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1 STATE OF CONNECTICUT
2 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
3 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
4 PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY
5
6 WATER PLANNING COUNCIL

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9 **Transcript of a stenographic recording of the regular**
10 **meeting held via videoconference on April 4th, 2023,**
11 **beginning at 1:33 p.m.**

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14 **H e l d B e f o r e :**

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

1 **APPEARANCES :**

2 **WATER PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT :**

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

4 **MARTIN HEFT (OPM)**

5 **DAN AUBIN (DPH)**

6 **GRAHAM STEVENS (DEEP)**

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

9 **LISETTE STONE**

10 **DAVID RADKA**

11 **ALICEA CHARAMUT**

12 **VIRGINIA DE LIMA**

13 **CHRIS BELLUCCI**

14 **DENISE SAVAGEAU**

15 **MARGARET MINER**

16 **DAVID KUZMINSKI**

17 **MARTHA SMITH**

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1 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, all.
2 Welcome to the Water Planning Council Meeting for
3 April 4, 2023.

4 The first order of business will be the
5 approval of March 7th, 2023 meeting transcript.
6 Do I have a motion?

7 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

8 GRAHAM STEVENS: Second.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made and seconded.
10 The transcript meeting approved from the previous
11 meeting.

12 Any questions on the motion?

13 (No response.)

14 If not, all in favor signify by saying
15 aye.

16 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

18 (No response.)

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion carried.

20 I should note that Dan Aubin from DPH is
21 sitting in for Lori today who's called away for
22 another meeting.

23 The next order of business is public
24 comment. Any public comment on agenda items?

25 (No response.)

1 THE CHAIRMAN: On to Dan's report, and
2 Dan, could you give us an update on WUCC, please?

3 DAN AUBIN: Sure, thanks. I will hand
4 it over to Lisette Stone from DPH to provide a
5 WUCC update. Lisette.

6 LISETTE STONE: Hi. Good afternoon.
7 Lisette Stone from Source Water Assessment and
8 Protection. So the WUCC, we are planning possibly
9 an in-person meeting for mid-July to kind of
10 stimulate participation as COVID hopefully
11 subsides, and then we have been in the development
12 of some municipal documents that the WUCC hope to
13 distribute to {Planning and Zoning Department
14 soon.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

16 Private wells?

17 DAN AUBIN: For this month we don't
18 really have any updates with private wells. We
19 still continued to do work and to hammer out some
20 education materials that will be distributed soon,
21 but no firm updates for this month.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

23 Next is the -- talk a little bit about
24 the budget. We are looking at alternatives, how
25 we still might be able to get some money to fund a

1 position. Certainly we're not going to be looking
2 at the magnitude of what we were looking at
3 before. I have talked to our chairman about
4 possibly doing some type of creative things as
5 we've done in the past with maybe utilizing some
6 funds between the agencies.

7 One thing we can't do is go over our
8 head count. I can't get a person from PUR to take
9 a position, we'd have to do something creative,
10 which is a possibility. I don't know, Martin or
11 Graham, if you want to weigh in on this. I know
12 Martin worked very hard to try to get something
13 within the budget, and unfortunately we did not
14 get it in the proposed budget, but Graham or
15 Martin, do you want to weigh in.

16 GRAHAM STEVENS: Regardless of the
17 prioritization at the high level, which is always
18 difficult to do, I think -- I believe all the
19 agencies are still very committed to seeing the
20 water chief directors are, whatever we're terming
21 this position, you know, see that come to
22 fruition, so I know that Jackie and I have had
23 some discussions and will definitely continue to
24 make ourselves available to try to find different
25 ways to fund this position.

1 We think it's critically important to
2 support not only the agencies, but also the
3 significant, you know, input and work that the
4 volunteers through all the different working
5 groups and the Water Planning Council Advisory
6 Group, Implementation Work Group, are doing to
7 benefit the State.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Graham.
9 Martin?

10 MARTIN HEFT: I don't have anything
11 additional to what the two of you have already
12 stated.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

14 And I have talked to Lori a little bit
15 about this, so it's a work in progress. Always
16 the optimist, something might be -- somebody just
17 messaged, it could be a contractor. It could be a
18 contractor or consultant. It's just a matter of
19 where we're going to get the funds to do it. So I
20 would think that somehow between the four of us,
21 four agencies, we can come up with something.
22 Again, we're not looking for the same amount that
23 we talked about earlier when we were looking for
24 federal money and also with the state budget, so
25 stay tuned.

1 Implementation Work Group, Virginia and
2 Dave, I know you've got a pretty extensive report.

3 DAVID RADKA: You want me to lead off?

4 VIRGINIA De LIMA: Yes.

5 DAVID RADKA: Okay. Normally she does.

6 So what I've been talking about, we can
7 go back to what the work group's been working on.
8 We obviously had Denise and others give updates
9 from Chris as far as their specific working
10 groups, but what we shared with you recently, and
11 Virginia, I think you could probably show it for
12 the benefit of everybody because I don't think it
13 made it in, it was pushed out, but we sent you
14 recently a few things.

15 The primary thing is our proposed or
16 alternatives to a slate. As you know we have
17 representatives that cycle through, 50 percent
18 cycle through April, so we'd be looking for your
19 approval and recognition of members to serve for
20 two years, and you could see we offered a few
21 options here. We have 12 members that are
22 authorized under our organizational charter, if
23 you will, and those that will continue are Chris
24 and Bruce, Janice from RiverCon, Steve Rupar, and
25 we're looking to reappoint Mr. Dan Aubin, who's

1 currently an alternative for Lori, but we think
2 he's done an outstanding job representing their
3 interests, and has attended I think every meeting,
4 so we'd be looking to, assuming it's okay with
5 Lori, to appoint Dan as the DPH representative,
6 and Ally, Jack, I believe she's spoken to you
7 about continuing on, so that's wonderful, and who
8 was recently appointed if there were a vacancy by
9 you a few months ago, she expressed interest in
10 continuing, so we're happy to have her do that.

11 The Planning Council Advisory Group has
12 two individuals that they appoint. One, as you're
13 aware, is Virginia, but because it's sort of a
14 glitch with her stepping down from that position,
15 we weren't sure if she could technically continue
16 in that role, so one of the options we floated was
17 to essentially flip-flop Virginia and Denise.
18 That would allow Denise to be one of the advisory
19 group reps, and Virginia would replace her as the
20 in-stream rep.

21 We don't think titles and labels matter
22 that much. No one comes with an agenda,
23 necessarily, to our meetings, but it retains
24 consistency with our organizational outline, and
25 really, as I said, our whole goal here is to

1 really keep Virginia and Denise on, who are both
2 really, you know, wonderful contributors, and
3 obviously wish to continue on.

4 The other representative for the
5 advisory group is still to be filled. I think --
6 I'm not sure if Dan is here, but I think Alicia
7 is, and been in contact with them, and there are
8 some folks, or at least one folk I think they may
9 have lined up, but that's a to-be-determined.
10 Mike Dietz is from UConn, as you know, and he
11 wishes to continue.

12 The only other individual at this point
13 is Dave Murphy, who I'm very pleased to let you
14 know that he has expressed not enthusiasm, but
15 certainly he's willing to be our out-of-stream
16 representative to replace me at this point.

17 Another option that we are offering up,
18 if you want to consider it, is to modify, slightly
19 modify our operating rules to add two at large
20 members, and one of those would be Virginia, and
21 the other one we would look to fill.

22 So at this point we really need to --
23 you can decide all of that at a later date if you
24 want to chew on it a little bit. I sent you a
25 revised track change version of what minor changes

1 we would need to add the two at large members.
2 It's not statutory approved or required, so it's
3 something you can do sort of as a pro forma thing,
4 but we're really looking to appoint Dan, Ally,
5 Dave Murphy and Mike Dietz, and figure out where
6 we slot Virginia and Denise at this time.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, David,
8 appreciate your work on this, and appreciate the
9 two alternatives that you came up with.

10 Any comments from council members?

11 MARTIN HEFT: I'll start. Thank you
12 both very much for this and the additions there
13 looking at adding the at large and obviously which
14 would require the language change which you've
15 also provided, so appreciate that.

16 What are the actual term dates? One of
17 the things I've asked, you know, on these in the
18 past is that the terms actually be identified, you
19 know, what's the start date, what's the end date
20 of these terms, is everyone on the same term, are
21 they all different? I know you mentioned what, a
22 two-year appointment? So obviously that's
23 something we need to track, and so I'd appreciate
24 that if you can get me the, or get the council the
25 term dates on all of these would be great, just so

1 we do have them.

2 And then your comments, you know, for
3 keeping Virginia and Denise on, you know, they've
4 done -- they've both done wonderful on there with
5 that. I'm not sure about the need to expand the
6 group from the 12 on it, but some of this will
7 probably come at a later conversation as, I will
8 let you know, you know, as I've been reviewing all
9 the different work groups and everything else, and
10 really looking at future need of all the different
11 work groups, and from the, you know, advisory
12 council and the implementation, you know, and
13 obviously all the other separate work groups is
14 looking at what our best option is moving forward
15 and possibly some restructuring, so just so you're
16 aware of that, that I'm looking into a couple of
17 things with that, you know, to better serve, you
18 know, the needs of what we're looking at moving
19 forward here, especially with revisions to the
20 state water plan.

21 DAVID RADKA: Thank you, Martin.
22 Virginia, as you can see, she's tweaking it as
23 you're speaking to indicate the terms. And to
24 follow up on what you indicated about not
25 expanding, another thought, I think I put it in my

1 email to you all, was that if we could probably
2 modify our operating roles to just simply make it
3 clear that the advisory group can appoint anybody,
4 they don't necessarily need to be advisory group
5 members. That way if they wanted to appoint
6 Virginia, they could certainly do that. That
7 would be probably the simplest fix at this point
8 and still have a stay at 12 members.

9 And also appreciate and applaud the fact
10 that you're looking at the function of this group
11 and the advisory group and how do we best work
12 together. We've had many conversations about the
13 challenges of having people volunteer for both of
14 these. In some ways our work is redundant, and it
15 would be wonderful to figure out how we could
16 merge both of these groups at some point in the
17 near future to really make the best use of
18 everybody's talents and time.

19 MARTIN HEFT: Thank you, David. I'm
20 looking at the same thing. I mean I know you've
21 got some people, as you said, that serve on both,
22 which is terrific, and then obviously there's
23 other people brought in and everything else on
24 that, but I think that's part of, you know, not an
25 immediate thing, but something that you do want to

1 review, especially with both of these committees,
2 and look to possibly, as you mentioned, about kind
3 of a consolidation into one that we need a whole
4 separate implementation piece as well as this. I
5 know it doesn't answer your question, you know, at
6 this point for making sure we appoint members and
7 everything else. I mean I'd be apt to, you know,
8 stick with option A and not make other changes to
9 the full plan in light of the comments I made.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

11 Graham?

12 GRAHAM STEVENS: First I just want to
13 acknowledge, I think David said replacing himself.
14 Is this true? Is there s replacement? No
15 disrespect to Mr. Murphy, but just wanted to thank
16 you for all of your service. I don't think that
17 this was a sufficient thanks for that, but just
18 wanted to say I appreciated having a chat with you
19 the other day, you know, your insight in the water
20 planning world is invaluable, and we appreciate
21 everything that you do and are doing and have done
22 for the benefit of all in Connecticut.

23 My personal opinion is, you know, I
24 think more than happy to move forward with the
25 easiest approach in a short term and looking at

1 larger changes over the long term to make sure
2 that those who are interested in participating
3 continue to have the ability to participate in a
4 meaningful way.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: So does that mean we want
6 to have a motion to approve option A for now, we
7 have the terms of office there?

8 GRAHAM STEVENS: And the motion would
9 include -- I'm not sure if the Water Planning
10 Council would need to modify the rules of the
11 Implementation Workgroup with that vote as well,
12 based on the proposal that was presented? Is that
13 correct, David?

14 DAVID RADKA: I'm sorry, Graham?

15 GRAHAM STEVENS: We also have to modify
16 the terms if we're using option A. Is there any
17 other modifications we would need to do besides
18 just the slate.

19 DAVID RADKA: Just the slate at this
20 point.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Option B we'd have to.
22 Option A we do not have to.

23 Any other questions before -- and I also
24 would like to -- Dave and I spoke earlier, last
25 week, and he has been an integral part of the

1 plan, and he's going to take a little respite for
2 a while. We'll let him. We're going to bring him
3 back in at some point. So he can relax a little
4 bit, and then we'll bring him back. But I want to
5 thank him for all he's done over the years.

6 DAVID RADKA: Can I just share with you?
7 I just wanted to -- I left the water company,
8 what, the beginning of 2019, and I decided that
9 Martin Westbrook of all people could really truly
10 retire, and I decided hey, I can too.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I respect that.

12 DAVID RADKA: On a serious note, I
13 talked last month when I told the Implementation
14 Workgroup that I decided not to ask to be
15 reappointed for another two years. I left a note,
16 you know, I felt really fortunate to have worked
17 with all of them for four years, and I appreciated
18 their knowledge, their dedication, their passion,
19 you know, they showed up and every time without an
20 agenda, just to work to get the state water plan
21 implemented, and I was really proud of everything
22 they accomplished with obviously minimum
23 resources, and I want to extend really the same
24 appreciation to you, Jack and Graham and Martin,
25 you know, Lori's not here, but Lori also, because

1 there's no doubt there's millions of things you
2 could be doing in your day, but you choose to be
3 part of that, and that says volumes about your
4 values, and I just appreciate you letting me be
5 part of it, so thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dave. Very,
7 very, very much.

8 VIRGINIA De LIMA: I tried to twist his
9 arm and I have not succeeded, so I welcome anybody
10 else who is willing to maybe with us together are
11 strong enough to twist his arm, but it's been
12 delightful working with you, Dave, and I want to
13 thank you for your all your contributions.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

15 GRAHAM STEVENS: The Chair said he will
16 be back, so as the Chair says, we follow.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll see.

18 Okay. I want to entertain a motion that
19 option A be approved.

20 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

21 GRAHAM STEVENS: Second.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made and seconded.
23 Option A approved. Any question on the motion?

24 (No response.)

25 THE CHAIRMAN: If not all signify by

1 saying aye.

2 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

4 (No response.)

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion's carried.

6 Thank you. Dave, were you going to say
7 something?

8 DAVID RADKA: No, I'm sorry, I didn't
9 realize you hadn't voted on the motion yet. I
10 just wanted to continue by saying we also shared
11 and forwarded a copy of an after action report
12 that we did following up on the completion and
13 submittal of the 2022 annual report, and as we
14 reported out, I just want to personally give you a
15 written update, that we had felt it important and
16 valuable to hold that, so the debriefing, the
17 lessons learned on the heels of that. So you've
18 got a copy of that. It went really well. We
19 spent a good hour discussing what we would have
20 liked to continue going forward and what ways we
21 think that process can be approved, and as you get
22 a chance to look at it, if you have questions for
23 me, you can direct them to Dan Aubin. He is
24 integral with that and going to help carry that
25 effort forward with the Phase II work plan.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: It was very well done.
2 It was excellent and really laid out to the -- it
3 was amazing what the group did, but certainly
4 points out some of the challenges you had making
5 it happen, getting it done. So we appreciate your
6 efforts in that.

7 Anything else under the workgroup,
8 Virginia?

9 VIRGINIA De LIMA: The other things that
10 we've been working on, obviously we spent a lot of
11 time working on the membership step, but we also,
12 as you know, have the education and outreach group
13 ongoing, which Denise will give you an update, and
14 then we have the workgroup looking at the USGS
15 data collection. They had another wonderful
16 meeting. Chris, you could pop in at any time.
17 But basically they've had USGS share the
18 rationale, the intricacies, the breadth and scope
19 and the history of each of the three networks, and
20 they've focused on two of them so far, and will be
21 focusing on the third one in their next meeting.
22 Correct, Chris?

23 CHRIS BELLUCCI: Yes. Virginia, just
24 to -- we had a slight modification to our agenda
25 last time. We presented information -- since the

1 topic was water quality monitoring, we presented
2 some of the information that we do at DEEP, and
3 next meeting will have USGS present their
4 information on water quality monitoring at USGS
5 since it all ties into similar type work that's
6 outlined as important in the water, state water
7 plan, and then we'll follow that up with a third
8 meeting on groundwater network.

9 VIRGINIA De LIMA: Thanks for that
10 clarification, Chris. And then as David said, we
11 are teeing up the Phase II of the tracking and
12 reporting group, which will be making the
13 adjustments that were in that after-action report,
14 and also beginning to look at what technologies
15 can make this process easier, smoother, more
16 accessible.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Excellent. Thank you.
18 Any questions for Virginia?

19 (No response.)

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.
21 Interagency Drought Workgroup, Martin, you have a
22 meeting coming up?

23 MARTIN HEFT: Yes. We have a meeting
24 this Thursday which will be continuing doing our
25 work, so nothing major to report on at this point,

1 which is good.

2 Also want to let you know that, not to
3 steal any of Denise's thunder in the next report,
4 so I won't go into it, but I will be speaking at
5 the upcoming Preparing For Drought in Connecticut
6 and opening that workshop up regarding climate
7 change, which Denise will talk more about on
8 Wednesday, April 12th, and talking about the
9 interagency drought workgroup and starting that
10 seminar opening, so just wanted to let you all
11 know that.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Very good. Thank you
13 very much.

14 Denise, we're going to go right to you.

15 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Okay. So the Outreach
16 Education Committee met today and we're continuing
17 to work on our work plan. I will get into a
18 little more detail in the workshops in a minute,
19 but just quickly, we continue to discuss and look
20 at the website, the logo, and some of the other
21 things that we have in that work plan, looking at
22 drought education in general, not just the
23 workshop we're going to be holding, and those are
24 continuing discussions, and we'll be bringing some
25 thoughts on that to the Implementation Workgroup

1 for further discussion before bringing it to the
2 Water Planning Council. So that's -- but our
3 major focus and some of the outreach is always the
4 workshop.

5 I want to share a document quickly for
6 you. And so there's two. Our theme this year is
7 client change, and we have a workshop coming up on
8 April 12th. Most of you I think have seen this
9 come out, and we're really pleased of everybody
10 who could do this.

11 We thought with the climate change theme
12 and the challenges we had with drought, this is
13 one of the things with climate change people don't
14 talk about. They talk about sea level rise, they
15 talk about storm events, and they don't probably
16 talk about drought probably as much as we should,
17 so we thought that we would focus on this and
18 start with letting people know, you know, what the
19 drought preparedness planning is going on in
20 Connecticut, and hopefully engage them a little
21 bit in terms of what municipalities can do.

22 And they only change, I will say, as
23 soon as we put this agenda out, and it was waiting
24 for everybody to confirm, everybody confirmed, and
25 then Caroline Baisley, who's the director of

1 health in the town of Greenwich, has been called
2 away. She actually has to be in court that day
3 now. It's always fun working for the town of
4 Greenwich. I've been there, done that. But we
5 were fortunate that David Knopf, who was the
6 director of health for the town of Darien. Has
7 gracefully agreed to step in at the last minute,
8 and Caroline and Dave and I are in communications
9 and going to be helping Dave get ready for that
10 part of the workshop. So thank you to Dave for
11 stepping up on that.

12 So beyond that, the other theme of our,
13 again, is climate change, and we had a workshop
14 set for May 10th, but there's a conflict with some
15 of our other agency folks, so we've moved this to
16 May 23rd. That's a Tuesday.

17 And we're going to be focussing again on
18 climate changes, but the impact on forests and
19 watersheds, kind of taking that focus where we're
20 really seeing climate change impact our forests,
21 particularly during drought, but also storm
22 events, but what does that mean for, you know,
23 watersheds and the integrity of our watersheds,
24 the health of our watersheds, so looking at
25 forests from the forest to faucet perspective, how

1 does that impact drinking water supplies, you
2 know, our forests and our drinking water supplies,
3 watersheds, how does that, you know, look at our
4 in-stream flows and our fisheries. So we're going
5 to be looking at a host of things.

6 We're just starting to put this
7 together. It took me a little bit of time to get
8 the April 12th agenda finally set, but so now
9 we're going to be focussing on this one, so keep
10 tuned for that. We just want to give everybody
11 that new date.

12 The reason I wanted to bring up this
13 graphic was not just to say that we're doing great
14 work, but I wanted to highlight the logo. So the
15 logo looks really good, and being able to brand
16 the work that we're doing I think is so important,
17 because now when we bring this up, and we will
18 have that logo on everything, whether it be the
19 state water plan, the Water Planning Council, I
20 just think it's really, really important, and I
21 think people are going to be responding to it. So
22 again, that's actually my major point of bringing
23 this up, discussing what we're doing, but just
24 showcasing that logo. And again, thank you to
25 Connecticut DEP and their staff that did this,

1 Joe, and Ali Hibbard, who helped really, you know,
2 move this along and made sure we had this happen.
3 So thank Graham and your staff for making this
4 happen because I think it's really important.

5 GRAHAM STEVENS: We will pass that on.
6 Thanks, Denise. We love to see it in print.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Denise.

8 Any questions for Denise?

9 (No response.)

10 THE CHAIRMAN: We will move on to the
11 Water Planning Council Advisory Workgroup, Alicea
12 and Dan.

13 ALICEA CHARAMUT: So just a couple of
14 updates with the advisory group. The first
15 conservation pricing and rate recovery analysis
16 workgroup meeting will be on Thursday at 11
17 o'clock, and that invitation has gone out to the
18 water planning distribution list. Right now we
19 have about seven folks who had an initial
20 interest, but it usually goes with this that you
21 have folks show up that didn't say that they were
22 interested but, you know, wanted to see when
23 things were going to get scheduled to see if they
24 could make it. So there will be more news on
25 that, but we're just going to be discussing at the

1 first meeting the scope of the work, and data
2 needs. I have to thank Ali Hibbard for locating
3 the last report that was done in 2011 or 2012 and
4 sending that along, so we do have that to work off
5 of. Anyway, I'm looking forward to that.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Alicea, I have to say you
7 did a great job with the background information
8 for that meeting, a lot of information there, so
9 well done.

10 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Like I said, it was
11 great. I don't know where Ali found it, but she
12 dug it up from somewhere.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Very impressive.

14 ALICEA CHARAMUT: So other than that, I
15 think that the -- am I missing anything, Dan? I
16 know we had a lot of discussion about legislation
17 and how we can support efforts for the updated
18 water plan and staffing, but other than that -- is
19 Dan here?

20 THE CHAIRMAN: I think Dan is at a
21 hearing that I'm supposed to be at.

22 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Yeah, he did say he
23 didn't think that was going to be done by now.

24 So I will pass this on now to the
25 watershed lands group. I know Margaret has a

1 report. Margaret?

2 MARGARET MINER: So a couple of -- to
3 begin with, Alicea, by the way, we usually have
4 steps on our agenda. Before I start, did you want
5 to report anything on steps? I think Denise was
6 with you?

7 ALICEA CHARAMUT: I knew I was
8 forgetting something, Margaret, thank you. Yes.
9 So as many of you may have attended, there was the
10 energy procurement workshop that was held by DEEP
11 on Tuesday or Wednesday of last week, and it
12 appears that the steps process is sort of going
13 forward as the RFP is being developed, so the
14 advisory group will be sending in the information
15 that we had prepared previously, and waiting for
16 the steps process to go forward again, so that we
17 can weigh in on how watershed lands and aquifer
18 protection areas are sort of looked out for during
19 the process, and the Water Planning Council had
20 already approved that report, so we just need to
21 send it along so they can know what we're thinking
22 on the water protection and the source water
23 protection side. Denise?

24 DENISE SAVAGEAU: I wanted to add in,
25 the workshop was held last Wednesday, and they're

1 looking for comments on the procurement process
2 that will be due shortly, April 12th, I believe,
3 and one of the things that I was surprised on was
4 the steps process. We were told that the
5 stakeholders would be engaged, and it appears
6 that -- so the good news, that I see, is that DEP
7 energy during this procurement process and our
8 input in the RFP out is now talking to the
9 environmental quality, environmental conservation
10 side of the DEP, they're talking with their own
11 agency, which we know that they didn't do before
12 and which is what triggered them prompting the
13 step process because they not only didn't engage
14 their own people, they didn't engage the
15 stakeholders.

16 So looking at that stakeholder piece,
17 one of the things that I have noticed still is
18 that -- and I appreciate that they've now talked
19 to their environmental quality and environmental
20 conservation side, but there's still no reference
21 to source water protection areas, drinking water,
22 supply water sheds. There is reference to aquifer
23 protection areas, but that's a very small part of
24 our public drinking water supply watersheds in
25 terms of, you know, so it doesn't make sense that

1 we will be cutting down forests in public drinking
2 water supply watersheds to supply one utility at
3 the expense of another utility that is going to be
4 challenged with, you know, definitely changes in
5 the hydrology and potentially the way things have
6 been going, you know, contamination from erosion,
7 sediment controls, and whatever, basically
8 long-term changes to that watershed in a public
9 drinking water supply watershed. So it's kind of
10 one utility over the other, but not necessarily
11 paying attention.

12 And I think we really need to have
13 lessons learned from what happened with Gaylord
14 Mountain Regional Water Authority. They had to
15 spend a lot of dollars and a lot of resources
16 defending their right to maintain a forest and
17 have that forest intact and their watershed, and
18 not have, you know, a state procurement process
19 looking at one utility over the other. And
20 basically saying, you know, well, clean energy I
21 is more important than clean water, we shouldn't
22 be making these decisions.

23 So I wanted to bring it up because I'm a
24 little bit disappointed. I think there's a whole
25 lot of folks that are a little bit disappointed

1 that the steps process didn't move forward the way
2 we thought it was going to. We all said how the
3 process should work, we were all asked to put our
4 names in to participate in this steps process, and
5 right now it appears that the steps process was
6 what they reviewed on Wednesday and then our
7 ability to comment on the RFP by April 12th, and
8 that's not what they had promised. So like I
9 said, I'm a little bit disappointed, and I'm
10 particularly concerned that they haven't addressed
11 source water protection, public drinking supply
12 watersheds.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Dave, did you have a
14 comment?

15 DAVID KUZMINSKI: Yes. I let Denise
16 know, I know you were scrambling around after
17 Caroline had backed out as a panelist, and just an
18 FYI, my next door neighbor is a professor on
19 climate change at Wesleyan University. I've had
20 him on my cable Comcast show a couple times, and
21 he's a wealth of knowledge, you know, as far as
22 that goes, so if you ever need somebody I'm sure I
23 could persuade him. Go from there.

24 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Thanks, Dave.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Back to Margaret.

1 MARGARET MINER: Yes, thank you. And
2 thank you, Denise, for that. And will you help us
3 all get the opportunity how to make comments on
4 the procurement proposal? Because I would like to
5 do that.

6 I much appreciate your comments. I want
7 to add to it. One more type of analysis that I
8 don't think I've seen it done, I don't know how
9 formal, that is to compare the greenhouse gas
10 emissions controls offered by a forest, the taking
11 up and the storing, as opposed to substituting for
12 that solar, a solar panel where there was a
13 forest. Or more solar panels.

14 When you look at the externalities of
15 the manufacture, the transport of the solar panel,
16 the maintenance to get in there to take care of
17 it, and then after 20, 30 or 40 years the
18 decommissioning and the need to provide for a
19 recycling of some sort. I've seen analyses that
20 show in terms of controlling and reducing
21 greenhouse gas emissions, you want to just let the
22 forest do it, and you'll end up with a better net
23 gain leaving it to the forest than taking down a
24 forest to put in solar panels.

25 I strongly approve of solar panels. And

1 France has passed a law, any new parking area more
2 than 80 vehicles has to have a solar roof, a solar
3 canopy. That's the direction I think we should be
4 going. I think you get a net loss if you take
5 forests. Now, that's just my opinion. I've seen
6 some analyses. I'll look for the best one.

7 On the lands group, a couple of -- we
8 had not written to Paul Lynch, who was so helpful
9 from OPM, and just as I was getting on this call,
10 I had follow-up questions from him, I saw I got an
11 email from him, so there's probably some more news
12 to come from OPM who did such a good job of
13 explaining their process on agency transfers.

14 Another item of interest is that -- this
15 originated in the Water Planning Council, a recent
16 advocacy has been done by separate groups, but at
17 the GAE website, very simple, if you go to just
18 scroll down, you will see all the applications and
19 questionnaires that have been submitted for land
20 conveyances this year, and this is a huge step
21 forward that I think everybody here wanted, and
22 it's actually incredibly easy to find, and Karen
23 Burnaska and I have been looking through it, and
24 there are lots of questions, but I wanted you to
25 know that all that is posted.

1 And then, just what will be added to our
2 agenda, I've been hearing in the last week or two
3 from friends at the Norwalk River Watershed
4 Association that there's a problem with artificial
5 turf ball fields being proposed. It's near an
6 aquarion source protection area. People think
7 they have PFAS, the Norwalk River Watershed
8 Association did a presentation on this a couple of
9 weeks ago.

10 I only realized in the last couple of
11 days that the land where the artificial turf
12 fields are to go is owned by the Department of
13 Transportation, and I don't know if it's a lease
14 renewal or a new lease, but had agreed to lease
15 the land for these artificial turf fields, and
16 that it's not just near an aquarion source, it's
17 like right on an aquarion source. What surprised
18 me most of all, I said, are you kidding, its on
19 state land, why haven't we heard about it, doesn't
20 a lease count as a conveyance of authority? So
21 that's a question that's still out there, in my
22 mind.

23 And then I heard just this morning that
24 last night in the Wilton Board of Selectmen, and
25 the report is a little vague, it says the project

1 is on hold because the state, I don't know which
2 agency, the state has determined that an
3 environmental impact evaluation should be done.

4 So my concern here is, here's a major
5 proposal concerning state land, on a controversial
6 issue, every town I think has that fights over
7 artificial fields, and by the way, athletes hate
8 them, and somehow or other, if it hadn't been for
9 the Norwalk Watershed Association sort of nagging
10 people, and for -- and I think -- I heard that DPH
11 was notified recently, and beyond that I don't
12 know which state agency has determined an EIE is
13 needed. I would say so.

14 But it's a new item. I'm raising it as
15 an agenda item. Obviously I have follow-up
16 questions. I don't understand how it got this
17 far, or happily how it's been halted, so I don't
18 know if Dan is on or anyone that's had anything to
19 do with this controversial proposal wants to
20 comment, but that's what I know so far, and all I
21 can say is that I have a lot of questions about
22 the process and how did we get to this point.

23 GRAHAM STEVENS: Thank you, Margaret.
24 I'm glad that OPM was helpful and that referral
25 was helpful for you guys.

1 To provide some context on the
2 processes, and just from my personal experience on
3 the previous role managing DEEPs up in space, the
4 agency decision to enter into a lease would not
5 require legislative act, but the legislature does
6 from time to time mandate agencies enter into
7 lease agreements for certain purposes with parties
8 to utilize state land, so that's the distinction.

9 MARGARET MINER: Wait a minute. If it
10 doesn't require legislative, how about an
11 announcement through the monitor which would have
12 led sooner to an EIE discussion?

13 GRAHAM STEVENS: You'd have to speak to
14 the agency that controls that land to see exactly
15 what their standard practice is for inclusion in a
16 monitor of a lease renewal.

17 MARGARET MINER: In lease renewal over
18 aquifer land, source water land, it's really an
19 easement that doesn't come under -- I'll just go
20 back to I find the process confusing. I would
21 have thought it needed some kind of more public
22 involvement as a routine, but maybe I'm wrong, so
23 I'll leave it at that.

24 GRAHAM STEVENS: I can't speak to
25 another agency's process, but just to clarify the

1 conveyance question that you raised.

2 MARGARET MINER: Okay, that's all I have
3 to say. Obviously more questions than
4 information.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for
6 Margaret?

7 (No response.)

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Let's move down to the
9 discussion of bridges and lead paint. Done a lot
10 of work on that. I saw the documentation, the
11 email you got back from the Department of
12 Transportation. Why don't you give us a little
13 history what happened here.

14 MARGARET MINER: Yeah, this is very
15 interesting. Again, we had a very good agency
16 person, Jacob Booth at DOT, who in response to the
17 questions we had, like what's going on with this
18 bridge program, how many bridges, what are you
19 doing, sent a very complete report. I'll just
20 start with a couple of end notes to the report.
21 I'll be quick.

22 One is, in terms of notice, and whether
23 we get notice or who gets notice, he said in his a
24 very informative email that the DOT notified DEEP,
25 EPA, and the towns that might -- I forget how I

1 did it, but I took that to mean the towns that
2 have steel bridges that might have a paint
3 chipping problem. So from our point of view, or
4 the point of view of some communities around the
5 state, the notice just didn't register, and so
6 that was one loose end to mention at the
7 beginning.

8 Another thing that he put at the very
9 end that I don't want to lose is that there are
10 approximately 365, I believe steel bridges owned
11 by municipalities, and that the program has not
12 taken those bridges into account or looked at
13 them. So that's something that if you're a town
14 and you own a steel bridge, you might want to go
15 out with your hazardous waste barrel and see
16 what's going on.

17 The information -- I guess I'll go again
18 from the back to front. He sent us a complete
19 spreadsheet of all the towns that they've looked
20 at, what the work schedules are, more or less what
21 they found. It's extremely valuable, and it's
22 hundreds of towns on it, and I think -- I'm sure
23 Alicea will be posting it as Rivers Alliance and
24 other people will be posting it, but if you want
25 to see for your town, he did send us a very good

1 spreadsheet that we'll be able to post, but I
2 couldn't post it, I'm not good enough to post it
3 for this meeting.

4 He told us, and now I'll really try to
5 be quick, that the problem was discovered in
6 February, and it affects steel bridges with older
7 paint on them and the steel was expanding and
8 contracting in the rapid shifts in temperature.
9 There are 2,600 steel bridges, 514 have paint
10 deficiencies, 281 with paint on the ground or in
11 the water. The remaining 233 have failed paint
12 adhering to the bridge, so it hasn't come off yet.

13 To our knowledge no municipalities have
14 determined -- oh, so the municipalities have not
15 looked at their bridges. DOT has assessed every
16 steel bridge in the state, in its inventory. We
17 notified our points of contact at DEEP and EPA,
18 and the railroad operators in the state. Their
19 environmental compliance group has been working,
20 they've been using contractors they're familiar
21 with, and they are also looking at roadside walks
22 and grounds that may have paint chips on them, and
23 skimming the affected water waste to collect as
24 much as possible. The work is being performed by
25 Enco Environment Remediation Consultants, and I

1 know the one that we know of in the power
2 watershed, Naugatuck watershed, has a good
3 reputation as a long history of performing
4 mediation work.

5 All known areas near schools and parks
6 have been addressed if there's been an impact
7 identified, and we are closing all area sidewalks
8 and known pedestrian areas.

9 A secondary follow-up is beginning now
10 with general contractors who are removing loose
11 paint and skim coating bridges with linseed oil.
12 That's an interesting product. Anyway, to protect
13 them for the next several years while we can put
14 together a plan. An emergency situation,
15 contractors can work.

16 We are putting together a series of
17 large painting programs. Bridges that have a long
18 remaining service life will be bundled together
19 and re-coated with a more durable coating system.
20 Good, because the weather isn't getting better.
21 And to prevent this from occurring again.

22 And then it says any more questions,
23 please reach out. I'm sure people have questions,
24 but this was one of the most comprehensive
25 responses I've gotten from asking -- from he said

1 to me originally, I'll be pleased to try to look
2 at your question. I said well, it's going to be
3 more than one question. And he did, I thought, a
4 fantastic job in answering.

5 I think we may want to follow up on how
6 the program is working. And I know that fisheries
7 are concerned could there be lead that's affected
8 chronic life or macroinvertebrates. I'm sure
9 people when they look at their towns will want to
10 have questions. But I thought this was an
11 extraordinarily thorough answer.

12 Mr. Booth would be happy to receive any
13 questions from us, and he's shown that he really
14 means it when he says that. And so what we've got
15 here is a wealth of information with some
16 remaining questions. As I said, the notice didn't
17 seem to work. And who's taking care of the town
18 owned steel bridges? That's my end of report,
19 which is really Jacob Booth's report.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Margaret, thank you, and
21 you forwarded that email from him, which was
22 really, I was very, very impressed with the
23 content and the information that he provided for
24 us, given where we were like a month ago when we
25 were talking about this issue, so I think he's

1 really opened the dialogue on this.

2 MARGARET MINER: Yes.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Alicea, did you want to
4 comment?

5 ALICEA CHARAMUT: I put the link to the
6 spreadsheet in the chat if anybody's interested in
7 seeing it.

8 MARGARET MINER: Thank you, Alicea.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

10 Any questions for Margaret?

11 (No response.)

12 THE CHAIRMAN: So we have state water
13 plan update. I think we covered that already.

14 MARTIN HEFT: Actually, Jack, if I may.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

16 MARTIN HEFT: Just to add a little more,
17 because we covered it slightly under budget, but I
18 wanted to -- I'd asked for it to get put on the
19 agenda so we can talk about it a little bit more
20 on here.

21 I guess part of the provision of
22 Connecticut State Statute Section 22a-352, which
23 is noted on our agenda, is, you know, the
24 provision for us to do the water plan, and of
25 course the caveat there is of course it says

1 within available appropriations. We've already
2 had that discussion of the budget, because if
3 there's not the appropriations, obviously we can't
4 hire staff or consultants or anyone to do
5 anything. The plan's been done, and then while
6 there is not a specific time frame in the plan
7 under subsection I, you know, it's obviously the
8 Water Planning Council shall oversee the
9 implementation and periodic updates to the state
10 water plan. So obviously looking at, we've talked
11 previously of like looking and trying to be, you
12 know, should we have a schedule five-year plan,
13 ten-year plan, you know, for those periodic
14 updates.

15 Part of it is I kind of mentioned
16 earlier about looking at the role of our, you
17 know, advisory group, the implementation group and
18 everything else is looking, okay, what types of,
19 you know, periodic updates could we do internally,
20 you know, with our groups rather than necessarily
21 a full blown complete redo of the state water
22 plan, which may or may not be needed, you know,
23 maybe there's just certain pieces that need to get
24 updated.

25 So I just wanted to just reference that

1 for everybody, that as we continue looking at
2 this, all of these kind of play together in my
3 mind, you know, for how we kind of set a plan
4 going forward, the budget, how our work groups are
5 established, and then looking at the periodic
6 updates, that all of this does tie together in
7 looking at kind of our future planning and how
8 we're going to handle this.

9 So that's what I wanted to mention on
10 that, just to kind of get the idea out there and,
11 you know, try to start, you know, looking at some
12 direction for how we go as we kind of go through
13 all these kind of three separate pieces.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Your point's well taken,
15 Martin. I think we're going to have to start
16 making that a regular part of our monthly meetings
17 and look at the -- the workgroup and the advisory
18 group have been fantastic in terms of providing
19 support to us, and again, still looking for
20 funding options, but before you know it, going to
21 be -- we do have kind of a template moving forward
22 for our report, but than can be used as almost a
23 guideline for an updated report.

24 Alicea?

25 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Yeah. Martin, I want

1 to thank you for that, because I think that we can
2 do some of these things piece by piece, and I
3 think that with the Implementation Workgroup of
4 course is focused on implementing consensus
5 recommendations, but we can start working on the
6 pathways forward, the things that we couldn't get
7 done before, and I'm wondering if we need to do
8 some sort of -- have some more -- make more lists,
9 and, you know, take a look at the -- maybe do a
10 prioritization of the pathways forward, but also I
11 think we should probably be keeping a running list
12 of some of the things that never even made it into
13 this state water plan that have sort of popped up
14 in the last five years, so just a couple of
15 thoughts on that, but thanks, Martin.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: It's always something
17 that certainly comes into play that we look at.
18 Margaret talked about earlier in terms of the
19 bridge replacement and the issue that that
20 provides for us to take a look at moving forward,
21 too, so you're absolutely the right, Martin and
22 Alicea, and we'll make sure that's part of the
23 process moving forward.

24 Anything else, Graham or Dan?

25 GRAHAM STEVENS: Nothing specific from

1 me, Jack, thank you.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Next meeting is going to
3 be on May 2nd, and I want to again thank David
4 Radka for his contribution to the Water Planning
5 Council and the Interagency Implementation Group
6 and on and on and on, but we'll be calling upon
7 you, though, absolutely.

8 If nothing else, is a motion to adjourn
9 in order?

10 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Wait, we need to do
11 public comment.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, sorry, sorry, public
13 comment. Alicea, you must have public comment if
14 you're asking for it.

15 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Thank you. I thought
16 about bringing this up during the watershed lands,
17 but this is kind of a new topic. I'm putting my
18 original Alliance hat on and taking my advisory
19 group co-chair hat off. And just a little bit of,
20 maybe this a little bit of a rant. I was looking
21 into a proposal for a zoning change in Ashford so
22 that a very large mega warehouse facility can be
23 put in in that area. The area is the headwaters
24 of Mount Hope Brook, which is the headwaters of
25 the drinking water watershed for Windham Water

1 Company. Windham Water Company has submitted
2 testimony, their concerns, and this is just
3 another prime example of how we cannot
4 consistently either protect drinking water sources
5 and headwater, our headwater streams, which are
6 the most pristine parts of our watersheds, and
7 it's frustration, and it's something I think,
8 Margaret, we might be able to talk about at the
9 next watershed lands meeting.

10 Like I said, it's in the process right
11 now in zoning, they're just in a zoning change,
12 but the project has been denied in the past, and I
13 just, again, it's just another frustration that,
14 you know, we can allow towns not to have what they
15 need to have in place for these protections,
16 right? So Ashford -- is it Ashford, do I have the
17 right town here -- does not have its -- yes,
18 Ashford does not have the protections in place
19 needed for even aquifer protections.

20 So, you know, we need to find a way if
21 we're going to continue to make land use decisions
22 169 different ways, we have to find a way to make
23 sure the towns have the regulations in place to
24 protect drinking water watersheds and our most
25 vulnerable ecosystems, so that's the end of my

1 rant.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: It's a good rant to have,
3 because I know there's two other towns I'm
4 thinking of. In Enfield right now, people may or
5 may not be aware, there's a big debate because
6 they want it to put in some type of sports complex
7 there, and some of the property abuts Connecticut
8 waters aquifers, so a big issue there, and in
9 Middlebury they're talking about putting a huge
10 Amazon warehouse there.

11 So those issues are cropping up around
12 the state, no doubt about it, and you have
13 inland/wetland committees, and you've got planning
14 and zoning, but the people doing this development
15 also have high priced lawyers, so it's something
16 to keep on the radar screen.

17 Denise, and then Martha.

18 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Thank you. So again,
19 I'm wearing my conservation district hat even
20 though I still run the Water Planning Council
21 Advisory Group with that hat on. I wanted to
22 bring a couple things to attention, and it has to
23 do with source water protection.

24 We certainly need to be looking at our
25 headwaters and our public drinking water supplies,

1 and these surface water supplies often are not
2 being looked at, although in Enfield that's the
3 aquifer that they're looking at there.

4 There's an initiative that's happening
5 in the mid-Atlantic New England area called forest
6 and Water Resources, and it's bringing together
7 folks of the forestry profession as well as folks
8 who are involved with water resources, in
9 particular public drinking water supply
10 watersheds, looking at that relationship, and as
11 part of that, I think I mentioned that the
12 Connecticut Association of Conservation Districts
13 was part of a national grant that was put in that
14 the landscape scale restoration grant, and we
15 would be taking the work we've been doing in
16 source water protection areas and some of the
17 mapping we've been doing with the Department of
18 Public Health, as well as UConn, we got a grant
19 from USDA to map all of the land use within public
20 drinking public water watersheds, and we're going
21 to be getting that mapping out shortly, but part
22 of that was that we started to identify areas that
23 need to be protected, areas that are closest to
24 public drinking water supplies, that are riparian
25 areas, that are close to reservoirs and would have

1 a direct impact, and what lands we need to
2 protect.

3 This grant would be, again, this whole
4 northeast region, the mid-Atlantic New England,
5 and to kind of solidify this group that right now
6 is kind of functioning ad hoc, Forest Resource
7 Management, so it's looking at putting that more
8 formal, so looking for that. But the grant itself
9 ranked 12th, and in terms of all of the grant
10 applications that were put in, which were I think
11 over a hundred applications were put in, so we're
12 pretty certain this going to be fully funded, and
13 we're expecting the announcement soon, so fingers
14 crossed, but we're very positive about this, and
15 that would be \$175,000, plus we would be state
16 matched, state or local matched, so it would be
17 \$350,000 to do forest restoration work and
18 riparian restoration work in public drinking
19 supply watersheds.

20 So I wanted to give everybody a heads up
21 that this is happening, and it kind of gets to
22 those issues of source water protection. That
23 said, this is working on lands and some will be
24 voluntary, and I will say, Alicea brought up this
25 issue, that we don't have -- we're not looking at

1 source water protection the way we should, and
2 although we talk about drinking water supplies and
3 we talk about it, we don't use the terminology
4 which is in the Safe Drinking Water Act source
5 water protection in the state water plan, and it's
6 something we need to do.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Denise.

8 Martha?

9 MARTHA SMITH: I'm just going to kind of
10 follow-up up with, Martin, your comment on
11 tracking from the progress that we do in the state
12 water plan.

13 About a year ago, I believe, I was part
14 of a workgroup that Corrine Fitting started and
15 then Dan Aubin, you finished the report, because
16 we did talk quite a bit about trying to streamline
17 the reporting, and so you might want to -- it may
18 not directly relate to what you're thinking, but I
19 would -- you might want to go back and look at
20 that work plan report, because we did talk about
21 that.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Great.

23 Virginia?

24 VIRGINIA De LIMA: My recollection is
25 that a while ago we had discussed having on your

1 agenda every month a brief update from the agency
2 of the work that they were doing that was directly
3 related to the state water plan. New initiative,
4 not just we're doing what a water agency's
5 designed to do, but interesting things that might
6 be going on from the agency just to share
7 information.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: You're absolutely
9 correct, we did have that as part of the agenda
10 and we can include that in the future.

11 Any other public comment?

12 (No response.)

13 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, thank you all
14 very much. Our next meeting will be May 2nd. If
15 there's nothing else to come before us, I don't
16 see any hands raised, motion to adjourn.

17 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

18 GRAHAM STEVENS: Second.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: All signify in favor by
20 saying aye.

21 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Meeting adjourned. Thank
23 you very much. Thank you, guys. Have a great
24 rest of the week everyone.

25 (Meeting adjourned: 2:39 p.m.)

1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2
3 I Hereby certify that the foregoing 50 pages
4 are a complete and accurate computer-aided
5 transcription of my original stenotype notes of the
6 Regular Meeting of the Connecticut Water Planning
7 Council, which was held before JOHN BETKOSKI, III,
8 CHAIRMAN, and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN, via teleconference
9 on April 4, 2023.

10 

11
12 Wendy Allen, RMR, CRR
13 Commissioner

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16 My commission expires: April 15, 2025
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