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STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

STATE WATER PLANNING COUNCIL

Transcript of an Annotated Digital recording of  
the Regular Meeting held via teleconference on March 7,  
2023, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

H e l d   B e f o r e :

JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, WPC CHAIRMAN,  
and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN

1     **A p p e a r a n c e s :**

2     **WATER PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

3             **JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, CHAIRMAN (PURA)**

4             **MARTIN HEFT (OPM)**

5             **LORI MATHIEU (DPH)**

6             **GRAHAM STEVENS (DEEP)**

7  
8     **ALSO PRESENT (on record):**

9             **DENISE SAVAGEAU**

10            **KAREN BURNASKA**

11            **ALICEA CHARAMUT**

12            **CAROL HASKINS**

13            **MARGARET MINER**

14  
15     **Staff:**

16            **LAURA LUPOLI**

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1 (Begin: 1:30 p.m.)

2  
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, everyone. I believe we  
4 have everyone on. Welcome to the March 7, 2023,  
5 Water Planning Council meeting. We'll call the  
6 meeting to order.

7 The first order of business will be approval  
8 of the February 7, 2023 transcript.

9 Do I have a motion?

10 LORI MATHIEU: So moved.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: So moved. Second?

12 MARTIN HEFT: Second.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Second by Martin.

14 Any questions on the motion?

15  
16 (No response.)

17  
18 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, all those in favor signify by  
19 saying aye.

20 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

22  
23 (No response.)

24  
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Transcript approved.

1 Any public comment on agenda items?

2 Margaret, do you?

3 MARGARET MINER: No.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

5 MARGARET MINER: Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: All right. If there's no public comment  
7 on agenda items, we'll move on to correspondence  
8 received.

9 You should all have received a note from  
10 Virginia de Lima dated a week ago, February 28th.  
11 And as you know, she's saying that -- well, she's  
12 not going to be at this meeting, nor is Dave.  
13 They're both traveling.

14 But we have, at least through this day, we do  
15 have Chris and Denise and Dan here to ask any  
16 questions we might have.

17 But she has indicated that she stepped down  
18 from the Water Planning Council advisory group  
19 effective the first of the year. And she still  
20 realized that that means that she's one of the  
21 representatives on the (unintelligible) workgroup.

22 She's willing to continue until it appoints a  
23 new representative.

24 I just want to -- frankly, I think Virginia  
25 has been invaluable on the IWG and I would like to

1           see her continue.

2   **GRAHAM STEVENS:** Is there a question before us, Jack,  
3           as far as can she continue until --

4   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Well, I think we could do it, honestly.  
5           I know we have our resident parliamentarian and  
6           legal and legislative expert, Mr. Heft here.

7           But I think we can do anything we want to do  
8           because the implementation workgroup is not  
9           statutorily organized. So I think we can put  
10          any -- frankly, I think we can put anybody we want  
11          on the implementation workgroup.

12          That's my opinion.

13   **MARTIN HEFT:** I would agree with you, Jack, that the  
14          Water Planning Council advisory group is  
15          statutory. The IWG is kind of a subgroup, same as  
16          the topical subgroups that are done that way.

17          So unless there was something in the Council  
18          advisory group's guidelines or something that says  
19          that they had to be a member of something, there  
20          would be no issue. Correct?

21   **LORI MATHIEU:** I tend to recall that we did have some  
22          structure to the implementation group, and that we  
23          may want to look at that structure that we  
24          developed when we put this group together so that  
25          we can just be -- you know to Martin's point, just

1           be true to what we've said in the past.

2   **MARTIN HEFT:** Yeah, I don't know if anyone has. I  
3           mean, that was prior, prior to me coming on board.  
4           So I don't know what -- as I've said, I don't know  
5           if there's a document there that establishes the  
6           IWG -- but of what the membership is or anything  
7           else, just as a verification.

8           I mean, I personally don't have a problem  
9           with conceptually the whole thing, but want to  
10          make sure that we, if there is something in line,  
11          that we are following it.

12   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Well, when it was set up, it was set up  
13          and we had representatives from all the agencies.

14          We had appointees from the Water Planning  
15          Council advisory group, and then we had  
16          representation from in-stream advocates and  
17          out-of-stream advocates -- and that's basically  
18          how it was, how it was set up. Those are the  
19          areas of membership on the Council.

20          Again, it's not -- to Martin's point, I think  
21          that we have some latitude with this that we  
22          can -- if we want to put somebody else on the  
23          group, we can do it -- I think.

24          Oh, Denise, I'm sorry.

25          Denise is raising her hand.

1 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yeah, so the implementation workgroup  
2 as well as the Water Planning Council advisory  
3 group is looking at this and looking to see if  
4 there's some ways to maybe switch folks around,  
5 so -- and you know my name has come up in terms of  
6 right now I represent in-stream, but maybe I would  
7 represent the Water Planning Council advisory  
8 group.

9 And you know, Virginia could do in-stream --  
10 although she wants to be neutral, so.

11 But we're looking at what the structure is.

12 And the one thing I would say is I do think  
13 you have flexibility. Lori is right there; we did  
14 adopt something and it may be, you want to look at  
15 it and say, do we want -- I don't know if we have  
16 members at large.

17 And I think you're on a group like this, and  
18 Virginia kind of falls into that category of maybe  
19 you want to expand that list.

20 So I will make sure I report back, but just  
21 to let you know that both the implementation  
22 workgroup and the Water Planning Council advisory  
23 group are looking at this, and we'll probably get  
24 back to you with some type of recommendation.

25 But there, there was a structure -- but it's

1           an internal structure to you.

2   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Right.

3   **DENISE SAVAGEAU:** It's not, like you said, legislation.

4           And I think we should follow that structure

5           because you adopted it -- but that doesn't mean it  
6           can't be amended.

7   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. Denise, that's very helpful.

8           So let's wait. Let's hold on this until next  
9           month so to give you an opportunity to do your  
10          research and make a recommendation, and then we  
11          can look, do a little research ourself.

12          And then we can -- in the meantime, I think  
13          Virginia can say right where she is for now.

14          Is that okay with everyone?

15   **LORI MATHIEU:** Yes.

16   **MARTIN HEFT:** Yes.

17   **GRAHAM STEVENS:** Yes.

18   **THE CHAIRMAN:** Graham -- good.

19          Thank you all very much.

20          Okay. Let's move on.

21          No other correspondence. We'll move on to H,  
22          Reports, WUCC and Private Wells. Lori?

23   **LORI MATHIEU:** So for the WUCC, I'm looking to see if  
24          my colleagues from DPH are on, either Eric McPhee  
25          or Lisette.



1 I don't see either one, and I did not get an  
2 update from them. So we'll move on to private  
3 wells.

4 For private wells, we continue on -- as I  
5 reported last month, we continue to work the  
6 public act that passed last session and we're  
7 receiving information via e-mail and developing a  
8 data system, hopefully fairly soon, to be able to  
9 capture information that's coming our way based  
10 upon water quality information and the way the law  
11 was written last session.

12 And then also combined with that is moving  
13 forward with hopefully -- we've had to step back  
14 on the hiring of an individual. We just didn't  
15 get a lot of applicants for the epidemiology  
16 position. So we're going to change that and post  
17 it for an environmental analyst position.

18 So that's where we are with private wells at  
19 this point. And again, if I see anything from  
20 anyone on the WUCC, I will let you know -- but I  
21 haven't seen an update.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Lori.

23 Any questions for Lori?

24  
25 (No response.)

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now we are going to move on to  
2 item number six, discussion of budget. And we  
3 will have Martin Heft give us a little bit of a  
4 report on that.

5 MARTIN HEFT: Sure.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Which is not great news.

7 MARTIN HEFT: So just -- yeah, a quick update. As we  
8 know, this body of Water Planning Council --  
9 sorry, my screen is a little dark there,  
10 apologies -- that we submitted a two-year budget  
11 proposal.

12           Unfortunately, it did not make it into the  
13 Governor's budget plan. So at this point there is  
14 no funding for the Water Planning Council for  
15 anything in the Governor's proposed budget at this  
16 point.

17           So there's a couple of options that could  
18 happen at this time. Obviously, it could be  
19 discussed and negotiated in through leadership and  
20 through all budget negotiations for adding into  
21 the budget proposal.

22           As we know, the budget appropriations is  
23 meeting now. Appropriations will present their  
24 budget. Then there becomes the back and forth  
25 between Governor's office, OPM, Appropriation,

1 leadership, and trying to come up with a final  
2 budget. So there is a possibility that something  
3 could be added back in there.

4 Another option is to put the budget back in  
5 during the midterm, which means another year out  
6 for that. Obviously, we were not looking at  
7 bonding funds because we are looking at hiring  
8 staff, everything else for this process. So we  
9 weren't looking at just bond funds. That's the  
10 way the state water plan was funded previously.

11 Obviously, that's an option, but that's only  
12 going to give us the capability to do the water  
13 plan. It's not going to allow us to hire the  
14 water chief position and all those types of items  
15 that way.

16 So that's kind of the update that I have for  
17 you on the budget and potential options.

18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** So it's not out of the question yet,  
19 Martin, that we might be able to get some kind of  
20 funds this year?

21 **MARTIN HEFT:** Well, I guess maybe from the Governor's  
22 side, because it's not in his budget. Not to say  
23 that they can't negotiate and add something in at  
24 some point, but it didn't make it to the  
25 Governor's budget. So I'm not sure if the

1 Governor's side would pop it back in with a  
2 change.

3 It could be something that if talking with  
4 Appropriations, talking with one of the  
5 committees, the Public Health Committee, something  
6 to see is there some way that something could  
7 happen in that sense. You know it's talking with  
8 obviously the people that are in the finance,  
9 revenue, bonding/appropriation sides of the budget  
10 committees as a potential would be really the way  
11 of looking at trying to get something into this  
12 year's budget.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So should we -- I guess, moving  
14 forward, how do you think we can? Who should we  
15 have talk on this, Martin, in terms of keeping it?

16 You've kind of been our unofficial  
17 spokesperson.

18 MARTIN HEFT: Well, only behind the scenes, because OPM  
19 prepares the budget. So I have to obviously walk  
20 the fine line, if you will -- which is, as we  
21 know, the budget was originally presented, to be  
22 presented under PURA, but you know not from  
23 regulatory funds, but from regular funds on it in  
24 that sense.

25 Sending information possibly to the

1 Appropriations Committee, Finance, Revenue,  
2 Bonding, you know, might be, you know, be an  
3 avenue, you know, to look at there, discussing it  
4 with them, you know, on it as a potential.

5 Some of it, I also think may be a little  
6 difficult, as we've known. You know we did get  
7 the annual report out this year, but you know no  
8 one has been really aware of what the Water  
9 Planning Council has been doing per se.

10 Obviously, they've heard about drought.  
11 That's come up, particular issues on it. So I  
12 think part of it is, in a sense, to further  
13 educate people on the importance of the state  
14 water plan, everything in the need for this.

15 I think some of that could have been maybe  
16 some of the precedent of why this maybe didn't  
17 move forward. That's just my own personal thought  
18 on it, so.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Martin, can we -- and Alecia sent me a  
20 message here about advocating for it, but the  
21 reality is that the office of the Governor has not  
22 supported this. That kind of puts us in a very  
23 challenging situation.

24 Martin, if we don't have an executive session  
25 on the agenda, can we still go into an executive

1 session at the end of the meeting?

2 MARTIN HEFT: We could, but the budget isn't  
3 necessarily a topic for executive session under  
4 the rules.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. All right. Well I mean, I guess  
6 we have to be cautious how we move forward. Maybe  
7 somehow we can take the temperature.

8 Do we have any -- actually, did this not come  
9 through DEEP? Wasn't this DEEP's?

10 GRAHAM STEVENS: So I believe this, this was -- or this  
11 would have been. Had it been a supported budget  
12 item, it would have been added to DEEP's budget, I  
13 believe.

14 I mean, generally what happens in the  
15 legislative budget making process is there's the  
16 Governor's budget, there's the legislative  
17 proposal, and then the legislators and the  
18 Governor negotiate.

19 And some items that were added by one get  
20 taken out, and some items that were not added get  
21 put back in. So it's part of the legislative  
22 deliberation, and really at this point it's  
23 between the Governor's office, OPM, and the  
24 legislative leadership.

25 So I think everyone can understand what that

1 means. Right? This is something that the  
2 agencies don't have a role in at this point. And  
3 if anything, the agencies are doing -- is, we're  
4 supporting the Governor's budget, which is based  
5 on what we've requested.

6 And the legislative leadership can negotiate  
7 with the Governor and his representatives.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

9 MARTIN HEFT: If I may? And thanks, Graham, for that,  
10 too.

11 Jack, you may want to -- as a possibility, as  
12 just Chair, is to reach out to the OPM secretary  
13 just again with the information and everything  
14 else, and maybe ask for reconsideration.

15 I mean, I'm not sure what the right  
16 terminology may be, but just to say thank you for  
17 the consideration type thing, and this is still --  
18 kind of restate this is still an important process  
19 for the water plan to be updated and everything  
20 else on it.

21 So it's just kind of another push, if you  
22 will.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. I think that's -- yeah. Why  
24 don't we do that? We can -- OPM, the Governor's  
25 office, Appropriations Committee, we -- a lot of

1 us have been in this business a long time, and you  
2 always have to implement the implementer; that we  
3 might wait and get some money in there, too.

4 So there's other avenues we can pursue.

5 GRAHAM STEVENS: And the one thing I'd say, Jack, too,  
6 is -- and I've had similar experiences. And when  
7 folks reach out to an agency, you know we can  
8 certainly share that information with the decision  
9 makers.

10 So you know that's kind of important for --  
11 any budget item is going to require broad support,  
12 and if the Water Planning Council receives that,  
13 that indication from stakeholder groups that they  
14 support this as a budget item, that could be  
15 something that could be shared with the secretary  
16 who has to balance a lot of budget demands and  
17 needs. And that's, I think, all I can say on that  
18 topic.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Lori?

20 LORI MATHIEU: I really do think that financial  
21 discussions between agencies belong outside of  
22 this discussion.

23 Well, I will bring up one thing. There is a  
24 lot of grant money out there, and maybe we should  
25 consider or we should ask some of our groups to



1 take a look at some of the grant money.

2 Maybe we could think a little bit differently  
3 about how to develop a grant proposal for us since  
4 we're in the position we're in right now. Maybe  
5 there's some opportunities there, because there's  
6 a lot of money out there.

7 There's a lot of grant opportunities.  
8 There's a lot of competitive grant opportunities  
9 under the bill. So maybe we should ask, tee up an  
10 item for people to help and to look at other  
11 opportunities for funds.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Uh-huh.

13 LORI MATHIEU: And the other thing I was thinking --  
14 and again, I don't like talking specifically about  
15 budgets out of respect for the Governor's office  
16 and OPM, and others that control all of this. I  
17 respect greatly the decisions that have been made  
18 so far.

19 But maybe there is a way, as Martin had  
20 mentioned, to go back -- maybe Jack as the Chair,  
21 to go back to the Secretary of OPM. And maybe  
22 there is some way forward with a smaller amount of  
23 money. I don't know -- some consideration of  
24 something. I don't know.

25 But the grant money, it might be worth us --

1           it probably is worth us looking into to see if  
2           there's anything that we could tap into as a  
3           group, because there seems to be a lot of  
4           opportunities out there.

5   **THE CHAIRMAN:**   Indeed, there seems to be a lot of grant  
6           money available.

7           Okay.   So what I will do -- and I can circle  
8           back with Martin and kind of discuss.

9           Anything I do, obviously I'm going to run by  
10          Graham, you and Martin before we send anything out  
11          and who we send it to, and everything else.

12          So we still have March, April, May.   We still  
13          have, like, three months, so -- but any ideas  
14          anybody has, let us know.

15          Okay.   The workgroup, our two chairs are  
16          traveling.   And so I'm going to move right on to  
17          the drought workgroup.   Martin?

18   **MARTIN HEFT:**   Perfect.   Thanks, Jack.

19          Just a note on the implementation workgroup  
20          is, they did send us a written memo of the update  
21          for their reporting that David sent.

22   **THE CHAIRMAN:**   Yes.

23   **MARTIN HEFT:**   So we just might want to note that for  
24          the record, they did give us a written update of  
25          the implementation workgroup update.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Why don't we make a motion that we  
2 accept the March 3rd report from the co-chairs in  
3 the implementation group. They talked about  
4 meetings, outreach and education, data collection,  
5 tracking and reporting, phase two, and the AWE  
6 scorecard and membership which was -- the AWE  
7 scorecard was part of the attachment that they  
8 sent out.

9 I don't know, Lori and Graham, if you had an  
10 opportunity to take a look at it?

11 LORI MATHIEU: Uh-huh.

12 GRAHAM STEVENS: I did.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Can we accept that, please?

14 MARTIN HEFT: Make a motion?

15 LORI MATHIEU: I'll second. I think Graham said, so  
16 moved. So I'll second that.

17 GRAHAM STEVENS: Martin moved.

18 LORI MATHIEU: Oh, Martin. I'm sorry.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Martin moved and you second?

20 Any questions?

21 LORI MATHIEU: Yes, I would -- I don't know. Chris  
22 Bellucci, is anyone else seeing what's going on  
23 with his video? Or is it just me?

24 GRAHAM STEVENS: Yeah. Chris, your video feed,  
25 scrolling.

1 LORI MATHIEU: What is going on?

2 THE CHAIRMAN: It's weird. It's very weird, Chris. I  
3 don't know what's going on. It looks like -- wow.

4 LORI MATHIEU: Take your camera, throw it against the  
5 wall, hook it back up. It always works.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Wow.

7 LORI MATHIEU: Isn't that weird? It's really strange.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: That was weird. It was like -- it was  
9 psychedelic.

10 LORI MATHIEU: Yeah, I know. I was a little bit  
11 worried about myself there for a second.

12 So with a second, for a discussion I would  
13 say that maybe if we could put that report in the  
14 chat. Is that possible? So people could see it.

15 GRAHAM STEVENS: I can try to do that.

16 LORI MATHIEU: Yeah.

17 GRAHAM STEVENS: Well, let me work on that real quick.

18 LORI MATHIEU: But they did share it. So maybe --

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, a good idea.

20 GRAHAM STEVENS: And it came from Virginia, if I  
21 remember. Correct?

22 LORI MATHIEU: Yes.

23 MARTIN HEFT: Great. Did we vote on that, Jack?

24 GRAHAM STEVENS: Not yet.

25 MARTIN HEFT: Okay.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: I think we did, yes. Yeah, we did.

2 Okay.

3 LORI MATHIEU: Yes.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Denise --

5 MARTIN HEFT: Oh -- well, no. Then I'll go into my  
6 drought report.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, I'm sorry.

8 MARTIN HEFT: I pushed you back, so don't worry.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah. Turning to the drought work.

10 Okay.

11 We don't have a drought. No drought. Right?

12 MARTIN HEFT: No, there is no drought. We did meet  
13 last week. We are continuing to monitor the  
14 situation. We've got the agencies, staffs all  
15 working on looking at a report, at a post-drought  
16 report, as we've mentioned.

17 And then additionally, we are continuing  
18 gathering information regarding one of the charges  
19 that was assigned to the Water Planning Council,  
20 Charge 3.02, looking at water use restrictions  
21 between water suppliers and municipalities.

22 We are gathering information and getting a  
23 report together. Hopefully you may have that for  
24 the next meeting for review by the Water Planning  
25 Council.



1 the next week or so and get a save the date out.

2 So we're moving forward on that.

3 The second workshop will be May 10th, and  
4 that, again, will be from noon to one. And the  
5 theme of that, again with the climate change is,  
6 looking at water resources; how climate change is,  
7 you know, impacting, you know, water resources and  
8 watersheds.

9 So we're looking at the watersheds and we  
10 kind of were thinking -- we had a good discussion  
11 today about looking at some of the challenges  
12 we're seeing from, for example, in a forestry  
13 perspective.

14 We know that we've had, you know, major pest  
15 challenges with the spongy moth. It used to be  
16 called the gypsy moth. Now it's spongy moth, for  
17 those who haven't heard the new terminology. I  
18 have to remember to say it myself.

19 And then, you know, having that impacting,  
20 for example, in Eastern Connecticut. That was a  
21 huge impact, and then exacerbated by drought. So  
22 we've got real challenges in our watersheds with  
23 our forests. So kind of looking at that.

24 Also looking at, you know, and of course,  
25 what that means in terms of water quality and

1 water quantity when our forests are so severely  
2 impacted. Also looking at, you know, what are the  
3 challenges in our streams and with our fisheries  
4 resource?

5 So we're going to take a holistic approach on  
6 looking at water resources from the, you know,  
7 forest-to-faucet type concept,  
8 no-net-loss-of-forest concept and how these  
9 impacts on some of our lands within our watersheds  
10 is impacting our water resources.

11 So we're just starting to put together a list  
12 of potential speakers. If anybody has them, we're  
13 always looking for speakers -- but we have, you  
14 know, we've been looking at UConn and talking  
15 about some folks we know from there. Doug Hoskins  
16 gave us a great list of a couple of speakers from  
17 DEEP.

18 So we'll be putting that together and  
19 hopefully we'll have that, you know, more news on  
20 that at the next meeting.

21 The two other things I think are important we  
22 did talk about drought education. Even though  
23 we're focusing a little bit on drought here,  
24 there's this ongoing drought education. And right  
25 now we're not in a drought, so what better time to



1 do the drought education preparedness piece in  
2 terms of getting the information together?

3 I think we had reported that we were working  
4 with CIRCA, and Mike Dietz is following up on that  
5 to get some information out of CIRCA and make sure  
6 what they're doing for climate change and climate  
7 change resiliency, that they have some good  
8 information on drought on their website and that  
9 we can share.

10 And then also again following up with Sue  
11 Quincy -- and she has been really active getting  
12 out climate change education, and drought is a  
13 piece of that.

14 So we're going to be looking at that.

15 And then specifically we were looking at, how  
16 do we utilize our website? How do we utilize, you  
17 know, what materials are needed? There's a lot of  
18 folks doing work on climate. There's a lot of  
19 folks doing education and outreach, you know, to  
20 all kinds of audiences, you know, whether it be  
21 municipal, general audiences, schools. And what  
22 kind of materials do they need that we could help  
23 with them? So we started really focusing on that  
24 discussion as well.

25 And then the last piece I want to -- well,

1 let me say the quick one is the logo. DEEP is  
2 working on, you know again, some protocols on how  
3 we utilize the logo.

4 We've already used it on the annual report  
5 that came out, but where we have a group working  
6 on that, DEEP and Department of Public Health are  
7 going to be looking at that and coming out with  
8 some recommendations on how we best use that logo.

9 So making sure it's used appropriately, but  
10 also has access to the folks who need to have  
11 access to it.

12 And then the last thing was we were really --  
13 we're talking about the website, and the  
14 discussion we just had about that we didn't get  
15 the budget. We don't want to ignore the website  
16 issue, especially from an education and outreach  
17 perspective.

18 The website is doing some things that it  
19 needs to do right now, and that has to do with  
20 making sure that we meet the FOIA requirements,  
21 but from an education outreach perspective, it  
22 could be more.

23 And we kind of gave you some of the thoughts  
24 that we had, initial thoughts on what should  
25 happen. So again, we're looking for input.

1           But one of the things that, you know, one of  
2 our young people on our committee came up with  
3 was, you know, when we're doing these videos for  
4 the education and outreach, are we putting them on  
5 YouTube?

6           For example, DEEP has a YouTube site. So  
7 we're going to be exploring, exploring that. And  
8 are we utilizing things the best we can? Are  
9 there other videos from, like you know, UConn or  
10 whatever that we should be, you know, directing  
11 people to as part of this outreach and education?

12           So we want to continue to explore that. And  
13 again, if you have any feedback to us on the  
14 website and how we move forward, I can't  
15 articulate, you know, strongly enough that this is  
16 something that really needs to take place.

17           And we understand that we're working with  
18 staff that is, you know, stretched beyond its max  
19 and whatever. So we're trying to figure out how  
20 to do that, but what should we tackle first? And  
21 how do we make sure that the website is doing what  
22 we need it to do?

23           So thanks. I think that's our update. And  
24 I'll just put it out -- I know we have some other  
25 members who were on there, particularly Allie.

1 Allie -- and Allie and Dan from the other  
2 agencies. And if they have anything that I  
3 forgot, let me know.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much, Denise, as usual.  
5 A lot of good work. I actually went on -- you  
6 know our website does have a lot of information,  
7 because I actually went on it to look up some  
8 information behind the implementation workgroup to  
9 see who was on it and get some guidance.

10 And it was very, very, very, very good and  
11 very easy to get to. So we should put a lot more.

12 Now we have our own YouTube informational  
13 station here, and I know DPH -- so maybe somehow  
14 we can incorporate the Water Planning Council into  
15 one of our agencies' YouTube.

16 Chris Bellucci, I don't know what's going on  
17 over there, but Chris Bellucci is having a very  
18 difficult time with this.

19 **DENISE SAVAGEAU:** I love how everybody else's face  
20 keeps popping up that's not Chris.

21 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Yeah. Chris, what are you doing over  
22 there?

23 Any other questions for Denise?

24  
25 (No response.)

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Alecia messaged me a while back and said  
2 she was going to testify. And I -- is Dan  
3 Lawrence on the line?

4  
5 (No response.)  
6

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So why don't we skip down to  
8 watershed lands workgroup. Karen?

9 KAREN BURNASKA: Sure. Hello. Yes, we'll do that.  
10 And hopefully Alecia will be able to get on.

11 Yes, the watershed lands workgroup is meeting  
12 on Friday, and we have a good jam-packed meeting.  
13 One of the highlights will be Paul Hinsch from OPM  
14 will be with us, and he will be explaining the OPM  
15 role in the transfer of straight surplus land, the  
16 process that goes through, that that is followed.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Excellent.

18 KAREN BURNASKA: And we have good information that's  
19 also attached to our agenda from DEEP on their  
20 process and the link to the CEQ website, which has  
21 information on the land transfer process.

22 So we're trying to get just -- what the  
23 workgroup is trying to do is to get some better  
24 understanding of how it works, the roles of OPM,  
25 DEEP and how they work together. And you know,

1           how the request for transfer of land moves through  
2           the process.  So that will be a very good  
3           discussion.

4           Then we have lots of -- I mean, we put  
5           legislation on the process, and I'm just updating  
6           my agenda with more bills every day.  There,  
7           there's so much going on in the Legislature.  We  
8           know what we're -- about a half an hour after our  
9           meeting, the watershed lands workgroup meeting,  
10          that there will be a public hearing on a bill  
11          regarding a study on the conservation of land and  
12          water in the Upper Farmington River.  A lot of  
13          it's the MDC land.  That's going on.

14          I hear that there is a public hearing on  
15          neonics, and there's -- we have lots of bills that  
16          we are going to discuss and give updates also on  
17          various items that have been in front of us  
18          before, such as the MDC declaratory ruling.

19          Aaron Budrous is there.  He will give a WUCC  
20          update -- and a jam-packed meeting.  And we hope  
21          you'll all join us.  It's via Zoom, 9 a.m., on  
22          Friday the 10th.

23          And I'll have to tell you -- I know that  
24          Margaret was on also and would like to say  
25          something -- but I see Alecia.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Alecia is back, yes.

2 KAREN BURNASKA: And I want to get her -- Alicia is  
3 back. So I will turn the floor back to Alecia.

4 ALICEA CHARAMUT: That's all right. If Margaret wanted  
5 to say anything (unintelligible) --

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Margaret, would you like -- thank you  
7 very much, Karen. Margaret?

8 MARGARET MINER: I think Karen covered everything.  
9 It's going to be quite a meeting.

10 Thank you, Karen.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Margaret.

12 And thank you, Karen.

13 Alecia, did you testify?

14 ALICEA CHARAMUT: No, not yet. But I -- of course, I  
15 think it's going to be a few minutes, but you know  
16 how that goes. Now they'll probably call my name  
17 since I stepped out.

18 So -- hold on. Let me get back to where I  
19 was. So Bonnie Burr joined us at our last  
20 meeting. It was great to see a new face.

21 And Carol, was there any updates you had from  
22 the nominating committee?

23 CAROL HASKINS: No, no updates.

24 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Okay. I just wanted to check before  
25 I went by.

1           Hold on one second. Let me just scan here.

2           We are still putting a group together to look  
3 at prioritization, and I do have yet to call  
4 together the conservation prioritization  
5 workgroup, but that will happen soon, as soon as  
6 the craziness of the Legislature calms down. So  
7 it's just been extremely busy lately.

8           So is there anything else I'm missing from  
9 the advisory group? I scanned through the minutes  
10 and I don't think there's anything. We did a lot  
11 of reporting back from your last meeting. We had  
12 a discussion about the funding. And of course, I  
13 don't know if everyone saw, but Denise had shared  
14 her testimony with the Appropriations Committee.

15          And so please take a look at that.

16          And I think it would be, you know, helpful  
17 for us at the next meeting, the next advisory  
18 group meeting, to think about how we can really  
19 kind of be cheerleaders for what we've got going  
20 on here and the need for funding.

21          So I don't see Dan. So if there's anybody  
22 else from the advisory group that wants to remind  
23 me of something I've forgotten, please speak up.

24          Otherwise, that's my report.

25 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Alecia. I know you're busy,



1 and thanks to you and the advisory group.

2 And Denise, so you put your testimony in the  
3 chat. Correct?

4 DENISE SAVAGEAU: I did.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very much for that.

6 Any questions for Alecia?

7  
8 (No response.)

9  
10 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you. Is there any public  
11 comment? Any public comment?

12 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yeah.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes?

14 MARGARET MINER: Is Carol going to make a public  
15 comment, Carol, on the Nonnewaug bridgework?

16 CAROL HASKINS: Yeah. So this is Carol Haskins from  
17 Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition. My video is  
18 unstable, so I'm going to stay off video.

19 Margaret actually called me last Friday with  
20 a report of seeing an environmental consulting  
21 type team doing work on a bridge over the  
22 Nonnewaug River in the Pomperaug Watershed.

23 And doing some further investigation, learned  
24 that DOT is doing a fair amount of bridgework  
25 because there's lead paint that has been chipping

1 and entering into rivers and streams.

2 And found out, you know, the roster of  
3 bridges within our watershed, and there didn't  
4 really seem to be a great amount of communication  
5 to municipalities that I could find. I don't know  
6 who DOT has communicated to, but from a public  
7 health and water quality perspective, I thought  
8 that was something that would be worth bringing to  
9 the attention of the Water Planning Council as  
10 well as the members, you know, in the audience  
11 here as just something to keep a pulse on.

12 And I don't know if it's something that's  
13 been flagged to, you know, Connecticut DEEP or  
14 Department of Health from both environmental  
15 quality or public health safety kind of stuff, but  
16 slightly alarming to learn that there's lead paint  
17 chipping into a few of our rivers, just locally  
18 here, as well as throughout the state.

19 MARTIN HEFT: Jack --

20 CAROL HASKINS: (Unintelligible) -- anything on that.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Graham?

22 GRAHAM STEVENS: Yeah, I'm happy to provide some  
23 additional context. And thank you for the  
24 comments.

25 So I believe in February, DEEP was alerted to

1 some paint chipping issues and we had concern. It  
2 was actually not to a watercourse, but it was in a  
3 neighborhood. We had concerns about contaminants  
4 associated with lead paints -- with paints,  
5 including lead.

6 So we collected some samples of the chips and  
7 did find that there was lead present in those  
8 paint chips.

9 Since that point in February DOT has been  
10 trying to determine the extent of the bridges in  
11 its portfolio that have, you know, that still have  
12 lead paint, that where the lead paint is chipping  
13 or may be chipping.

14 And it is -- yeah, there are a sizable number  
15 of bridges in Connecticut that have confirmed or  
16 suspected lead paint issues. And I believe DOT is  
17 working on some protocols to address that as  
18 expeditiously as possible.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much, Graham.

20 Any questions for Graham?

21  
22 (No response.)

23  
24 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Any other public comments?

25 Denise, yes, you had a public comment?

1 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yes. So obviously the budget has  
2 been discussed, but I think taking off most of my  
3 hats, I just wanted to comment that I think this  
4 is something really needed. I understand the  
5 process and I understand the challenges of the  
6 Water Planning Council once the Governor's budget  
7 is in place, and you know, that as agencies your  
8 job is to really follow that.

9 If there is information on how this impacts  
10 your agency, I think information is key for those  
11 of us who are advocates for you. So if there's  
12 information on, you know, that we need that would  
13 help us be better advocates, I hope that you will  
14 share that with the Water Planning Council  
15 advisory group and those of us who advocate for  
16 water resources.

17 I did put my testimony in the chat because I  
18 think it's important that you understand that  
19 there are those of us who recognize how important  
20 this is, and that we will be advocating for that.

21 And if there's something we can do, we'd be  
22 more than happy to come in and support that as you  
23 work your internal channels that you need to work  
24 in, and again, within the, you know, the Water  
25 Planning Council, and your agencies and OPM and

1 the Governor's budget and how that process works.

2 But I just want to say that I think that this  
3 is critically important. And my testimony says  
4 one important thing. Right now, the water  
5 planning -- or I should say the state water plan  
6 implementation workgroup is being led by Virginia  
7 and Dave, two retired resource professionals.

8 Myself, I'm a retired resource professional  
9 and I'm chairing the outreach and education. And  
10 I wonder how far we would be with the state water  
11 plan implementation without those three water  
12 resource professionals, you know, high level  
13 professionals doing this.

14 And this is not a sustainable structure. I  
15 can't state that enough. Eventually Virginia and  
16 David and I are really going to retire. And you  
17 know, who is going to step up?

18 And I think that having a state water plan  
19 and that when we really worked on that annual  
20 report, and David and I and Virginia spent a lot  
21 of time on it. And I can't tell you how many  
22 hours David spent over the weekends doing this to  
23 make sure that we got this report to you guys by  
24 December.

25 So this was during the holiday season and a

1 lot of time was spent on it, and really realizing  
2 that who was making this happen. And I'm not  
3 discounting all of the work of the wonderful staff  
4 of the agencies. You know there's so much.

5 But I also know that they're stretched as  
6 thin as they can go, and that they have other jobs  
7 and the Water Planning Council isn't their main  
8 job, and that we can only ask so much.

9 So how do we move forward? And I think we  
10 have this compelling message that we need to get  
11 out there.

12 I will let you know, on one of my other hats  
13 I serve on the Connecticut League of Conservation  
14 Voters. So all the legislators that -- or many of  
15 the legislators that are in place today, we  
16 interviewed and I helped interview. And we  
17 specifically asked about support for water  
18 planning -- and it is there.

19 So I hope that if you, you know, we  
20 specifically asked leadership like Senator Looney,  
21 you know, can you support this? So I want you to  
22 know that there's support for water planning in  
23 the Legislature, and it's a matter of us making  
24 sure that then there's support administratively.

25 And again, you know, talking to the Water

1 Planning Council -- because this is yours, but the  
2 folks who are on there, we need to step this up  
3 and make sure that everybody understands how  
4 important this is. It's critically important, the  
5 work of the Water Planning Council.

6 This coordinating -- otherwise we continue to  
7 work in silos, and that is just not a good thing  
8 for water resources in our state.

9 So thank you for the time.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Denise and all. Very  
11 excellent points. And as you know, I mean, we've  
12 been around a very long time -- and that's the  
13 whole reason we were established around 2000,  
14 2001, was because we had the silos.

15 And we have the plan, but the plan now needs  
16 to be updated. So we definitely need to get some  
17 funds. So all your points will become part of the  
18 argument to get the testimony -- I should say, to  
19 get the funds. So thank you.

20 Any other public comment?

21  
22 (No response.)

23  
24 **THE CHAIRMAN:** If not, our next meeting will be April  
25 4th, and there will be meetings in between

1 starting with the watershed lands workgroup will  
2 be this Friday, 9 a.m.

3 Attorney Klein, do you have a comment or are  
4 you just waving goodbye?

5 Okay. If there's nothing else to come before  
6 us, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

7 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

8 GRAHAM STEVENS: Second.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor?

10 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

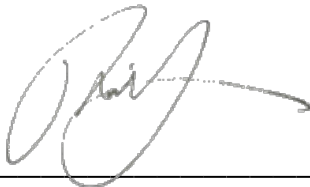
11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you all very much. Be safe,  
12 everyone. Take care. Thank you all.

13  
14 (End: 2:17 p.m.)  
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 40 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of an annotated digital recording of the Regular Meeting of the Connecticut Water Planning Council, which was held before JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, CHAIRMAN, and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN, via teleconference on March 7, 2023.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M #857

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 6/30/2025

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