

## Water Planning Council Advisory Group

### November 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes

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

Agenda: <https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/18566>

Video: [https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2023-11-21\\_WPCAG\\_Video.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2023-11-21_WPCAG_Video.mp4)

#### Members Present by video or phone:

Aaron Budris	<a href="#">Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments</a>
Josh Cansler	<a href="#">Southeastern CT Water Authority</a>
Alicea Charamut	<a href="#">Fisheries Advisory Council</a>
Kathy Czepiel	<a href="#">Save the Sound</a>
Carol Haskins	<a href="#">Pomperaug River Watershed Association</a>
Patrick Kearney	<a href="#">Manchester Water &amp; Sewer</a>
Fred Klein	<a href="#">CT Power and Energy Society</a>
Dan Lawrence	<a href="#">Aquarion</a>
Alison McHorney	<a href="#">CT Office of Consumer Counsel</a>
Margaret Miner	<a href="#">Rivers Alliance</a>
Denise Savageau	<a href="#">CT Association of Conservation Districts</a>
Kelsey Sudol (alt)	<a href="#">Lake Waramaug Task Force</a>
Steve Vitko	<a href="#">South Central CT Regional Water Authority</a>

#### Other Participants:

Paul Aresta	<a href="#">CT Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)</a>
Ally Ayotte	<a href="#">CT Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA)</a>
Jonathan Avery	Hazardville & Jewett City Water Cos.
Lauren Bergman	CT Water Co.
Rich Hanratty	CT Water Co.
Ali Hibbard	<a href="#">CT Dept. of Energy &amp; Environmental Protection (DEEP)</a>
Iris Kaminski	
David Kuzminski	Town of Portland

#### Members Absent:

Bonnie Burr	<a href="#">UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources</a>
David Knauf	<a href="#">CT Association of Directors of Health</a>
Jon Morrison	<a href="#">USGS CT Water Science Center</a>
Darryl Newman	<a href="#">CT Nursery &amp; Landscape Assoc.</a>
Tom Tyler	<a href="#">MDC</a>
Brenda Watson	<a href="#">Operation Fuel</a>

#### Vacancies:

Business Association (Non-Water Intensive)  
Recreation

#### Staff:

Bruce Wittchen [CT Office of Policy & Management \(OPM\)](#)

#### 1. Call to Order

Co-chair Dan Lawrence called the meeting to order and everyone introduced themselves.

## **2. Approval of draft 10/17/2023 Minutes**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the draft [10/17/2023](#) minutes and the motion was approved unanimously.

## **3. Discussion: Future of WPCAG & IWG**

- Recap of WPC and IWG meetings and further discussion & recommendations

Alicea Charamut said the WPC voted to merge the groups but there will be no change until procedural changes are in place. Denise Savageau said the IWG had been focused on the WPC's annual report, but that is finished and she said WPCAG and IWG co-chairs are considering various issues. One is the role of WPC agency staff in the combined group and she said the WPC decided agency staff would only have an advisory role. She mentioned IWG subcommittees that need to migrate to the WPCAG and noted that most members of the IWG are involved with the WPCAG.

Dan Lawrence noted the potential need to manage more subgroups during a water plan update and Denise distinguished between standing groups and those established to complete a task and not continue. Kelsey Sudol mentioned that the IWG had discussed the differences between the two groups regarding the length of members terms and provided an overview.

Carol Haskins provided an update regarding WPCAG membership changes, noting that the WPC appointed Kathy Czepiel and Alison McHorney to fill two vacancies and decided that members whose terms expire at the end of the year will continue to be members until decisions are made about the upcoming merger and potential membership changes. There was a discussion of Roberts Rules procedures.

## **4. Updates**

- a. Other Water Planning Council Updates

Dan Lawrence noted that the WPC's focus has been on the just-discussed merger, the state water plan update, and funding for an executive director/water chief. Denise Savageau said the draft annual report has been provided to the agencies and noted her concern about the draft plan's approach towards funding water plan implementation.

Kelsey Sudol said there had been a discussion at last week's IWG meeting about plans for a water-oriented position at OPM. Margaret Miner said she shares Denise's concern regarding the lack of progress in funding a position to lead plan implementation. Rich Hanratty added that, based on his experience at the Capitol, a position like this needs to be created legislatively, especially with four agencies being involved.

- b. Implementation Work Group Update

- Topical Sub-Work Groups

- [Outreach & Education](#)

Denise said the source water protection theme was discussed at this month's WPC meeting and the planned workshops will be discussed at the subgroup's 12/5 meeting and provided an overview of what is being considered. She also mentioned that the group is taking up the issue of natural resources/resiliency jobs.

- Water plan implementation/tracking

Denise Savageau staff person who had taken the lead has been reassigned and this effort will regroup.

- USGS data needs

Ali Hibbard said the work group met Friday and sent the updated draft to Virginia de Lima and she was asked to also send it to Dan and Alicea to circulate to WPCAG members.

- CT state water website group

Denise Savageau provided some background regarding this group and Ali Hibbard added that the state website platform is archaic and it has taken some time to catch up. She also noted that state websites are being moved to a new platform, but there is no timeline for those moves. The focus at this time is to make text updates because those will transfer to the new platform. Denise Savageau said the outreach & education group will look at this more closely following the website transition.

- State Water Plan and staffing update

Dan Lawrence said this had been covered earlier.

## 5. WPCAG Work Group Updates

- a. Watershed Lands Work Group

Margaret Miner said OPM's Becca Dahl will email the group with some questions prior to the 12/8 meeting. Rich Hanratty said they are asking the group about looking at the adequacy of the aquifer protection regulations and said they are interested in suggestions from people experienced in applying the regulations. He said Margaret has suggested looking at past ground water measurements. She added that they will also point out a confusing aspect of the statutory definition of Class II watershed lands and there was a discussion of a nuance in that definition. Dan Lawrence added that Aquarion is discussing a related scenario with DPH and Rich Hanratty described his research of the legislative history of that definition.

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

Denise Savageau said the group is moving along well and is finalizing the draft white paper and explained the approach taken with the white paper. A subgroup will have

weekly 1/2-hour meetings and other people are welcome to participate. The next meeting of the full group will be 12/19. She described overlap with work by other groups and noted the impact of land conversion and limitations of land use restrictions. They are looking for input from others, particularly water utilities.

Denise recommended reconvening the source water collaborative and mentioned other possible participants and additional issues to consider. Lisette Stone added some further details, noting that she and DPH's Eric McPhee discussed this and a desire to broaden the source water collaborative. Denise noted the connection between that and the work of the outreach & education group.

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

There was no update.

- d. Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis Work Group

Alicea said the group met to discuss the survey described at the previous WPCAG meeting and she will meet with some people from utilities to discuss that ahead of the work group's next meeting.

## 6. Old Business

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

Jonathan Avery and Dan Lawrence said WUCCs are receiving few requests and Dan said the Western WUCC will meet to select new officers.

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

Bruce Wittchen said the group will be paying closer attention to conditions as some dryness returns to the region and said they will also continue with drought plan update work. Dan Lawrence asked if they are seeing ground water or stream flow impacts and Bruce said those were normal or above last he checked but precipitation has been below normal recently and the US Drought Monitor has begun classifying some nearby places as being abnormally dry.

- c. Nominating Committee

Carol Haskins said they have a full slate of members and asked that members select an alternate if they have not done so already.

- d. Hydrilla update

There was no update.

## 7. New Business

There was no new business.

## 8. Public Comment

Denise Savageau described a new tool for ranking properties in source water and aquifer protection areas for protection, management, or restoration. She provided a link – <https://clear.uconn.edu/projects/sourcewater/> – and mentioned possible workshops. Denise also mentioned interest in the relationship between forests and water and a one-water conference held this year. Some people here might be contacted about this. Iris Kaminski mentioned work she has begun regarding 1,4-Dioxane and said she would like to talk with anyone who is interested in this or whose work is related.

## 9. Next Meeting Date

Upcoming meetings include:

Nov. 21, 2023	Source Water Protection Work Group (9:00)
Dec. 5, 2023:	Outreach & Education Work Group (9:00)
Dec. 5, 2023:	WPC (1:30)
Dec. 7, 2023	Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis (11:00)
Dec. 7, 2023	Interagency Drought Work Group (1:00)
Dec. 8, 2023	Watershed Lands Work Group
Dec. 12, 2023:	IWG (1:00)
Dec. 19, 2023	Source Water Protection Work Group (9:00)
Dec. 19, 2023:	WPCAG (1:30)

## 10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:29.

*Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM*