

Water Planning Council Advisory Group

October 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/2022-10-18_WPCAG_video.mp4

Members Present by video or phone:

Aaron Budris	Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
Karen Burnaska	Save the Sound
Josh Cansler	Southeastern CT Water Authority
Carol Haskins	Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
Patrick Kearney	Manchester Water & Sewer
Fred Klein	CT Power and Energy Society
David Knauf	CT Association of Directors of Health
Dan Lawrence	Aquarion
Martha Smith (alt.)	Rivers Alliance
Denise Savageau	CT Association of Conservation Districts
Kelsey Sudol (alt.)	Lake Waramaug Task Force
Tom Tyler	MDC

Other Participants:

Paul Aresta	CEQ
Jonathan Avery	Hazardville & Jewett City Water Companies
Ally Ayotte	PURA
Chris Bellucci	DEEP
Kim Czapla	DEEP
Erica Fearn	CT Environmental Council
Rich Hanratty	CT Water Co.
Ali Hibbard	DEEP
Iris Kaminski	
Sonia Marino (alt.)	CT Association of Directors of Health
Keyla Palada	Operation Fuel
Mary Pelletier	Park Watershed
Aimee Petras (alt.)	Farmington River Watershed Association
Katie Schlick	Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
Lisette Stone	DPH

Members Absent:

Alicea Charamut	Fisheries Advisory Council
Virginia de Lima	USGS CT Water Science Center
Eric Hammerling	CT Forest and Park Association
Darryl Newman	CT Nursery & Landscape Assoc.
Steve Vitko	South Central CT Regional Water Authority
Brenda Watson	Operation Fuel

Vacancies

Agriculture
Business & Industry – Association

1. Call to Order

Dan Lawrence called the meeting to order at 1:38 and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of draft 7/19/2022 Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft [9/20/2022 minutes](#) and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Water Plan Updates

a. Annual Report Summaries

Dan Lawrence provided an overview of expectations for the WPC's annual report on implementation of the state water plan, which has not been prepared in recent years, and noted that a [proposal](#) has been circulated and volunteers are being sought for a work group to help prepare it.

b. Water Planning Council Update

Denise Savageau provided an overview of this month's WPC meeting and said they are moving forward with reporting and budgeting recommendations, highlighting the need for a water planning budget.

c. Implementation Work Group Update

Dan Lawrence said Virginia de Lima could not attend today's meeting but sent an update about [last week's IWG meeting](#). He said she wrote that the [Outreach & Education](#) work group discussed WPC website needs and that climate change will be the theme for outreach in 2023. That work group is moving its meetings to 9:00 on 1st Tuesdays.

Regarding the new USGS data collection work group, Dan said Virginia's email mentioned that 22 people have expressed interest and she highlighted a need for a representative from the consulting industry. Chris Bellucci summarized the backgrounds of people who have volunteered to date and noted that the focus will be on identifying data gaps. The initial meeting will be scheduled soon.

Denise Savageau said the Outreach & Education work group also welcomes new members and provided a brief overview of its work. She noted the need for drought education and suggested it be included as part of the climate education required of public schools. Dan Lawrence noted that [Water Utility Coordinating Committees](#), which will be discussed later, are also interested in that and there should be a discussion of coordinating their efforts. Aaron Budris noted that they all are trying to reach the same audience and there was further discussion of coordination.

4. WPCAG Work Groups

a. Watershed Lands Work Group

The group has not met since the last WPCAG meeting and there was no update.

- b. Source Water Protection Work Group: [Source Water Protection Outline](#) – no updates

There was no update.

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

Dan Lawrence said there was no update and Denise Savageau said the work group has been waiting for DEEP to begin its [Sustainable, Transparent and Efficient Practices for Solar Development](#) (STEPS) process. Chris Bellucci offered to look into that at DEEP and there was a discussion of how he would report back to this group.

- d. **Now Forming:** [Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis Work Group](#)

Dan Lawrence described the intention behind this new work group, explaining that water companies with rates set by PURA are able to use a revenue adjustment to adapt to the decline in revenue resulting from conservation. Municipal and other utilities face barriers in responding to such revenue loss. An announcement went out seeking volunteers.

5. Old Business

- a. [Water Utility Coordinating Committee](#) (WUCC) update

Dan Lawrence said the three WUCCs held a joint meeting and are finalizing documents. Jonathan Avery added that the three WUCCs will have individual meetings and meet together on the same day in November. Dan said most of the current work is at the combined implementation group. Dan also noted the significance of WUCC data in the original water plan and likely relevance in the proposed plan update.

- b. Interagency Drought Work Group update

Bruce Wittchen said the [Interagency Drought Work Group](#) met this month and decided to reduce New London and Windham counties to Stage 2 while leaving the remaining counties at Stage 2. He noted that many indicators are improved but the group chose to make only that limited change and continue to monitor conditions. He pointed out that many private wells are in bedrock beneath till and that ground water is not easily recharged.

- c. Nominating Committee

Carol Haskins provided an update on the group's efforts to fill vacancies and there was a discussion of options in the beverage and hospitality industries. Carol introduced the [CT Environmental Council](#)'s Erica Fearn, who is attending this meeting and can represent water-intensive businesses. Erica introduced herself and described the organization. Carol said the committee has sent information about Erica's interest to the WPC.

Carol also mentioned that long-time WPCAG member Virginia de Lima will leave the group at the end of the year, so it will be necessary to replace her. It was noted that Mike Dietz of UConn's [Institute of Water Resources](#) is Virginia's alternate. There was further

discussion of the vacancies to be filled and Fred Klein said he believes one business/industry position should be filled by someone representing strongly seasonal uses, such as an irrigation contractor, and the other should represent a year-round user, such as a bottler.

d. Hydrilla update

There was no update.

6. New Business

Denise Savageau mentioned the [Governor's Council on Climate Change's](#) (GC3's) interest in the overlap with WPC and water planning activities. She listed [GC3 work groups](#) and highlighted connections to the WPC's work. Dan Lawrence pointed out work previously done to compile and compare water recommendations from the different groups and suggested it be updated.

7. Public Comment

Iris Kaminski asked about drought impacts on CT surface waters. Dan Lawrence said reservoir levels are generally rising and Bruce Wittchen said stream flows have generally been normal in the last month but remain below normal for the longer term considered by the drought plan. Tom Tyler provided an overview of MDC's reservoir status and agreed with Dan that demands are dropping. Denise Savageau noted that some people with private wells have had to pay for water haulers to replenish wells.

Denise Savageau said this is the 50th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act and noted that the national act was based on the CT act adopted the previous year. She also mentioned an upcoming [Imagine a Day Without Water](#) workshop. There was further discussion of applications of the Clean Water Act.

8. Next Meeting Date

Upcoming meetings will be.

November 1, 2022:	WPC
November 8, 2022:	IWG
November 15, 2022:	WPCAG

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM