

**Agenda**  
**Town Council Regular Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 01, 2023 at 8:00 AM**  
**Town Hall Green Room**

1. Pledge
2. Visitors
3. Approval of Minutes – February 15, 2023
4. Appointments/Reappointments  
John Hoefflerle (U) Public Works Comm Alternate Seat until June 30, 2023
5. Charter Revision Discussion
6. Participation in Regional Housing Committee
7. Chairman’s Report
8. Town Manager’s Report
9. Council Discussion
10. Town Council Committee Liaison Reports
11. Executive Session – Personnel, pursuant to CGS 1-200(6)(A)
12. Park and Recreation Commission Appointment for a term until 6/30/23
13. Adjourn

## **Charter Revision Calendar**

January 9, 2023	Charter Revision files report with the Town Clerk
No later than February 23	Town Council holds public hearing on draft report (Council has 45 days from the filing date to have last hearing – this assumes 1 public hearing on the draft)
1 <sup>st</sup> week of March	Town Council makes recommendations to Charter Revision  If no recommendations, report becomes final  If recommendations, Commission meets with Town Council to discuss and makes report final after 30 days from receiving recommendations
1 <sup>st</sup> week of April	Report becomes final
3 <sup>rd</sup> week of April	Town Council vote to approve or reject amendments from the Charter Revision Commission
3 <sup>rd</sup> week of May	Amendments published in newspaper
1 <sup>st</sup> week of June	Town Council votes to determine the election where voters will act on the amendments (assuming November 2023 – cannot be longer than 15 months from approval of the report – 3 <sup>rd</sup> week of April)
August 16, 2023	Town Council vote to approve ballot questions
September 7, 2023	Deadline to submit ballot questions to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the November vote
November 7, 2023	Municipal election to vote on revisions

## RECOMMENDATION 3

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# Establish a Regional Housing Commission

One of the easiest ways to ensure regional coordination on housing issues is to create a Regional Housing Commission (RHC). Of the Region's 17 municipalities, 76 percent were interested in or had already created a standing housing commission or committee to implement their AHPs as well as this RHP. A RHC should be created as a voluntary association of the Region's municipalities with representation from each. This commission could be hosted by RiverCOG, which would provide staffing and support.

### Phase 1 – Education, Outreach, and Partnerships

The RHC should serve as an information resource on housing and community development for each of the Region's municipalities and their residents. Having a housing point person and/or staff knowledgeable in housing was a goal of 53 percent of the Region's municipalities. Other goals were increased public outreach (35 percent), a dedicated housing information webpage (47 percent), promotion of subsidized Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) mortgages (71 percent), and promotion of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (65 percent), were almost universally popular.

The RHC should also serve as the primary point of contact for partnering and coordinating efforts with nonprofits like the Homeownership and Opportunity for Everyone (HOPE) Partnership and Habitat for Humanity, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), as well as for developers looking to create affordable housing in the Region. Creating partnerships with nonprofits and developers was a goal in 65 percent of the Region's municipalities. By tasking this to the RHC, the municipalities can ensure that developers and nonprofits are aware of the housing needs throughout the Region and that housing is being built where it can create the greatest benefit.

#### *Action Items for Executing Phase 1*

- Recruit diverse representative membership from each of the 17 member municipalities.
- Create an outreach campaign focused on establishing key relationships with local advocates, particularly in communities of color.
- Establish commission goals and adopt a mission statement.
- Build coalition with state and local elected officials.

## Phase 2 – Data Collection and Analysis

The RHC should be tasked with creating a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) every 5 years to support future updates of municipal affordable housing plans. The commission should develop a methodology that considers factors such as projected population growth, job markets, access to transportation, access to infrastructure, environmental assets, and environmental constraints, similar to the analysis performed as part of this plan. By utilizing that methodology, the RHC should be able to determine how many housing units the Region needs to accommodate the projected population and provide a framework for municipalities to coordinate those needs across the Region in a sustainable way.

### *Action Items for Executing Phase 2*

- Partner with state and local Geographic Information System (GIS) coordinators to collect relevant parcel data necessary for Affordable Housing Programs (AHP) revisions.
- Complete an updated RHNA using commission created methodology.
- Continue to foster relationships with policy makers and elected officials.
- Draft pilot program for expanding regional approach to solving housing issues.

## Phase 3 – Expanding Operations

Once the RHC has been established, the municipalities may choose to give the commission additional authority to undertake activities for the municipalities. For example, partner with a regional land bank, create and administer a regional housing trust fund, cooperate with a Regional housing land trust, act as partner with local, municipal, or regional housing authorities. The following table compares the four entities and their regional potential. The RHC could use this information as a starting point to determine which, if any, of these entities or activities are most appropriate.

### *Action Items for Executing Phase 3*

- Establish Housing Trust Fund and secure initial seed funding.
- Incorporate Regional Land Bank Authority (LBA) activities under regional commission.
- Establish board members for Trust Fund and Land Bank Authority.
- Fund local affordable housing projects through a revolving loan fund.
- Study feasibility to expand into further regional activities.

## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

TO: Honorable Town Council Members

FROM: Karl F. Kilduff, Town Manager

DATE: March 1, 2023

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Please find my report concerning various items of interest to the Town Council and community.

### 1. Council Business:

- Charter Revision – The next milestone for the Council for Charter Revision (after the public hearing) is a discussion to determine if the Council has any recommendations for the Charter Revision Commission. If the Council has no recommendations, then the report is considered final. If the Council does have recommendations, then a meeting should take place with the Commission ASAP and they have 30 days to consider. The Commission would make the report final after those 30 days without further action from the Council.

I did follow-up with the Town Attorney regarding the two comments that came from the public during the public hearing. In one instance, there is no statutory requirement that would require a town to look at its charter every five years – that is an exclusively local decision. The other comment concerned the staggered terms of the Council. It was suggested to just leave the current language alone rather than replace it to avoid confusion.

### 2. River COG:

The Council of Governments met on February 22, 2023. Some of the meeting highlights included:

- Early Voting Report – The Regional Election Monitor gave a report to the COG regarding the possibilities of early voting and concepts being discussed for how it could be implemented.
- CEDS Public Comment – The COG's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is out for public comment at this time. The public comment period was extended. It may be voted on by the COG in March. However, given the extension and possible impacts of added comments, that vote could take place in April. A CEDS is a tool to help leverage additional federal funding and our region is the only one in the State without a CEDS.
- Regional Housing Committee – To date, 10 COG towns have voted or intend to participate in the Regional Housing Committee.

### 3. Miscellaneous:

- Consulting Town Engineer – Interviews were held to appoint a consulting town engineer. After the interviews, I contacted the top pick and will be reviewing their service contract language and fee structure.

- Solid Waste – MIRA held a meeting with participating towns to provide an overview of their operations and the possible impact of the Governor’s proposed bill that would restructure MIRA. A regional meeting will also be held more locally with MIRA towns to continue discussions on creating a regional solid waste authority to manage the waste flow from our area.
- Union Contract Negotiation – Negotiations need to be completed for entire successor agreements to the Police and Dispatchers Unions. Public Works, Clerical and Supervisors all have wage re-openers where only wages are subject to negotiations. Additionally, the Police Union pension negotiations (which were put on hold in 2018) are going to be active.
- Coastal Resiliency – I have a number of potential appointees for the Council to add to the Coastal Resiliency Taskforce. Names have been put forward by Planning & Zoning, Harbor Management, and the Conservation Commission. A possible appointee representing a beach association also put their name forward. The Council will need to determine who will represent the Council on this group.