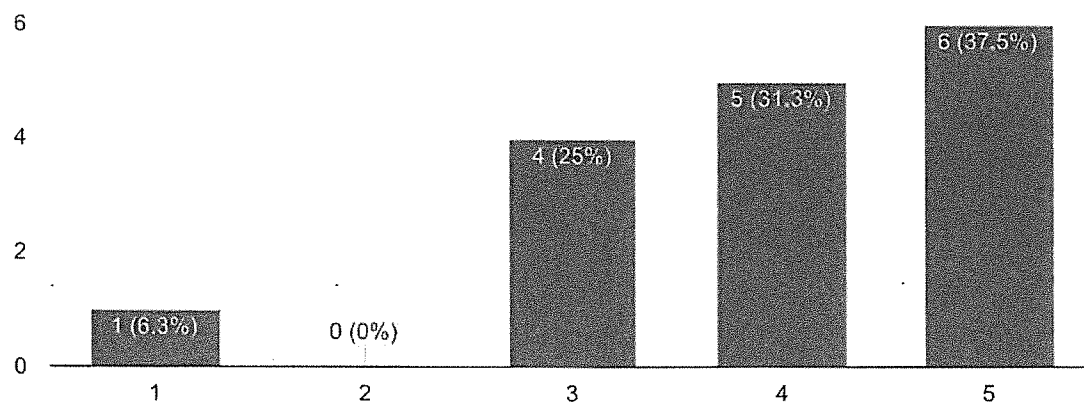
Discover Litchfield Hills Website and other tourism/marketing efforts

16 responses



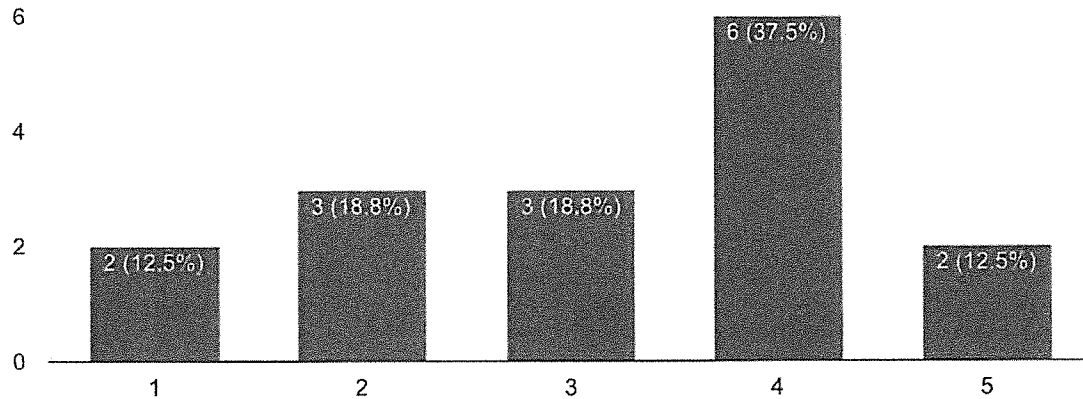
Annual Economic Development Forum

16 responses



Civic Lift

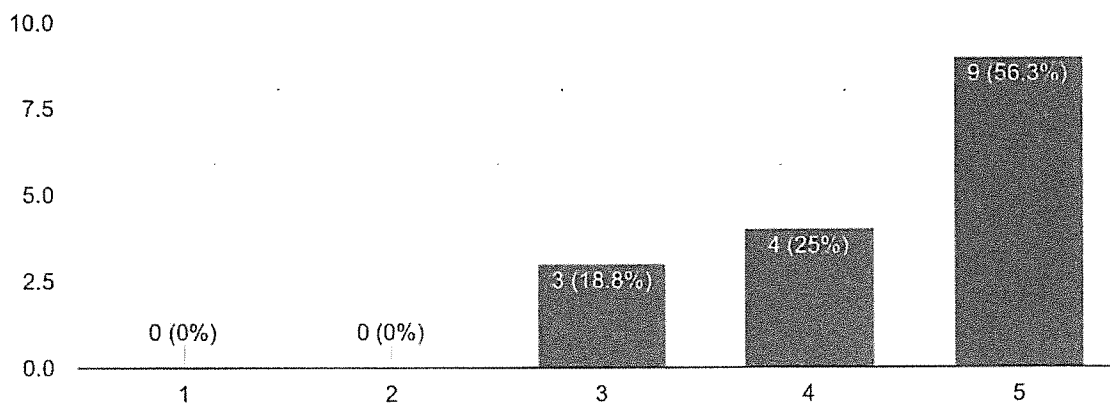
16 responses



SECTION 4 - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT "DEMHS REGION 5"

Serve as the Fiduciary/Oversight Agent/Grant Applicant and Administrator for DEMHS Region 5 (Rather than NVCOG or WESTCOG in Region 5)

16 responses

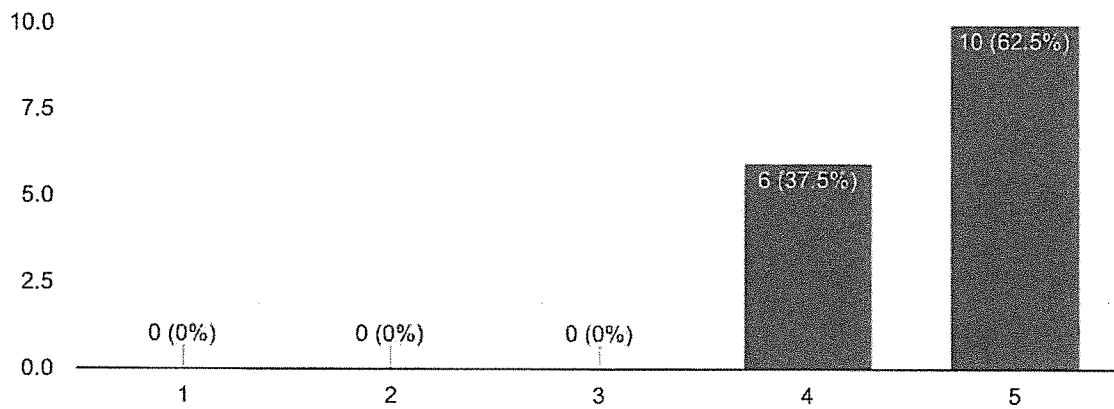


SECTION 5 - LAND USE PLANNING AND OTHER LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



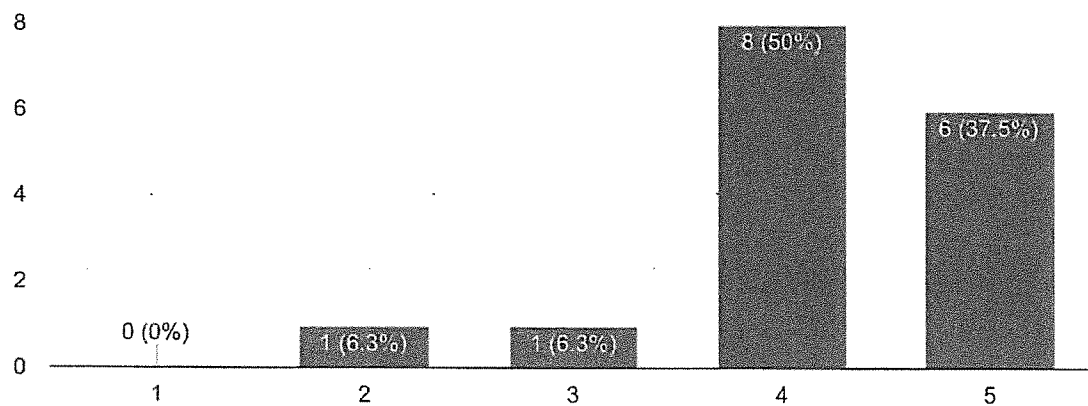
Assist member-towns with guidance on planning documents, technical questions, and statutory requirements

16 responses



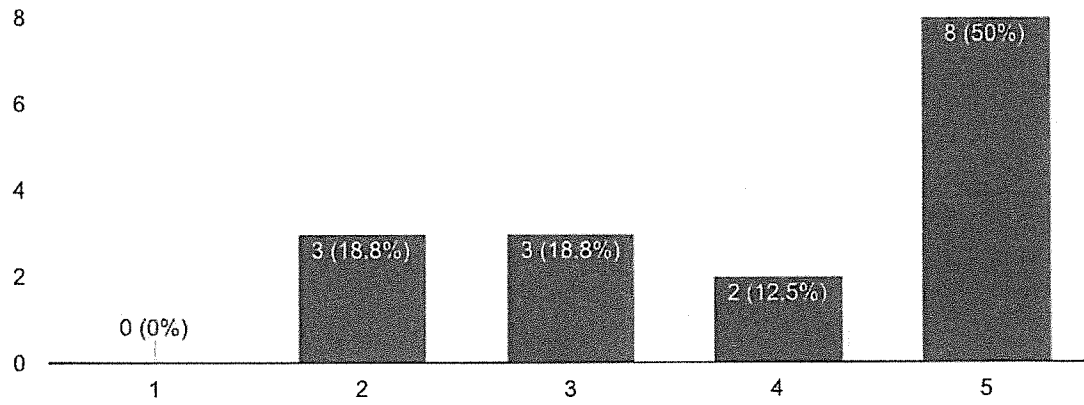
Host Fifth-Thursday Forums to provide local land-use staff and board members with training and informative sessions

16 responses



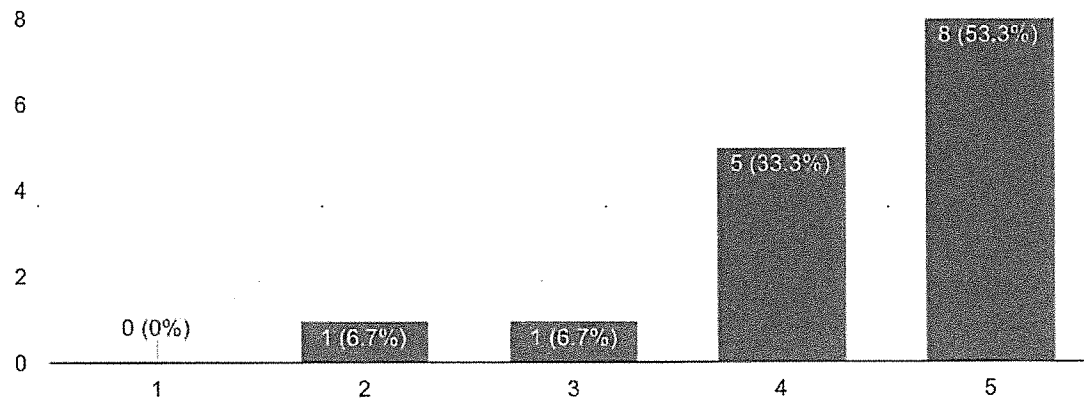
Provide local conservation commissions, land trusts, and Housatonic River Commission with on-going support

16 responses



Provide member-towns with technical mapping assistance "GIS" and data collection

15 responses

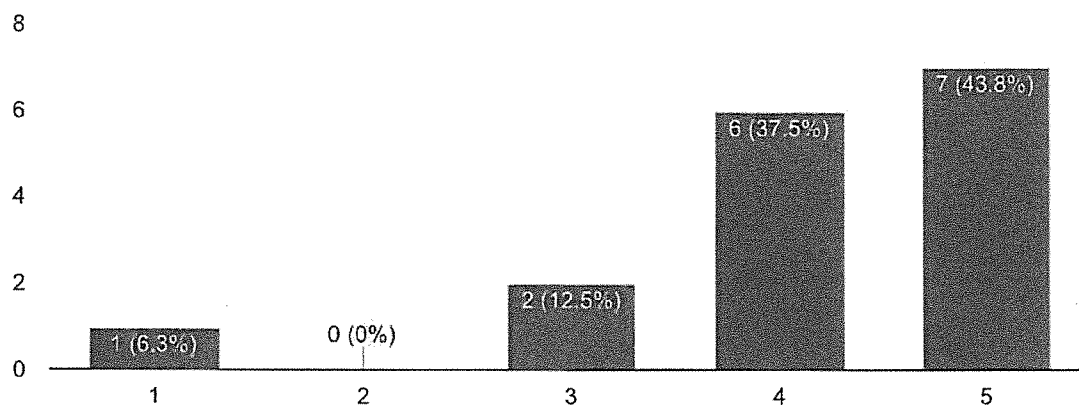


SECTION 6 - HEALTH, HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES



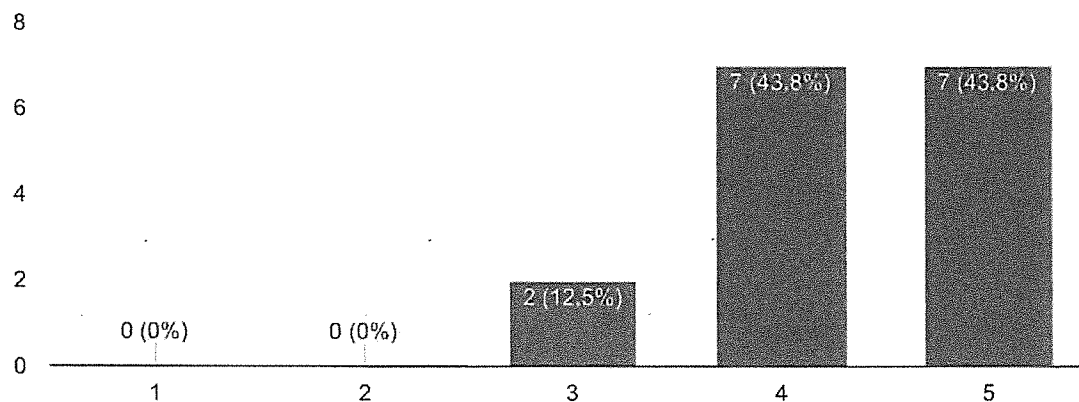
Administration and fiscal oversight of Prescription Assistance, Fuel Bank, Neighbor to Neighbor Programs

16 responses



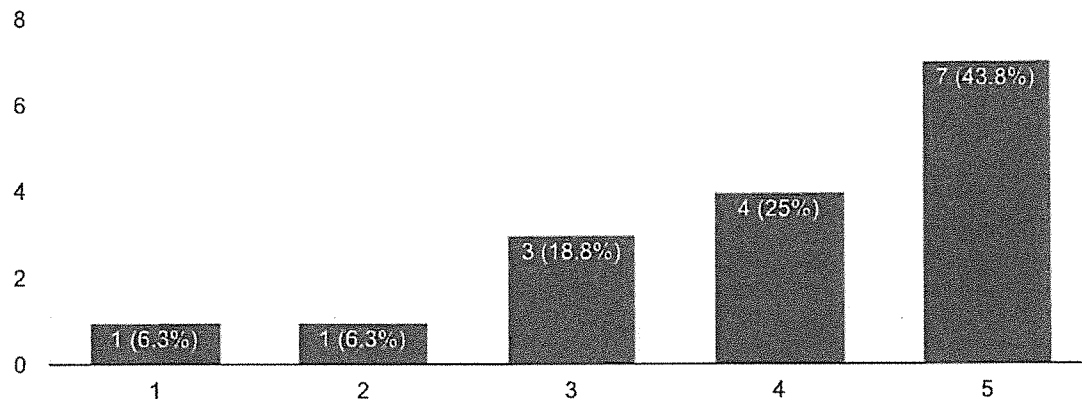
The Value of Regional/Affordable Housing Planning and Assistance

16 responses



Regional Health Services Coordinator – NEW Initiative in the Region and will be Ongoing for Approximately the Next Year

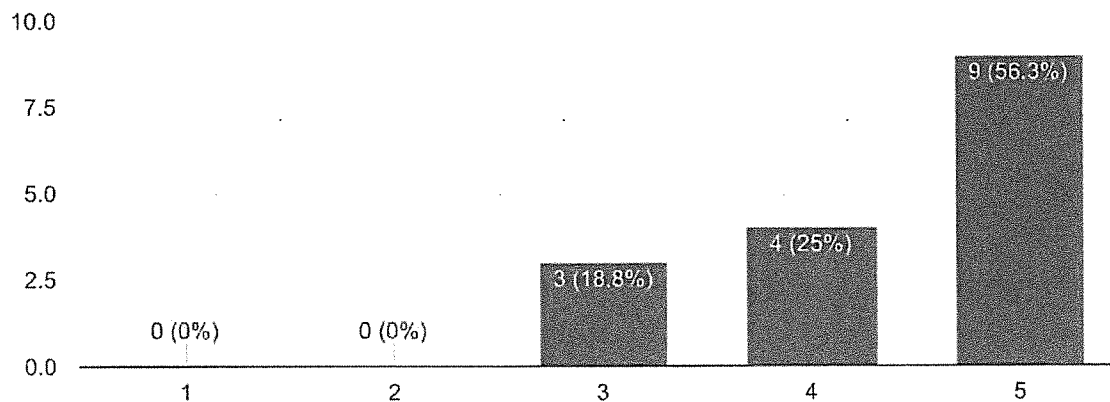
16 responses



Future Service Level Considerations

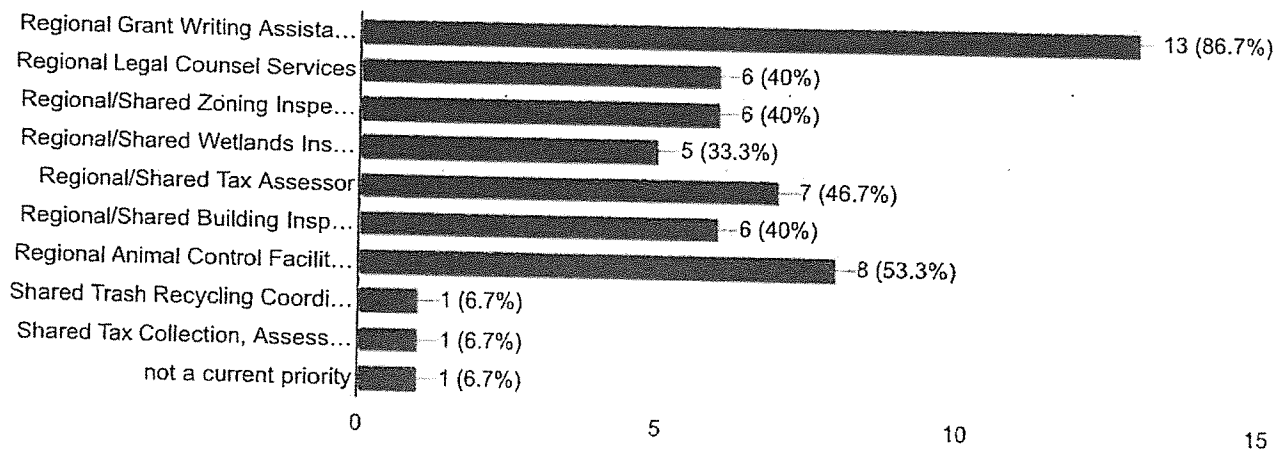
In accordance with new state requirements, provide Land-use Commissioner/Staff Training for member-towns

16 responses



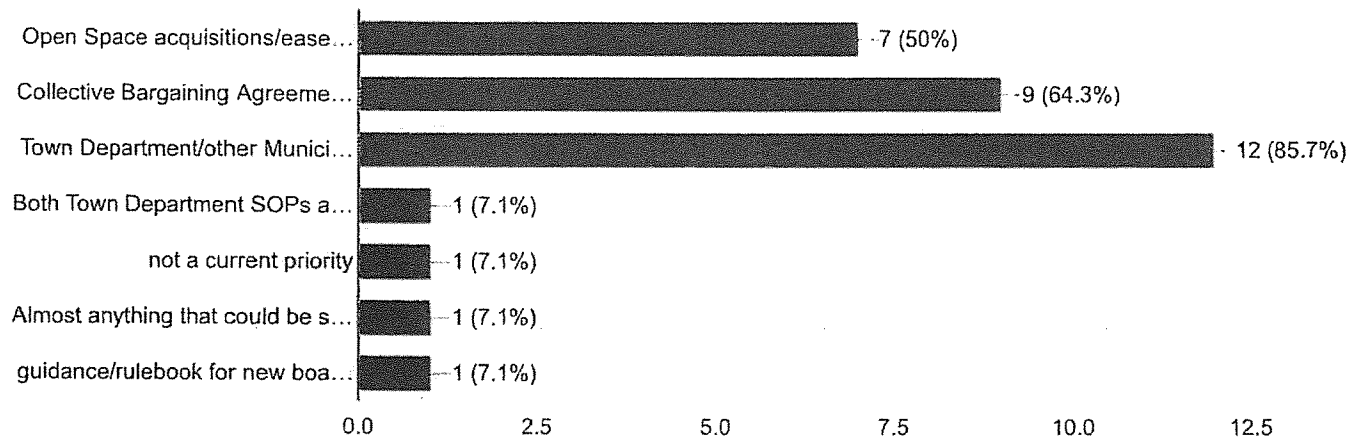
Regionally Coordinated/COG Hosted Services

15 responses



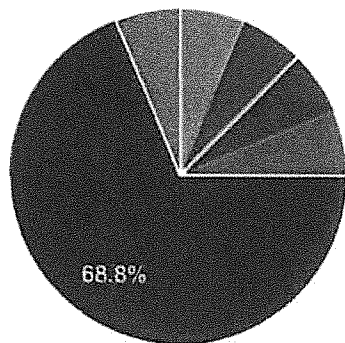
What policy documents/templates could the NHCOG provide in an 'information bank' that would be considered useful?

14 responses



Do you Support Additional NHCOG Staffing to Enhance Service Delivery/Meet Future Needs in the Region?

16 responses

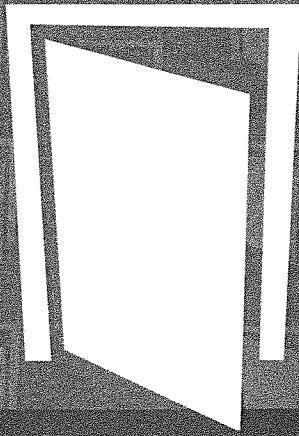


- YES - Staffing Levels Should be Increased to Meet Expanded Services...
- NO - Staffing Levels Should Remain Minimal to Meet Current Service Level...
- Not sure
- refill with similar roles
- staffing level should be refilled to previous level
- as needed and where it maks sense, dont build it up to create positions with...

Please Add Any Other Comments that you Feel are Important/Valuable to this Survey and/or Valuable for Planning and Coordination of Existing or Future COG Services and Associated Staffing Levels
THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

8 responses

- 1) I think also having a Regional Trash/ Recycling Coordinator is important so that each town can benefit from a shared source of education, data collection, ideas and initiatives. Its cost prohibitive for each town to hire its own RTC. Especially with the amount of small towns that are in the NHCOC. Thank you!!
- 2) We need more regionalization! I'm happy to go to bat for increased COG contributions if you can show us how it will help us save money elsewhere in our budget (we don't need to hire a local building official if we can have a shared official shared with us by the COG, etc)
- 3) Some of our COG meetings have gotten too long because we have veered from our core mission. I appreciate the technical services offered by COG staff, but the lengthy agendas with speakers looking for funding should be removed (so that we can get back to business). Those folks can appeal to towns directly. Also...newer Selectmen seeking "survey" information should respond directly to the COG (and not reply all) so that our emails aren't jammed with hundreds of emails. Then staff can distribute (and store) a single informational document. COG Salary survey (important) has yet to be distributed!
- 4) i think there should be a planner to work on economic dev/ housing and another to help with local land use Boards.
- 5) I personally believe the cog has lost its way and is involved in things that do not serve the 21 towns but a few special interests instead. The direction should not be determined by an employee's passion.
- 6) Having the COG as such a wealth of information and partner in so many spheres of muni government has most certainly benefited every member town.
- 7) our biggest concern right now for the town is finding a qualified Assessor to fill a part time position.
- 8) The GIS specialist is critical - we tell the stories of our small rural towns through maps!



CENTER FOR HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

LITCHFIELD COUNTY

Center for Housing Opportunity, Litchfield County

facilitates a coordinated, regional response to address housing affordability in Litchfield County, aligning and delivering critical resources, data, and technical assistance to municipalities and non-profit housing organizations including:

- ▶ Community engagement, education, and advocacy
- ▶ Capacity building support
- ▶ Housing plan implementation assistance
- ▶ Collective impact approach

GET INVOLVED

cthousingopportunity.org
has resources, data, and research tools.

Questions? Contact Litchfield County
Center for Housing Opportunity,
Director Jocelyn Ayer:
jocelyn@thehousingcollective.org

Follow us for the
latest updates.



PARTNERS



Regional Plan Association (RPA)

RPA is an independent non-profit civic organization that develops and promotes ideas to improve the economic health, environmental resiliency, and quality of life of the New York metropolitan area. RPA conducts research on the environment, land use, and good governance, and advises cities, communities, and public agencies.



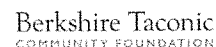
The Housing Collective

The Housing Collective is a CT-based nonprofit agency that applies a Collective Impact framework to deliver solutions to the most pressing housing problems. Focused on ending homelessness and creating equitable housing opportunities for all, the Housing Collective provides the leadership and support that enables productive, regional collaboration across organizations and sectors and drives systems change.



Partnership for Strong Communities (PSC)

PSC is a statewide nonprofit policy and advocacy organization dedicated to ending homelessness, expanding affordable housing, and building strong communities in Connecticut. PSC creates and promotes proven solutions for homelessness, supportive and affordable housing, and community development and connects key state and federal policymakers, local officials, corporate leaders and non-for-profit organizations.



Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation

Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation strengthens communities through philanthropy and leadership. Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation responds to regional priority issues while addressing their root causes, expanding the role of philanthropy as a force for change.



Northwest CT Community Foundation

Northwest CT Community Foundation seeks to enrich the quality of life for residents of Northwest Connecticut by inspiring local philanthropy, convening stakeholders in community welfare, strengthening the regional nonprofits network and fostering collaborative funding partnerships.



Foundation for Community Health (FCH)

Serving the greater Harlem Valley of New York and the northern Litchfield Hills of Connecticut, FCH works to create the conditions required for health, well-being, and equity. To accomplish their mission, FCH makes grants, conducts research, provides technical assistance, and supports collaboration and advocacy.



Regional Legislative Priorities – 2022 Session

We continue to plead with the state to do no harm. The 21-member towns of the NHCOG are still struggling to recover from many challenging issues and un-met needs in the wake of COVID-19. Many of the costs incurred by our towns are not being covered by federal and state programs, and municipal revenues continue to decline or are limited. Support from our area legislators is more critical than ever as we seek to be resilient and bounce back from this unprecedented pandemic. Our residents continue to struggle day in and day out to survive during this inflation, job insecurity and financial instability. Your assistance is critical in supporting the following legislative priorities of the member towns of the NHCOG.

1) Develop a strategic plan and legislation to effectively address the municipal solid waste crisis in Connecticut.

- Creation of an implementable strategic plan and state financial support is critical to addressing the financial and technological issues faced by MIRA so that it can become a reliable and sustainable resource for our municipalities over the long term.

2) Partner with our communities to control taxes and make Connecticut affordable.

- Use state surplus funds to address state debt and removing the burden from small towns and businesses such as i.e, teacher pensions, etc.
- Sponsor legislation to provide for virtual or hybrid town meetings over the long-term in cooperation with Connecticut's Freedom of Information Commission.
- Support continued mandate relief measures. In particular, enact a higher prevailing wage threshold for renovation projects similar to what was done for new construction.
- Sponsor legislation that would allow towns, at local option, to adopt bi-annual budgets to enable longer-term budgeting and cost savings in municipalities.
- Sponsor legislation that would enable towns in a regional school district to adopt a 3-5 year rolling average for municipal assessments to minimize the fiscal impact in any one

given year. Provide enabling legislation for the establishment of a Board of Finance for Regional Schools to better monitor and control spending.

3) Support voluntary regionalization and shared services.

- The member towns of the NHCOC have long supported voluntary regionalism and have already regionalized many municipal facilities (schools, health districts, emergency dispatch) and services (cooperative purchasing, regional equipment sharing). Any new proposals should be presented as well-researched options and not state mandates.
- Support maintenance of funding for COGs and the Regional Performance Incentive Program to enable planning and implementation of additional shared services.

4) Support implementation of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and other regional plans.

- Connecting every home and business to fiber-optic broadband is essential to long-term economic progress in our region and a core strategy in our CEDS Plan. We need state and federal support to help this initiative become a reality.
- Pass legislation requiring PURA to adopt One Touch Make Ready (OTMR) regulations. OTMR would streamline the process of attaching new fiber-optic wire to utility poles saving hundreds of dollars per pole and more than a year of time for municipalities trying to address their high speed broadband needs.
- Support the state, regional and local efforts now underway to address the un-met needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

* * * * *

MINUTES OF THE NHCOC MEETING
February 10, 2022 held via Zoom

Members or Representatives in Attendance:

Canaan, Henry Todd
Goshen, Todd Carusillo
Kent, Jean Speck
Morris, Tom Weik
Norfolk, Matt Riiska
Salisbury, Curtis Rand
Warren, Greg LaCava

Colebrook, Christopher Johnstone
Harwinton, Michael Criss
Litchfield, Denise Raap
New Hartford, Dan Jerram
North Canaan, Charlie Perotti
Torrington, Elinor Carbone
Winchester, Josh Kelly

Others in Attendance:

Hedy Ayers, Eversource; John Field, DEMHS Region 5; Betsy Gara, COST Executive Director; Leonardo Ghio, Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator, Catherine Awwad, NRWIB; Dan Bolognani, Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area; Thomas Kirk, MIRA President

NHCOC Staff: Rob Phillips, Janell Mullen, and Sarah Better

Call to Order and Opportunity for Public Comment. Leonardo Ghio, Rural Healthcare Resource Coordinator, introduced himself and looks forward to working with everyone.

Report of the Executive Director. Janell Mullen is taking her talents to the private consulting within the region. Her last day is February 24. Good luck to Janell! Regional Service Survey will be going out to COG members. Asking for your input of the core services that the COG provides. This will help guide the COG through next fiscal year. Want to see what's important to our members so we can better serve them. This survey is critical to where the COG is going and how to staff moving forward. Training on March 31 at the Litchfield Inn for DEMHS Region 5 ECO's. Original endorsement of \$900.00 contribution but it has increased to no more than \$1845.00 per COG. Funds will be used for speaker, facilities, breakfast, and lunch.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill – Mark Boughton, Commissioner of CT Department of Revenue Services, reviewed the new grant money that will be available within the next year. He suggested the towns talk to town engineers and town planners and get ready for the new funding. Waiting for guidance to come out from the government within the next year as to how to apply.

Municipal Forum – Henry Todd and Wayne Hileman, Chairman for the Northwest Connect Board, discussed the need for a broadband service. It appears that a public/private partnership is going to be necessary to accomplish this. Northwest Connect was approached by Google to discuss a potential collaboration within the local region. This is just a conversation at this point. For more information contact Wayne at hilemanwe@gmail.com

Outlook for Legislative Session Emerging Priorities of Council of Small Towns. Betsy Gara, COST Executive Director, 2.85 billion in new funding, impending closing of MIRA and discussed the future trash issue. Broadband and infrastructure funding is in the Governor's budget, along with education needs, juvenile crime, opioid abuse, and mental health concerns facing children. There is a concern with the issue of car tax. Feel free to contact Betsy with any questions at bgara@CTCOST.org

Updates on Activities of the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (NRWIB) Catherine Awwad from NRWIB will present her updates at the next NHCOC Monthly Meeting on March 10 due to another meeting.

Western New England Greenway - Dan Bolognani from the Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area presented update Western New England Greenway bike project that connects Norwalk to Canadian boarder. Looking to achieve designation with signage through American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials -AASHTO. Rout 7 is the designated bicycle rout that passes through New Milford, Kent, Cornwall, Canaan, North Canaan and Salisbury. Looking to erect signage in the towns that have the direct route. Federal funds have been obtained to fabricate, purchase and delivery. May ask municipalities to help with installation.

Update on Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) – Thomas Kirk, MIRA President – Connecticut is in a waste disposal crisis and the window to refurbish the facilities has passed. What do we do in the immediate future and what cane we do as a state to properly dispose of our waste. Possibilities include trucking waste to western Pennsylvania or other areas. Issues are with volume of tonnage to be managed. Options are very limited. Capabilities of the plant as is now not functional as is. Need manpower and skilled works and this is a challenge currently. Facilities are closing all across the Northeast. What is warranted is policy review and legislative action. A town meeting is planned for early March.

DEMHS Update - John Field, DEMHS Region 5 Supervisor, 8 total pods of Covid test kits and masks, FEMA is starting to reach out to towns regarding long term plans, masks in schools being left up to superintendents. DEMHS is still looking to hire new people. Grants unit is trying to Cyber Security tool kits coming out soon CEO training for the end of March.

Committee Updates – Michael Criss – legislative committee meeting. MIRA is a big topic and need to focus on special meeting Priority. Town taxes are going to be an issue trying to control taxes need to work together legislative survey is going to be sent out by each town.

Administrative Items

a) ACTION – Recommendation NHCOC Local Dues for FY 22-23 – Henry Todd moved to approve annual dues Michael Criss seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) ACTION – Approval of Minutes from January 13, 2022 (Attachment B) Michael Criss moved to approve the minutes Charlie second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c) ACTION – Approval of Financial Statement for December 2021 (Attachment C) Michael Criss moved to approve the Financial Statement. Charlie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:012 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah B. Better
NHCOC Financial/Office Manager

Jan-22

Jan-22

	ORIGINAL	BUDGET	AMENDED	EXPENDED	EXPENDED	
OVERHEAD COSTS	BUDGET	AMENDMENTS	BUDGET	THIS MONTH	TO DATE	UNEXPENDED
Audit (Fiscal Services)	10,800			0.00	10,435.00	365.00
Cleaning Service/MSW Disposal	2,000			75.00	975.00	1,025.00
Dues, Subscript., Publications	3,000			0.00	725.00	2,275.00
Insurance (Bonds/Office/Property)	16,800			0.00	14,353.00	2,447.00
Miscellaneous	6,700			117.34	2,289.34	4,410.66
Office Supplies	3,500			69.40	1,043.18	2,456.82
Postage	700			0.00	161.46	538.54
Printing Services/Repro.	1,600			0.00	0.00	1,600.00
Rent	25,188			2,058.00	14,406.00	10,782.00
Equip. Maintenance, Repairs	2,500			77.20	2,444.63	55.37
Telephone, Computer, Fax & Internet	5,440			389.79	2,376.94	3,063.06
Travel & conference	6,000			35.28	940.64	5,059.36
Utilities	7,000			756.04	2,567.07	4,432.93
Contingency	5,000				0.00	5,000.00
STAFFING						
Salaries	330,000			24,494.84	213,489.69	116,510.31
Employee Benefits	103,447			1,608.61	55,082.87	48,364.13
Payroll Expenses	27,993			2,741.77	18,275.26	9,717.74
CONSULTANTS & OTHER SERVICES						
Transit Planning - NWCTD **	10,000				2,137.50	7,862.50
Regional Engineer (LOTICIP)*	12,500				1,002.00	11,498.00
Regional Transportation Planning**	10,000				0.00	10,000.00
Housatonic River Commission	1,030	300.00	1,330.00		1,330.00	-
EDA Planning Partnership	60,000				34,619.26	25,380.74
EDA CARES	189,000.00			6,160.96	66,482.96	122,517.04
Pop Up Hub*		2,131.11	2,131.11		1,400.00	731.11
Hazard Mitigation Plan*		12,399.92	12,399.92	4,898.42	12,399.92	-
NHMP Local Match		13,062.75	13,062.75	7,716.60	12,408.10	654.65
Wheels of Opportunity**		1,250.00	1,250.00		0.00	1,250.00
Regional Animal Facility Bid		3,900.00	3,900.00		1,444.17	3,900.00
Affordable Housing		2,100.00	2,100.00		2,100.00	-
Consultant Contingency **/ Other	40,441				0.00	-
CAPITAL AND NON-REOCCURRING						
Medical Deductible Contingency	2,000				0.00	-
Equipment	1				0.00	1.00
OPERATING BUDGET SUB TOTAL	882,640	35,143.78	917,783.78	51,199.25	474,888.99	442,894.79
Passthrough***				60,496.82	413,603.56	
TOTAL				111,696.07	888,492.55	
Revenue Received This Month	86,032.55					
Revenue Received To Date**	1,132,694.05		Revenue Received to Date		1,132,694.05	
Balance of Awarded Revenue	601,564.16		Expended to Date		888,492.55	
Total Revenue	1,734,258.21		Operating Account Balance		244,201.50	
Note: There are separate checking/savings accounts for: NW Hills Fuel Bank, Prescription Assistance Program, Public Works, N2N						
*Carryover from FY 20-21 for defined purposes.						
**Includes FY 20-21 carryover						
***Passthrough includes: DEMHS, CERT, Geer, HHW, HRC						

NORTHWEST HILLS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Dec-21

	ORIGINAL BUDGET	BUDGET AMENDMENTS	AMENDED BUDGET	RECEIVED THIS MONTH	RECEIVED TO DATE	NOT RECEIVED
INCOME						
Regional Service Grant (OPM-SGIA)	263,868.00				0.00	263,868.00
ConnDOT Transportation (HPR)	135,000.00				42,916.37	92,083.63
ConnDOT Transit	23,625.00				6,561.62	17,063.38
ConnDOT LOTCIP	12,500.00				0.00	12,500.00
ConnDOT RITS	10,000.00				0.00	10,000.00
Municipal (Local) Dues	88,082.00				88,081.20	0.80
Town Fee for Service	10,000.00				675.00	9,325.00
Regional Housing Council Dues	675.00				675.00	0.00
Housatonic River Commission Dues	2,800.00				2,800.00	0.00
Foundation For Community Health	7,290.00			1,736.11	2,761.33	4,528.67
N2N (Berkshire Taconic)	1,500.00			220.90	450.69	1,049.31
DEMHS Region 5 Coordination by COG	12,000.00				3,200.00	8,800.00
DEMHS Region 5 Fiduciary	23,000.00				6,000.00	17,000.00
Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan - DEMHS		12,053.25	12,053.25		12,053.25	0.00
Department of Housing	20,000.00			3,743.22	33,971.38	-13,971.38
EDA-Partnership Planning	60,000.00			0.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
EDA-CARE	200,000.00	11,575.88	211,575.88	0.00	62,268.52	149,307.36
Miscellaneous	200.00	573.14	815.14		815.44	-0.30
Bank Interest	100.00			13.43	90.31	9.69
Previous Year Accounts Receivable		68,148.48	68,148.48		68,148.48	0.00
Carryover funds FY 20/21	12,000.00				0.00	
OPERATING BUDGET SUB TOTAL	882,640.00	92,350.75	974,990.75	5,713.66	361,468.59	601,564.16
Passthrough****				80,318.89	473,385.09	
TOTAL				86,032.55	834,853.68	
				TSB Certificate of Deposit #1	47,949.78	
				TSB Certificate of Deposit #2	48,182.71	
				TSB Certificate of Deposit #3	60,510.61	
				NCB Certificate of Deposit	218,490.65	
				STIF NHCOC General Fund	359,527.35	
****Passthrough includes: DEMHS, CERT, Geer, HHW, HRC				Total Rainy Day Funds	734,661.10	