

## Water Planning Council Advisory Group

### January 18, 2022 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/2022-01-18\\_WPCAG\\_Video.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2022-01-18_WPCAG_Video.mp4)

#### Members Present by video or phone:

Aaron Budris	<a href="#">Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments</a>
Karen Burnaska	<a href="#">Save the Sound</a>
Josh Cansler	<a href="#">Southeastern CT Water Authority</a>
Alicea Charamut	<a href="#">Fisheries Advisory Council</a>
Carol Haskins	<a href="#">Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition</a>
John Hudak	<a href="#">South Central CT Regional Water Authority</a>
Patrick Kearney	<a href="#">Manchester Water &amp; Sewer</a>
Fred Klein	<a href="#">CT Power and Energy Society</a>
David Knauf	<a href="#">CT Association of Directors of Health</a>
Dan Lawrence	<a href="#">Aquarion</a>
Margaret Miner	<a href="#">Rivers Alliance</a>
Darryl Newman	<a href="#">CT Nursery &amp; Landscape Assoc.</a>
Jeff Pugliese	<a href="#">Middlesex Chamber of Commerce</a>
Denise Savageau	<a href="#">CT Association of Conservation Districts</a>
Kelsey Sudol (alt.)	<a href="#">Lake Waramaug Task Force</a>

#### Other Participants:

Jonathan Avery	Hazardville and Jewett City Water Cos.
Corinne Fitting	<a href="#">DEEP</a>
Rich Hanratty	CT Water Co.
Alexandria Hibbard	<a href="#">DEEP</a>
Iris Kaminski	
Linda Kowalski	
David Kuzminski (alt.)	Portland
Tim Malone	<a href="#">Capitol Region Council of Governments</a>
Sonia Marino (alt.)	<a href="#">CT Association of Directors of Health</a>
Dustyn Nelson (alt.)	<a href="#">CT Nursery &amp; Landscape Assoc.</a>
Martha Smith (alt.)	Rivers Alliance
Bruce Wittchen	<a href="#">OPM</a>

#### Members Absent:

Virginia de Lima	<a href="#">USGS CT Water Science Center</a>
Eric Hammerling	<a href="#">CT Forest and Park Association</a>
Tom Tyler	<a href="#">MDC</a>
Brenda Watson	<a href="#">Operation Fuel</a>
Vacancy	Agriculture

#### Vacancies

Agriculture

#### 1. Call to Order

Alicea Charamut called the meeting to order at 1:32, started the recording, and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

## **2. Approval of draft 12/21/2021 Minutes**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft [12/21/2021 minutes](#) and the motion was approved unanimously, with John Hudak abstaining because he had not attended the meeting.

## **3. Water Plan Updates**

### **a. Water Planning Council Update**

There was no update.

### **b. Implementation Work Group Update**

- **Topical Sub-Work Groups**

Alicea noted that IWG co-chairs Virginia de Lima and David Radka are not here to provide the update. She mentioned that the [outreach & education](#) work group's efforts for an upcoming event and recommended people contact PURA's Laura Lupoli or WPCAG member Denise Savageau if they did not receive the notice for the [2/2 event](#) celebrating World Wetlands Day and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CT Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act.

Alicea also mentioned that the work group considering potential water chief responsibilities will meet Friday. Denise Savageau said the agenda is being finalized for the 2/2 event and provided an overview of the group's efforts, including monthly themes. She noted that others beyond this group are making plans of their own for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

- **Other IWG matters**

Dan Lawrence noted the common ground between the state water plan and work of the Water Utility Coordinating Committees (WUCCs), highlighting the WUCCs' work with emergency interconnections.

## **4. WPCAG Work Groups**

### **a. Revisit Conservation/ratemaking barriers workgroup proposal**

Alicea Charamut mentioned last year's Association for Water Efficiency workshop. She noted there are barriers to implementation of conservation rates and said she can redistribute w work group proposal. She said the goal is to have a rate structure that provides needed revenue for water companies and resilience to drought.

Dan Lawrence agreed with the desire to focus on such barriers. Denise Savageau said [Operation Fuel](#) is also looking at water rates. She also mentioned that another

consideration regarding water use is the cost of waste water treatment. She said electricity for treatment plants is a significant cost for municipalities; this is important.

b. Watershed Lands Work Group

Karen Burnaska and Dan Lawrence mentioned Aaron Budris's work on a story map and Aaron provided further background regarding information it will provide. Dan said work will continue at the next WUCC meeting. Karen thanked Dan and Aaron for the work. She also mentioned the work group's efforts regarding the legislative land conveyance process and said they hope to have good news about that at the next watershed lands work group meeting.

Margaret Miner said the [Council on Environmental Quality](#) (CEQ) used to track the loss of wetlands in the state but no longer does because of data quality concerns. She also mentioned the desire to protect [AA waters](#) not currently used as public water sources and mentioned Cheshire aquifer protection area land included in the legislative land conveyance discussed at previous meetings. Even if not currently used as a public supply, such lands should be protected as if they were. She added that this will be discussed at the group's 3/11 meeting and Alicea Charamut read the dates of the group's quarterly meetings in 2022.

Alicea, who is also a member of CEQ, explained that CEQ had noted decreased municipal reporting of wetland information to DEEP and fewer reports provide acreage information. She described CEQ's consideration of the issue and said they don't have the data needed to report on wetland loss. There was further discussion.

Denise Savageau said there should be a panel to look at this, but also mentioned the need for funding and the limited staffing available at DEEP with further retirements to come. She asked what monitoring is needed and pointed out that people had assumed current wetlands reporting was adequate. Denise recommended the Implementation Work Group look into this. She also noted that the emphasis in the preparation of the state water plan was on water quantity, assuming everything else was addressed. There have been a lot of assumptions. Margaret Miner monitoring is important but added that OPM once had a lead role in water planning and should retake its planning role.

c. Source Water Protection Work Group: [Source Water Protection Outline](#)

Alicea Charamut said she will reach out to people to fill in the blanks.

d. Solar Siting Work Group: [Draft Solar Siting Recommendations & Work Plan](#)

Alicea said a meeting is being scheduled and invited people who are interested in participating to contact her.

## 5. Old Business

a. Water Utility Coordinating Committee (WUCC) update

Dan Lawrence said there will be a meeting on 2/16 and [information is available from DPH](#). He mentioned that one topic of interest is the development of new noncommunity water systems near existing community systems. He added that the focus will be on the

WUCC implementation group, which will try to meet quarterly. Jonathan Avery said the Eastern WUCC plans to meet in February and noted that they must replace previous co-chair Mark Decker.

b. Interagency Drought Work Group update

Bruce Wittchen provided a brief update regarding the [Interagency Drought Work Group](#). He noted that conditions had grown dryer in the SW and SE corners of the state but the group did not go to the drought plan's Stage 1. The group continues its work on the recommendations in the [report submitted by the Drought Topical group](#). The individual agencies are reviewing the interagency group's previous work and meet again in February, possibly finishing at that time.

c. Nominating Committee

There were no updates.

d. Hydrilla update

There were no updates

e. SWP Prioritization Discussion

Alicea mentioned that she had circulated the previous prioritization prior to this meeting and showed it on her screen. Darryl Newman asked about the mention of *public trust* and Alicea provided an overview of its meaning and the controversy over the application of public trust doctrine. There was a discussion of the controversy and length of the debate and John Hudak pointed out the large number of public comments received. Dan Lawrence recommended circulating the state water plan's [executive summary](#) and noted that some of the prioritized actions are in progress. There was a discussion of how recommendations were organized and prioritized previously

Denise Savageau said funding should be a priority. She said the state does not always have the matching funds necessary to receive federal fund. She also noted the state water plan's lack of any specific reference to source water protection although the concept is contained in a piecemeal way in other topics. The plan needs to be updated.

Iris Kaminski asked where prevention of water pollution, such as by pesticides, belongs in the plan. Denise Savageau said water pollution prevention is associated with plan topics such as low impact development (LID), non-point source pollution, and green infrastructure even if there is no specific mention of pesticides.

Margaret Miner referred back to the public trust discussion, noting that the intent is that water companies and people do not own water and acknowledged the level of controversy. Martha Smith said the state should not be bound by its previous priorities and mentioned that solar siting is new. Denise Savageau agreed that some significant topics are not in the plan. Dan Lawrence said the group should reconsider the plan and discuss what is missing and what is important.

## 6. New Business

- a. WUCC presentations on draft work of WUCC implementation: Interconnections & WUCC CPCN/Developers

Dan Lawrence said he should have something to share after the next WUCC meeting.

## 7. Public Comment

Denise Savageau mentioned a contract between the [CT Council on Soil and Water](#) and UConn for parcel-level land use mapping in source water watersheds and aquifer protection areas. She noted that they are looking at how to rate the potential for contamination and the potential for protection.

Denise also mentioned that there will be a lot of federal funding for Long Island Sound that can also be applied in watersheds. They are looking at the One Water concept and she recommended that public water sources be prioritized for funding and that funding be leveraged to protect Long Island Sound and public water supplies.

Iris Kaminski elaborated on her previous references to pollution prevention, noting its cost effectiveness. She said we cannot treat what we do not know and, although things can be treated, it is a more costly approach. She noted that some things are impossible or cost-prohibitive to treat. Alicea Charamut mentioned the controversies and regulatory processes to address PFAS and salt contamination. Denise Savageau pointed out the different roles different agencies have with respect to water and commented that change typically comes from advocates, not from the agencies.

## 8. Next Meeting Date

Alicea read the schedule of upcoming meetings:

February 1, 2022:	WPC
February 2, 2022:	Event: World Wetlands Day/50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of CT Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act
February 8, 2022:	IWG
February 15, 2022:	WPCAG

## 9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

*Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM*