

Water Planning Council Advisory Group

November 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

A telemeeting of the Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG) was held by Zoom

A video recording is available at:

https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2021-10-19_WPCAG_Video.mp4

Members Present by video or phone:

Aaron Budris	Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
Josh Cansler	Southeastern CT Water Authority
Alicea Charamut	Fisheries Advisory Council
Virginia de Lima	USGS CT Water Science Center
Kat Fiedler (alt.)	Save the Sound
Carol Haskins	Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
Sean Hayden	Lake Waramaug Task Force
John Hudak	South Central CT Regional Water Authority
Patrick Kearney	Manchester Water & Sewer
Jeff Pugliese	Middlesex Chamber of Commerce
Denise Savageau	CT Association of Conservation Districts
Martha Smith (alt.)	Rivers Alliance

Other Participants:

Jonathan Avery	Hazardville & Jewett City Water Co.
Ally Ayotte	PURA
Corinne Fitting	DEEP
Rich Hanratty	CT Water Co.
Alexandria Hibbard	DEEP
Dave Kuzminski (alt.)	Portland
Gannon Long	Operation Fuel
Darryl Newman	CT Nursery & Landscape Assoc.
Bruce Wittchen	OPM

Members Absent:

Eric Hammerling	CT Forest and Park Association
Fred Klein	CT Power and Energy Society
David Knauf	Darien Health Department
Dan Lawrence	Aquarion
Joan Nichols	CT Farm Bureau Assoc.
Tom Tyler	MDC
Brenda Watson	Operation Fuel
<i>Vacancy</i>	CT Nursery & Landscape Assoc.

1. Call to Order

Alicea Charamut called the meeting to order at 1:33 and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of draft 10/19/2021 Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft [10/19/2021 minutes](#) and the motion was approved unanimously, with Jeff Pugliese abstaining because he had not attended the meeting.

3. Presentation: Lake Waramaug Stratification Study (Sean Hayden)

Sean Hayden did a presentation on the study that the [Lake Waramaug Task Force](#) is doing to assess the water quality impacts of climate change. He explained the use of mini-loggers that measure water temperature and dissolved oxygen (O₂) every 20 minutes, initially with a string of three mini-loggers set at different depths. This year, they added a string of mini-loggers set at 1-meter intervals.

Sean Hayden said the results of this study can help guide the use of aerators in the lake and help other lake management planning. He added that they are able to compare lake data with weather data from a nearby weather station. Sean pointed out that the mini-loggers cost \$1000 each and a string of buoys is set beneath a buoy that is 2m below the surface to avoid conflict with boaters and swimmers, although they do find fishing lures snagged on the line. Sean said they want to share their results with the rest of the lake management community and showed a [video illustrating their work](#). He also showed and explained a graph of data illustrating seasonal changes in O₂, including the impact of winter ice cover.

Virginia de Lima asked how many strings of loggers are in use and Sean there is a string of 10, a string of 2, a ring of loggers around a 2-3 acre delta that is forming at the outlet of the major stream entering the lake, and another logger in the stream. He explained the interest regarding the highly oxygenated stream water entering the lake and noted that operating the aerators used in the lake costs \$1000 per week. They hope to calibrate when the aerators need to be on and when they can be turned off.

Virginia asked about algae problems and Sean said algae had not been a problem the three previous years but they had problems with cyanobacteria in 2021. He noted the role of storms over the watershed and Virginia asked about the source of phosphorus. Sean said it probably is a former farm and added that he does not believe it is septic systems. John Hudak said they are not alone; Regional Water also experienced problems with cyanobacteria this year even in a nearly 90%-forested watershed.

John Hudak said lakes remain stratified longer now and climate change and cyanobacteria are here to stay. He noted that Regional Water recently applied a peroxide-based algicide to manage a cyanobacterial bloom; they previously stopped the use of copper. Virginia de Lima mentioned a USGS study that found more phosphorus coming out of a lake than going in, showing that phosphorus in the sediments that entered the lake in the past is being released from sediment when the lake stratifies.

There was a discussion of the loggers and Sean Hayden noted that they are hung to avoid bubbles interfering with the sensors beneath them and to avoid sediment accumulating on the sensors if they faced up. He said they must be removed to retrieve the data and be cleaned, which they do every six months.

There was a discussion of erosion and sedimentation and Darryl Newman noted that he thought 2018 caused more sediment problems than 2021 and Sean described his previous experience walking Lake Waramaug streams. He added that the improving water quality at

Lake Waramaug is attracting more construction and landscaping work and he believes erosion and sedimentations requirements should be rethought.

4. Water Planning Council/Implementation Work Group Update

Implementation Work Group Update

Virginia de Lima said the Plan Implementation Tracking work group will have its first meeting on Nov. 30, at 1:30. She also said the Outreach & Education work group has proposed that it be established as a standing committee, given that outreach and education must continue into the future. She said they are considering wetlands as being the theme for the first year. She said the group has also discussed website issues, noting the limited staffing for handling it at OPM. They will refer that to the WPC.

Virginia said the IWG also discussed the proposed water plan director position and will form a short-term group to identify tasks to be included in a possible job description. She added that DPH's Lori Mathieu and DEEP's Graham Stevens will discuss a framework. That group will meet by Zoom on 12/2 and she noted that five people have already expressed interest.

5. Old Business

a. Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) update

Alicea Charamut noted that [Water Utility Coordinating Committee \(WUCC\) Implementation Work Group](#) will meet tomorrow.

b. [Interagency Drought Work Group](#) update

Bruce Wittchen said the [Interagency Drought Work Group](#) met to continue working through the recommendations compiled in the [report submitted earlier this year by the Drought Topical group](#). He explained that the interagency group has completed its review of three of the four charges in the topical group's report and is halfway through the fourth charge. The group will continue with that at its meeting the first week of December. He also described how the group is categorizing the recommendations.

c. Nominating Committee

Alicea Charamut said the committee met and discussed the agriculture position and the position for the [CT Nursery & Landscape Association \(CNLA\)](#). She said the [Working Lands Alliance](#) is being considered for the agriculture position and she thanked Darryl Newman for offering to represent CNLA and he noted that his background is also in agriculture and he offered to help with that in the interim needed.

Alicea noted that the next WPCAG meeting will be Josh Cansler's last as co-chair and Josh said Dan Lawrence is leaving the nominating committee when he becomes co-chair, creating a vacancy. He noted that the committee does not meet often and Carol mentioned that she keeps the meetings to no longer than 20 minutes. Denise Savageau noted that the WLA is a great organization and is experienced with farmland preservation and soil health.

6. WPCAG Work Groups

a. Watershed Lands Work Group

Alicea Charamut said the group will meet at 9:00 on 12/10 and noted that Aaron Budris will give a presentation regarding WUCC implementation.

b. Source Water Protection Work Group –

- [Source Water Protection Outline](#)

Alicea Charamut asked that people who have not yet provided their submissions and Denise Savageau mentioned that she is waiting for a few. Alicea pointed out that the [Governor’s Council on Climate Change](#) (GC3) discussion was skipped earlier on the agenda and said she had just received something from DEEP. Denise Savageau said the [CT Forest & Parks Association](#) (CFPA) is leading regarding forest land protection. She mentioned public meetings for CFPA’s [Policy on Resilient Forests for CT’s Future](#) (PRFCT Future) initiative, including one today, and noted that CFPA is under contract to DEEP.

c. Solar Siting Work Group

- [Draft Solar Siting Recommendations & Work Plan](#)

Alicea Charamut said DEEP is reviewing comments received regarding the [Sustainable, Transparent, and Efficient Practices for Solar Development](#) (STEPS) initiative. People are waiting to learn how the initiative will proceed.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

9. Next Meeting Date

Alicea read the schedule of upcoming meetings:

December 7, 2021:	WPC
December 14, 2021:	IWG
December 21, 2021:	WPCAG

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM