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

STATE WATER PLANNING COUNCIL

Regular Meeting held Via Teleconference on
May 14, 2024, beginning at 1:32 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 COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

4 **CHRIS BELLUCCI (DPH Alternate)**

5 **MARTIN HEFT (OPM)**

6
7 **ALSO PRESENT (on record):**

8 **ALICEA CHARAMUT**

9 **RICH HANRATTY**

10 **DAN LAWRENCE**

11 **ALI HIBBARD**

12 **DENISE SAVAGEAU**

13
14 **Staff:**

15 **LAURA LUPOLI**

16 **ALYSON AYOTTE**

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1 (Begin: 1:32 p.m.)

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3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Good afternoon, everyone.

4 Welcome to the Water Planning Council meeting for
5 May 14th. The first order of business will be the
6 approval of the April 2nd transcript of the
7 meeting. Do I hear a motion?

8 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

9 CHRIS BELLUCCI: Second.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made and seconded that the
11 transcript be approved.

12 Any questions or comments?

13
14 (No response.)

15
16 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, all those in favor signify by
17 saying aye.

18 MARTIN HEFT: Aye.

19 CHRIS BELLUCCI: Aye.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: The transcript is approved.

21 Before we begin today's meeting, it's a sad
22 day for all of us. I'd like to have a moment of
23 silence for our beloved Margaret Miner, who left
24 us recently. And I'm going to talk a little bit
25 about her after a moment of silence, and then open

1 up to other people.

2 So let's have a moment of silence for
3 Margaret before we begin.

4
5 [Moment of silence in memory of Margaret Miner.]
6

7 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you.

8 So when Alicea called me last week and told
9 me that things were not looking good for Margaret,
10 it was just disbelief, because Margaret had the
11 type of personality you thought she would live
12 forever and work forever, and advocate forever.

13 And I had the privilege of knowing her for
14 almost 25 years since the inception of the Water
15 Planning Council. She was a fierce advocate. She
16 kept us all on our toes, including me.

17 The first thing I could think about with her,
18 she was really big on the FOI when we first
19 started this, and she would question me. But one
20 thing you could see about all the people that have
21 reflected on her life is she -- and we need more
22 of this, actually -- is that she would never take
23 it personally. I mean, she would never. She
24 would fight for the cause, but she would never
25 hold it against you personally. I mean, she'd

1 make her point, and she made it a very charming
2 way.

3 And the accolades are coming in from
4 everybody from Senator Murphy to others about what
5 she did in terms of protecting our water supply in
6 this state, the State of Connecticut and quite
7 frankly, nationally.

8 And it's interesting when -- I won't repeat
9 what I read in the obituary, but it was
10 interesting what she was doing up until the end.
11 She was -- Alicea, and I'm going to call on Alicea
12 to say a few words. I mean, she was advocating
13 for legislation, thinking about legislation and
14 questioning what was going on in Hartford.

15 But I also was interested to see that she was
16 taking Spanish lessons and playing poker when she
17 could. I don't know if I'd ever want to play a
18 poker game with her, I'll tell you. I expect that
19 she would outmaneuver me very easily.

20 So she will be missed. I will miss her.
21 I'll miss her charm and wit, her dedication, her
22 passion for education. And we're going to talk a
23 bit more about it later on in the agenda, but I'm
24 going to open it up to anybody else that would
25 like to.

1 Alicea, I think it would be appropriate,
2 perhaps if you feel up to it, to say a few words?

3 ALICEA CHARAMUT: So I want to acknowledge Margaret's
4 daughter, Catherine, who joined us. I asked her
5 to join us today so she can hear what folks have
6 to say about Margaret.

7 But like you said, Jack, I went to see her
8 Thursday before she passed, and she was very eager
9 to talk about what's going on with the legislative
10 session, with very specific orders to let her
11 know, keep her apprized of what's going on. And
12 that was very comforting that Margaret, her spirit
13 and her mind were very strong until the end.

14 And you know I certainly will miss having her
15 around as a sounding board -- but I'm going to
16 leave it at that before I break down.

17 So thanks.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Martin, you want to say a few words?

19 MARTIN HEFT: Sure. I don't want to go into a lot, but
20 I read the article that was in the newspaper out
21 from where she resides and everything else. And I
22 think the headline of it covers it all where it's,
23 Roxbury's Margaret Miner, longtime
24 environmentalist, remembered as a force of nature.
25 I mean, that just says it all about her.

1 And I can't add any other words to that,
2 because that just encompasses the type of woman
3 that she was and that she will be remembered for.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Dave LeVasseur, who was retired from the
5 Office of Policy and Management and was one of the
6 founding members of the Water Planning Council,
7 sends his best. And he remembers back when he was
8 first selectman of Killingly and has just fond
9 memories of her working with him on open space
10 there.

11 What I said earlier, he said; you know we
12 could agree to disagree, but she was a charmer and
13 she would never hold it against you.

14 Denise, would you like to say something?

15 **DENISE SAVAGEAU:** Yeah. I mean, Margaret was a very
16 special lady, and we're so fortunate to have her,
17 had known her, worked with her.

18 I've had the pleasure of serving with her not
19 only here on the Water Planning Council advisory
20 group, but on Rivers Alliance and also the
21 Connecticut League of Conservation Voters.

22 She really was a force. It's no surprise
23 that Senator Murphy has put something out. She
24 helped recruit him to run for office. I mean,
25 it's amazing what she has done, and the legacy.

1 And I have to say -- and I know that not
2 everybody here will agree with me on this, because
3 we did have some controversy, but recognizing
4 water as a public trust resource and fighting to
5 make sure that we remember that, I think, is one
6 of her lasting legacies.

7 It's a really important resource, and I think
8 we all do well to remember how much she fought for
9 the public trust for us.

10 Thank you.

11 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Denise.

12 **CHRIS BELLUCCI:** Jack, if I could? I'd say a few
13 things.

14 I have very fond memories of Margaret, and
15 she's certainly a special person in my mind. And
16 I -- when I think of Margaret, I have visions of
17 her being on the phone and one foot in the door
18 going into another meeting, and always just
19 involved in a lot of different issues.

20 And I think I will always have Margaret in my
21 mind whenever we make decisions. I think I'll
22 always have her voice with me.

23 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Chris. I think we all will.

24 Anyone else?

25 **DAN LAWRENCE:** This is Dan Lawrence.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Dan Lawrence.

2 DAN LAWRENCE: So just everybody knows, I joined
3 Aquarion in 2014. And I can remember my first
4 engagement with Margaret over a FOIA issue, which
5 was not a pleasant conversation at the time.

6 And I'm like, man, this is going to be a
7 difficult relationship. But what you realize
8 about Margaret quickly, as you said, Jack, she put
9 things aside. She built relationships and she
10 cared. And she would listen to you.

11 So she and I developed a good relationship
12 where we could bounce things off each other; not
13 agree, but listen, and be respectful and
14 responsive. And that became, I think, really
15 important for me personally, but also for
16 Aquarion. We very much respected everything
17 Margaret stood for, whether we agreed with
18 everything -- we respected where she was.

19 So she'll be missed for sure.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dan.

21 RICH HANRATTY: Hey, Jack?

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir.

23 RICH HANRATTY: So when I started at the Capitol, it
24 was well over 20 years ago. My first year at the
25 Legislative Commissioner's Office I thought

1 Margaret was one of the state senators.

2 Because I -- again, we did. We would go up to the
3 Senate outside the chamber and she was always
4 there holding court, and everybody would check in
5 with her. And for about a year I thought she was
6 a senator -- but I quickly learned that when she
7 spoke, to listen because she had a lot to impart.

8 And she was really just a legend, and she'll
9 be missed.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks so much, Rich.

11 I know, Alicea, there's going to be a
12 celebration of her life later on at a later date.

13 Correct?

14 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Yes, there will be. There will be
15 something, and we'll let everyone know once the
16 date is set.

17 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you all for those great
18 comments.

19 Okay. Is there any other public comment?
20 Any other public comment besides tributes to
21 Margaret?

22
23 (No response.)

24
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. We're going to start with Alicea

1 and Dan on the advisory group.

2 DAN LAWRENCE: Alicea, you want me to do it?

3 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Go ahead. Thanks.

4 DAN LAWRENCE: No problem. So pretty simple meeting we
5 had in terms of updates. We went through, you
6 know, introducing everyone to each other as we
7 merged the groups together. So that's what worked
8 out well.

9 And then we had our handful of things that we
10 covered on the legislative side, trying to keep
11 track of what's going on.

12 And then really talking the old business
13 side, you know, still on the nominating committee,
14 Carol still pushing away on that, and we went
15 through some other things.

16 I did provide the same presentation I did for
17 the Water Planning Council to the Water Planning
18 Council advisory group on PFAS and CERCLA, so I
19 think that was one as well -- but really just a
20 good, I'll call it, kickoff meeting in terms of
21 getting one together and get going.

22 So unless someone else has anything, that was
23 it from our minutes, so.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: Any questions for Dan?

25

1 (No response.)

2
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

4 Denise?

5 DENISE SAVAGEAU: So the Outreach and Education Group
6 met last week. And we're going to be continuing
7 the work we're doing on source water protection;
8 that's our theme for this year. And we'll be
9 looking at that as the Source Water Protection
10 Week is in September. So we're going to be
11 designing a program around that.

12 There's a couple of themes. We already did
13 the aquifer protection during Groundwater
14 Awareness Week, and the Safe Drinking Water Act
15 50th anniversary is going to be part of the of our
16 program in September. As well as that official
17 act -- my understanding is that it became official
18 in December.

19 So we'll be looking at possibly getting out
20 some type of press release or whatever surrounding
21 the Safe Drinking Water Act, you know, and
22 reminding folks about the state water plan and
23 source water protection. So that's the work on
24 our theme.

25 The other thing we've been working on was how

1 better to integrate -- and this kind of started
2 with a discussion at our previous meeting. How
3 better to integrate the water utilities into the
4 work we're doing in outreach and education.
5 Obviously, they do it as well. And they have, you
6 know, there -- so we're working. We have -- a
7 couple of our members are involved with the water
8 utility, so we're working on that.

9 But outreach of that also -- and this is what
10 we really focused this meeting on was, you know,
11 the role of other groups, also the NGOs. You know
12 we have so many groups, as you know, that are
13 represented here.

14 So we've got the water utilities. We have
15 all the agency people, but we also have all the
16 nonprofits that are in, and folks who are doing
17 that. And how do we make sure that as part of the
18 outreach and education that we're capitalizing on
19 our collective, you know, energy and all the work
20 that's being done?

21 And it's actually one of the things we had
22 talked about when we were talking about the state
23 water plan and documenting what was being done.
24 How do we capture? Because the stuff that's in
25 the state water plan, that is being done by a

1 whole host of people. It's not all just the work
2 that we do here, you know, the agency, the agency
3 stuff, or even the Water Planning Council advisory
4 group. There's sections of that plan that you
5 know everybody's working on.

6 So we wanted to talk from an outreach and
7 education perspective again. So we started
8 thinking about that. And part of the
9 brainstorming -- excuse me for turning my head.
10 I'm looking at my notes here. Just wanted to talk
11 about -- we started talking about the stewardship
12 of water and identifying again who does what, you
13 know, in terms of implementing the state water
14 plan.

15 And kudos to Kim Czaplak for coming up with --
16 she's like, maybe we want to talk about having a
17 state water plan steward program where we have
18 like, what's everybody doing? Who are the
19 stewards of this plan? Who's letting people know
20 that we need to do source water protection? Who's
21 letting people know that we need to protect
22 forests for public drinking water supply, and
23 whatever?

24 So right now it's just a concept. We didn't
25 get any further than, oh, my God, this is a great

1 brainstorm -- but I wanted to put it out there so
2 that people could think about it and if they have
3 anything to share with our group, but I just
4 wanted to put that out there.

5 So this is kind of a concept that we're going
6 to be developing. If anybody has any thoughts on
7 that, please share it with us. If anybody has any
8 comments today, that's good. But we're really
9 thinking about how to better, you know, utilize
10 the resources we have in outreach and education so
11 that, you know, because we can't do it all and we
12 need to have these other groups. So how do we do
13 that? And you know, and how do we make sure that
14 every, you know, everybody is interacting?

15 And I'm just going to share with you
16 something that happened that -- I couldn't believe
17 it because it was almost the same discussion, only
18 it was on a different project. I ended up being
19 part of a listening session on public outreach on
20 the update for the comprehensive -- the
21 conservation comprehensive management plan for
22 Long Island Sound.

23 And one of the interesting things that came
24 up was somebody came up to us and said, you know,
25 how do we know if someone's doing this for Long

1 Island Sound? So you might have -- and I'm just
2 going to, you know, Save the Sound doing
3 something, or you may have some other watershed
4 group or somebody doing something to save the
5 Sound, to protect the Sound.

6 But they wanted to know how it all fit into
7 the Long Island Sound estuary program, which is a
8 program, you know, that's about the estuary, but
9 similar to the state water plan. There's this
10 bigger overarching plan. You know there's a
11 bigger plan for Long Island Sound.

12 And they had suggested, like, is there some
13 type of umbrella thing that, you know, whether it
14 be a logo or whatever, so that we all knew that
15 people were working collectively on Long Island
16 Sound? And it was interesting to me that this
17 came up from a person at this listening session at
18 the general public, and it was kind of what we had
19 been talking about with the state water plan. So
20 I just wanted to share that, because I think the
21 public is interested in this.

22 So if, whether it be the Pomperaug River,
23 Rivers Alliance, your water utility, you know, a
24 state agency; if we're doing stuff about the state
25 water plan, how do we make sure that everybody

1 understands that it's like, there's so many of us
2 working on this?

3 And again, so we're going to be developing
4 this stewardship, this steward program. I'm not
5 sure where it's going to take us yet, but again, I
6 wanted to kind of explain it. If anybody has any
7 ideas, share that with us.

8 And our next meeting, we always have them on
9 the first Thursday at 9 a.m., and anyone is
10 welcome to join us.

11 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Excellent. Any questions or comments?

12
13 (No response.)

14
15 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Denise -- and your group always does a
16 great job in coming up with great new ideas.

17 Alicea, anything on the -- I know you've been
18 really busy with the pricing of water.

19 **ALICEA CHARAMUT:** No, nothing new yet.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay. Now on the watershed lands
21 workgroup, Alicea and Dan, I know that Margaret
22 has kind of been leading that effort. So I guess
23 I would recommend that you guys take a look at
24 that and see if you want to come up with a
25 recommendation for somebody who will lead that

1 effort.

2 DAN LAWRENCE: Rich, are you going to step in and talk?

3 Rich looks frozen.

4 RICH HANRATTY: Yeah. So about six months ago Margaret
5 called me -- and you don't really say no to
6 Margaret. She asked if I'd be co-chair, and then
7 Kathy Czepiel from Save the Sound came on as
8 co-chair.

9 And I believe there was -- I'm not sure
10 mechanically exactly how it worked, but I believe
11 myself and Kathy Czepiel are co-chairs right now.

12 Our next meeting is Friday, June 14th at
13 9 a.m. We will be working on putting an agenda
14 together. So anyone who has any suggestions about
15 which direction we should take, please reach
16 out -- but we're definitely going to miss
17 Margaret's guidance. Thanks.

18 DAN LAWRENCE: Thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Interagency drought workgroup?

20 MARTIN HEFT: Nice short report. We did not meet last
21 week. Last week we canceled the meeting. They
22 are working upon moving forward with a tabletop
23 exercise, and we'll have a next scheduled meeting
24 in June.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other public comment this afternoon?

1 (No response.)

2
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Our next meeting is scheduled for June
4 4th. I actually will be on vacation. So we may
5 be on -- we'll see what kind of business we have
6 coming up. Perhaps we won't have a meeting on
7 that.

8 Then maybe we'll have it later on in June,
9 depending on people's schedules. I'll have Ali do
10 some polls and maybe we want to wait until later
11 in the month when all the committees have met.

12 Okay. Under new business, I would like to
13 suggest that moving forward we rename the Champion
14 of Water Award the Margaret Miner Champion of
15 Water Award. I think this would be a great way of
16 keeping Margaret's legacy alive, and I think she'd
17 be very, very happy with that.

18 I spoke to my colleagues, and I just want to
19 formalize it this afternoon with a motion to make
20 it official.

21 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Martin.

23 Second?

24 CHRIS BELLUCCI: Second.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made and seconded that henceforth

1 the Champion of Water Award be renamed the
2 Margaret Miner champion of water award.

3 Any questions on the motion?
4

5 (No response.)
6

7 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, all those in favor signify by
8 saying aye.

9 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?
11

12 (No response.)
13

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion carried.

15 Okay. Anything else to come before us?
16

17 (No response.)
18

19 THE CHAIRMAN: This is probably one of the quickest
20 meetings we ever had, but it was a good meeting
21 because we paid tribute to someone that we worked
22 with for many, many years and loved, and her
23 legacy will live on.

24 So with that, I'll entertain a motion to
25 adjourn?

1 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Second?

3 CHRIS BELLUCCI: Second.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: All those in favor signify by saying
5 aye.

6 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you all very much. Have a good
8 afternoon, a good rest of the week. And we'll let
9 you know about the June meeting.

10 Thanks. Thank you very much.

11

12 (End: 1:55 p.m.)

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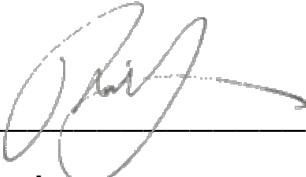
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 21 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken 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 May 14, 2024.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M #857

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 6/30/2025

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