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THIS TRANSCRIPT CONTAINS 38 PAGES
NUMBERED 1 THROUGH 38

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

Regular Meeting held Via Teleconference on
July 2, 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 (of record):**

2 **WATER PLANNING COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

4 **ERIC McPHEE (DPH)**

5 **MARTIN HEFT (OPM)**

6 **GRAHAM STEVENS (DEEP)**

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

9 **ALICEA CHARAMUT**

10 **ALEXANDRIA HIBBARD**

11 **DENISE SAVAGEAU**

12 **IRIS HERZ KAMINSKI**

13 **KATHY CZEPIEL**

14
15 **Staff:**

16 **LAURA LUPOLI**

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

2
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to
4 call the Water Planning Council meeting for July
5 2, 2024, to order.

6 The first order of business will be the
7 approval of the meeting transcripts from May 14,
8 2024. Do I hear a motion?

9 MARTIN HEFT: So moved.

10 GRAHAM STEVENS: Second.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made and seconded.

12 Any questions on the motion?

13
14 (No response.)

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

18 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: The motion is carried.

20 Item number three is public comment on agenda
21 items. Any public comment on agenda items?

22
23 (No response.)

24
25 THE CHAIRMAN: Seeing none, we'll move on to action

1 items with workgroup reports. First, we'll call
2 on Alicea and Dan Lawrence for the advisory
3 workgroup.

4 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Hi. So Dan is on vacation, so it's
5 just me. And we did not meet in June since there
6 was no Water Planning Council meeting, and I was
7 away on vacation. So we don't have anything to
8 report except for the specific workgroups that are
9 on the agenda.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. That's fine. Thank you.

11 Denise, good afternoon.

12 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Good afternoon. Hi, everyone.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: You look like you have a nice -- you're
14 down at the Sound?

15 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yeah, that's the Long Island Sound.
16 That's Griswold Point, kind of where the Long
17 Island's -- Connecticut River enters Long Island
18 Sound, and we monitor piping plovers there, so.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Very nice.

20 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Good afternoon, everyone. The
21 education and outreach group met this morning, and
22 we're just moving forward with a couple of our
23 programs. I just realized since we didn't have a
24 meeting in June, we didn't report on that. So let
25 me just go over a couple of things.

1 We have as our theme this year -- some folks
2 remember source water protection, and it's the
3 50th anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act.
4 And so on the week of -- the last week in
5 September is source water protection week. And on
6 the 24th, we will be having a lunch and learn.
7 And we're going to be focusing on two things.

8 We'll be talking about the Safe Drinking
9 Water Act and celebrating the Safe Drinking Water
10 Act, but the other part of that with source water
11 protection is looking at emerging contaminants.

12 So we're looking to have two speakers on
13 that, one will be on PFAS. We're looking at
14 someone from the Department of Public Health who's
15 doing work on that. And then the other one will
16 be from Yale with some of the emerging
17 contaminants that they're working on as well. And
18 so stay tuned, we'll be getting out a save the
19 date soon on that. Again, that will be September
20 24th, and that the lunch and learn is usually from
21 twelve to one.

22 The other piece of our work is with source
23 water protection in our theme for this year, we
24 were looking at, like, the quality of water, which
25 this, which the September meeting will focus on,

1 but also the quality of water.

2 And as many of you know, in October they have
3 October 18th as imagine a day without water. And
4 so we're looking to do a program there. And as
5 many of you know, we've been -- the outreach and
6 education group had Eric Lindquist from the
7 Department of Public Health talked to us on flash
8 drought.

9 So we're looking to do a workshop on flash
10 drought. We'll be contacting Eric and see how we
11 might put that on, but we're looking at that again
12 for October 18th, imagine a day without water, and
13 we've always participated in that. I think Jack,
14 you remember that that's one of the ones we always
15 do.

16 Just a couple of other things is we're
17 finally moving forward with our private wells fact
18 sheet. We have a draft that's going around within
19 our committee. Shortly it will go out to the
20 Water Planning Council advisory group for context,
21 so we'll be doing that. And we're going to be
22 starting a new fact sheet again on flash drought,
23 and we're hoping to have that ready for the
24 workshop in October.

25 And then the last thing that we're working on

1 is -- and if you've read our minutes, we've done
2 the -- we've been having discussions on the role
3 of other organizations outside of the state
4 agencies for outreach and education.

5 So for example, the role that, you know, the
6 NGOs are playing, the role of the public
7 utilities, the water utilities are playing -- so
8 that the implementation of the state water plan
9 isn't just about the agencies, it's about all of
10 us. It's our state water plan.

11 And so we're going to start with some type of
12 a survey. We're just starting to work on this and
13 Kim Czaplak is going to be leading this, working
14 with a few other folks who said they would help;
15 Olivia with the Pomperaug, and Kelsey with one of
16 the other watersheds in the conservation district
17 cases, Kelsey Sudol -- and looking at, who's doing
18 what in terms of the state water plan?

19 We know this is a whole lot of work, the
20 state water plan. We know what the agencies are
21 doing, but there's other people who are
22 implementing sections of this state water plan.
23 So we're going to be looking at trying to do a
24 survey to find out who's doing what.

25 And then as I reported last time, we're

1 looking at then making state water plan stewards.
2 After we just look at who's doing what, seeing if
3 we can get people to buy into the state water plan
4 and saying, yes, I'm a state water plan steward
5 and we're committed to working on this part of the
6 state water plan.

7 So that's kind of in the works. We haven't
8 worked that out. That's a concept that we're
9 working on. Like I said, the first step is going
10 to kind of be, like, who's doing what? And then
11 we'll develop this, the state water plan steward
12 concept. So that's kind of where we are.

13 Oh, and the last piece of this is we continue
14 to have -- there's a workgroup of the agency
15 folks, Kim and Alexandria. And I know -- and then
16 Becca and Bruce from OPM are continuing to work on
17 the website and update that. So we're looking at
18 that.

19 So people should look at the website, and we
20 just want to remind people that if we have
21 comments, bring it to our committee or directly to
22 any of the folks who are working on that, because
23 it's important. It's one of the things we
24 identified as needing work. And so that now
25 there's this internal state agency workgroup that

1 had continued to update that, and they're doing
2 great work that way. And that's what we have for
3 the outreach and education.

4 Any questions? I'll be happy to take them.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Denise. Great report, and I
6 really like that idea of water planning stewards
7 out there.

8 So I mean, I really think that we need to
9 kind of get us recharged, and perhaps this would
10 be a way of doing it. We need to get -- and of
11 course, with some of the events coming up we can
12 always get publicity attached to that as well.

13 But you're doing great work.

14 Any -- Graham? Martin?

15 GRAHAM STEVENS: I just want to say Denise, you know,
16 great plan as always. I really like the idea of
17 trying to engage with people to find out who else
18 is implementing the state water plan.

19 It's also a teaching moment, maybe because
20 people are implementing the state water plan, you
21 know, and may not even know it.

22 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Exactly.

23 GRAHAM STEVENS: And so that's, you know, kind of that
24 two-way exchange of information.

25 I think it's -- which I'm sure you already

1 thought of as well -- is just a great opportunity
2 to further, you know, educate folks that this is
3 our plan. Right? This is the State's plan, not
4 just one agency or one entity's plan.

5 So I'm really appreciative of the work that
6 you guys are doing and trying to get the word out.

7 So thank you.

8 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yeah, thank you. We're really
9 excited about this. You know we've done the lunch
10 and learns and we kind of have that format down
11 and we'll continue to do those, but this is
12 expanding.

13 And I think where we really need to go
14 identifying, you know, how, how we educate people,
15 that the mission of this group has always been
16 educate people on two fronts. One is, what is the
17 state water plan and what's being done, and the
18 other is just on water resources in general, which
19 is kind of the implementation of the state water
20 plan, educating people about things, that they
21 need to know that, you know, so. Because that's
22 what the state water plan asks us to do. Right?
23 And make sure that we have this engagement.

24 So I'm very excited about this. And I think
25 that the rest of the workgroup is as well.

1 GRAHAM STEVENS: That's great. And one of the things I
2 see as a follow on to is, like, what can state
3 agencies do once more people are educated about
4 the values and steps that the state water plan
5 lays out for the future in prioritizing actions
6 that, you know, actually take steps towards
7 implementation of the state water plan where
8 there's a lot of different programs the various
9 state agencies implement, and a lot of different
10 factors that are evaluated, and scoring criteria
11 and evaluation.

12 And I think, you know, as more people become
13 educated about the state water plan, I think
14 agencies need to think about further
15 prioritization of its -- of the funding decisions
16 to fulfill the goals that we've set out in the
17 state water plan collectively.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Alicea?

19 ALICEA CHARAMUT: And an added benefit is I think it
20 will give exposure to some groups that are doing
21 really good work that should be recognized at the
22 state level, and encourage -- encourage others to
23 sort of take these best practices and implement
24 them locally so it gives -- and for the agencies
25 to see what's going on around the State as well.

1 So it's definitely a benefit.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Excellent. Thanks again, Denise, to you
3 and your group. Appreciate your efforts.

4 Watershed lands work -- who is picking that
5 up now?

6 **KATHY CZEPIEL:** Rich Hanratty and I are co chairing
7 that group. And I don't think Rich is -- is Rich
8 on the call? I can't see everybody, but I don't
9 think I see him here. So I can just give you a
10 quick update.

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

12 **KATHY CZEPIEL:** Yeah, sure. So we met on July 14th,
13 the watershed lands workgroup. And we spent most
14 of our time -- Charles Vidich of WestCOG gave us
15 sort of part two of a very in depth and
16 interesting informative presentation on some
17 research, and that he's -- he and his group have
18 been doing.

19 And he, I guess the focus of what he talked
20 about this time was some key points about
21 watershed conscious land use controls. And he
22 spoke some more about some mapping challenges and
23 riparian quarter protections in particular, and
24 gave us a number of key takeaways.

25 But I think that the big one is just that

1 there's not a consistent approach yet in
2 Connecticut to watershed conscious zoning in
3 general. We have what he called a potpourri of
4 approaches. And so talking about some ways in
5 which, you know, different overlays, for example,
6 ways in which we can get stronger watershed
7 protections in place in general.

8 As we all know, the riparian buffer
9 legislation didn't go through this session. So
10 still a big concern about that and what
11 municipalities might be able to do or be
12 encouraged to do in terms of riparian quarter
13 setbacks.

14 And so I think that the bottom line in the
15 workgroup talking about what we might be able to
16 do going forward is just to think about how --
17 well, part of our charge is to determine the
18 adequacy of current statutory and regulatory
19 provisions. So how -- what could we recommend
20 looking at all of this information that might be
21 something to help municipalities, for example, put
22 in their POCDs?

23 So I think we have a lot of conversation left
24 on this topic, but we have a ton of information
25 based on Charles's work. And I think we're

1 looking forward to continuing to talk this through
2 and think about what are some basic next steps
3 that we can put forward.

4 So that was the bulk of our meeting, and we
5 also just ran through a kind of overview of
6 legislation this session; what passed and what
7 didn't that was relevant to watershed protection.
8 And that's pretty much it.

9 So that was our meeting a couple weeks ago.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Kathy.

11 Any questions for Kathy?

12 **ERIC MCPHEE:** Has there been any talk of aligning
13 zoning with water? I mean, obviously, zoning is
14 done town by town, but has there been any talk of
15 sort of compiling that by watershed so you could
16 get a watershed-based analysis of zoning?

17 **KATHY CZEPIEL:** Yeah. I mean, I think that's part of
18 the problem is that, you know, towns have all of
19 these different ways in which they do zoning. And
20 so the overlays are one way in which to kind of
21 deal with the fact that you've got this odd
22 patchwork of zoning in towns. And it's not
23 usually -- zoning is not usually related to the
24 watershed.

25 So Charles was talking about different ways

1 in which -- basically three different overlays,
2 complementary overlays -- so not distinct
3 overlays, but three complementary overlays to
4 consider; so one overlay for watershed-based
5 protections, one for GAA groundwater protections,
6 and one for riparian buffer protections and that
7 those should all be working together.

8 But that's complicated. Right? So -- but
9 one way of -- well, basically, I think he said
10 it's the only approach to deal with the wide range
11 of municipal zoning districts that you find in
12 towns. You know every town has got its own thing
13 going on.

14 So we did talk quite -- he did talk quite a
15 bit about that. And that's one thing that I think
16 we're going to want to be discussing some more.

17 I don't know if that answers your question.

18 ERIC MCPHEE: Yes, thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Denise?

20 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yeah, just quickly from -- there is
21 one org entity in the State of Connecticut that
22 I'm aware of, and that's the Connecticut River
23 Gateway Commission. And they are charged under
24 statute of looking at zoning.

25 And so the eight towns that are in that

1 district, of course, it's the ones that are right
2 as adjacent to the Connecticut River. So it's not
3 the watershed, the whole watershed per se, but it
4 is all the towns that buffer the Connecticut
5 River, and so from a riparian perspective.

6 And that one of the things they've done is
7 all the towns who entered into that pact and
8 decided to be into the pact, into that, you know,
9 the towns had to opt in. And once they opt in,
10 they all agreed to have adopted the minimum zoning
11 requirements that the river gateway put in, and so
12 they have at least that. They can still go above
13 that, and so they can be more stringent, but
14 there's at least a minimum requirement.

15 I think one of the things, even if they had
16 different ways of doing it, would be to say, what
17 are the minimum standards that we should be
18 looking at zoning from a watershed perspective?
19 And those are some of the things we might want to
20 look at.

21 So just putting that out there that there
22 is -- there is a model in Connecticut that where
23 this has been done somewhat. It's interesting.

24 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Very good. Any other questions?

25 **Comments?**

1 (No response.)

2
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, we'll move onto our favorite topic
4 with Alicia, conservation pricing rate recovery
5 and analysis workshop.

6 ALICEA CHARAMUT: There's no report of.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: That's okay. We'll make it a fall
8 project.

9 Martin, drought workgroup.

10 MARTIN HEFT: Sure. Good afternoon, everybody.

11 Our next meeting is scheduled for next
12 Thursday, July 11th. Just to -- we did meet last
13 month as well, reviewed all the conditions. We
14 are noticing some changes, even though we've had a
15 lot of rain, but we are seeing some areas changing
16 on some of the other mapping, and everything
17 getting a little bit drier and everything.

18 So we will have a meeting next week, update,
19 and just make sure we continue following
20 everything as we continue through the summer
21 months.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, sir.

23 Is Rebecca on the call?

24 MARTIN HEFT: Becca is not on, but I know Kim and Ali
25 are both on, and maybe they might be able to give

1 an update on what's been going on with the
2 website. I could also do a screenshare, if need
3 be, to show all the website if you want after they
4 kind of maybe give an update of what's been going
5 on.

6 And sorry to put them on the spot. Becca is
7 out sick today.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry to hear that. Okay. Ali?

9 Thank you.

10 ALEXANDRIA HIBBARD: Hey there. Kim Czapla, Becca Dahl
11 and Bruce Wittchen and I are continuing to work on
12 the website and make improvements. We meet on a
13 monthly basis, and this month we're going to be
14 looking at the interagency drought workgroup
15 webpages to try and improve them, make sure the
16 appropriate information is on there.

17 And we are welcoming any comments if folks
18 come across broken links or are looking for
19 information that's not on the website. We can
20 certainly add it.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: If anybody has any suggestions for the
22 group, please feel free. Right, Ali?

23 ALEXANDRIA HIBBARD: Absolutely.

24 THE CHAIRMAN: I appreciate your efforts to update
25 that.

1 Any other workgroups, the ad hoc group
2 workgroups going to report today?

3 MARTIN HEFT: So are you on item B on the business?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

5 MARTIN HEFT: Oh, okay. If you want Jack, I can handle
6 that.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

8 MARTIN HEFT: But Denise has her hand raised. I don't
9 know if she had question on the website.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Go ahead. I'm sorry, Denise.

11 DENISE SAVAGEAU: No, it wasn't on the website. It was
12 on -- I just wanted to give a quick report on the
13 source water protection workgroup, too.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: Oh, good. Okay.

15 Then, Martin, we're complete with the
16 website. Right?

17 MARTIN HEFT: Yeah. Yeah, we'll go back up. I think
18 we skipped over that one.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Okay, Denise.

20 DENISE SAVAGEAU: All right. Thanks. I just wanted to
21 do a quick update because this workgroup has been
22 working for a while. We kind of got stalled.
23 There were some changes in staffing and some
24 things we were dealing with, but now we're moving
25 forward with the source water protection.

1 So we have a white paper that's in draft form
2 in terms of the beginning of it. And we're
3 looking now for input on -- so the beginning of
4 the white paper gets into, this is what exists in
5 source water protection across various agencies,
6 across some of the nonprofits, across the water
7 utilities. What's everybody doing for source
8 water protection? And then we're looking to
9 identify the gaps and make recommendations. And
10 that's where we are right now.

11 What we're going to be looking for is
12 feedback from, obviously, the Water Planning
13 Council agencies as well as the Water Planning
14 Council advisory group. So I'm going to be
15 putting that up on a Google Doc so people can take
16 a look at it and make comments.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Good.

18 **DENISE SAVAGEAU:** And whatever.

19 I've got to make sure that people, if you
20 make comments, that you don't change it or edit
21 it. So I think I can figure out how to do that so
22 that you will only be able to, like, make comments
23 on it, but we're definitely going to be taking
24 comments.

25 And what we're hoping is that at the end of

1 the summer, we'll have something that we could
2 actually really present to the Water Planning
3 Council, and then go out for -- to the larger
4 public for comments on it, but that's where we are
5 now.

6 So stay tuned. We'll be sending out those
7 links and asking again the Water Planning Council
8 advisory group as well as any of the Water
9 Planning Council members or agency folks who might
10 not be on this group who want to comment on it to
11 give us feedback.

12 Like I said, what we're specifically looking
13 for is gaps, and then and therefore
14 recommendations. So that's what we're working on
15 now. Thank you.

16 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Denise, did you want to mention the
17 source water protection collaborative? I know
18 it's not completely aligned with the workgroup.

19 It might be a good time to let everyone know
20 about the really amazing meeting that we had last
21 month.

22 DENISE SAVAGEAU: Yeah, well, I'm happy to talk about
23 that, but I would really defer to Eric McPhee on
24 that since his department put that together, and
25 Lizette. So I think it's really important.

1 So as we're working on this source water
2 protection, the source water collaborative is, you
3 know, all -- like said, all the folks who are
4 working on protecting our public drinking water at
5 the source, and that's coordinated by the
6 Department of Public Health. So I will defer to
7 them about that meeting.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Eric?

9 **ERIC MCPHEE:** Sure. Yeah, happy to. So we got a
10 little bit derailed by COVID, but the Connecticut
11 source water collaborative was modeled after a
12 national effort. There are also other state and
13 regional collaboratives.

14 And the idea would be for, sort of, disparate
15 careers and roles who all have a sort of common
16 stake in protecting drinking water come together
17 and find sort of those common themes and common
18 efforts, you know, where we can sort of advance
19 the protection of drinking water sources.

20 So what we've done historically is invited a
21 small group of people, sort of handpicking, you
22 know, educational institutions, businesses, local
23 health, water utilities, state agencies, and
24 brought together sort of an invited group of
25 experts to have a topical discussion.

1 And then generally, we have a walk-and-talk
2 field trip where we look at something related to
3 source water protection and have, you know, sort
4 of informal conversations, which are usually the
5 most effective part of that, anyway.

6 And so we picked that back up this year. We
7 had an amazing meeting in Easton at -- Aquarion
8 was gracious enough to host the meeting portion of
9 it as well as the walking tour that we did
10 afterwards. Our Commissioner Juthani was able to
11 do opening remarks and we had a topical
12 discussion.

13 You know, with this group, it was well
14 attended. We had maxed out the amount of people
15 that we could invite. We took a look at the
16 treatment plant to see what happens after we've
17 protected the source water and where it goes next,
18 and then we did a walking tour of part of the
19 reservoir and talked about things like forestry
20 management, and invasives, and the sort of pros
21 and cons of recreation in drinking water
22 watersheds.

23 So we'll publish -- Lizette turned her camera
24 on. She's going to work to publish all of the
25 minutes and information associated with the

1 meeting. And we hope to do this at least annually
2 moving forward and just have, you know, people
3 from different, you know, walks of life come
4 together with a common theme in protecting
5 drinking water sources.

6 So I agree. Yeah, thanks for the kind words.
7 I thought it went tremendous. And we do -- you
8 know, long term, this should not be a DPH effort.
9 You know, we kind of need sort of a champion, or
10 someone who can take the reins and have it not be
11 a state agency, you know, in future efforts.
12 We're happy to coordinate until that point, but it
13 should be sort of driven from the ground up.

14 So yeah, really happy with how it went, and
15 we can share pictures up on the website.

16 DENISE SAVAGEAU: And just quickly, I want to add in
17 that one of the important pieces, I think of the
18 discussion was looking at how municipalities -- so
19 kind of building off that, the discussion that the
20 watershed lands workgroup is working on; what's
21 the role of municipalities in protecting our
22 public drinking water supply?

23 A lot of times they defer to the water
24 utilities, but the water utilities -- or the state
25 agencies, but the water utilities and the state

1 agencies aren't the local land use regulatory
2 bodies.

3 And beyond regulations, you know, we talk
4 about zoning, we talk about inland wetlands -- but
5 they're also the folks who have the, you know, the
6 plan of conservation and development. They also,
7 a lot of times, have the open space committees.
8 They work with the local land trust on identifying
9 those key areas and towns that need to be
10 protected from a public drinking water supply.

11 And I think one of the things that came out
12 loud and clear was that we talked about source
13 water protection, primarily from a public drinking
14 water supply perspective with the larger
15 utilities, but that we have a lot of small
16 utilities and we also have private wells.

17 And you know those are some of the gaps that
18 we identified -- actually, if you remember, in the
19 state water plan was how do we deal with private
20 wells, and it's something we've been talking
21 about.

22 So a very good discussion. And thank you to
23 Eric and Lizette, because they're the ones who
24 wanted that focus on the municipal piece, and I
25 think that it was very well received and had lots

1 of food for thought.

2 THE CHAIRMAN: And a great venue, the Easton treatment
3 plant, for sure. I've been there many times.

4 Alicea, I see your hand up?

5 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Yeah, sure. So one of -- just to tie
6 some of these things together, because I see that
7 Carol had put in the chat about what the COGs are
8 doing when we were speaking about the watershed
9 lands meeting.

10 And one of the things that during this
11 meeting, you know, we can see what Naugatuck has
12 been doing policy-wise on water. At the watershed
13 lands meeting we've seen what Northwest is doing
14 with research and mapping on various zoning
15 regulations within the town.

16 And I think we really have an opportunity
17 here to bring all of the COGs together just on,
18 specifically on water issues, because you know
19 there are some groups that are doing such great
20 work, and being able to maybe apply some of that
21 throughout the rest of the COGs would be extremely
22 beneficial.

23 So Rivers Alliance is committed to moving
24 forward to bringing the COGs together on these
25 water issues to try to get some information

1 sharing and hopefully, you know, have a little
2 bit, you know, more consistency across the COGs
3 and the support that they give the municipalities
4 on drinking water and riparian buffer protections.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Excellent. Okay. Let's move on to
6 Martin.

7 **MARTIN HEFT:** Sure. Thanks. So one of the things we
8 just popped on the agenda was review of the
9 workgroups. This is part of our overall goal, if
10 you will, as we looked at when we had our little
11 summit and everything, when we talked about after,
12 you know, our consolidation of the advisory
13 implementation group. We kind of set some overall
14 goals, things that we should be reviewing.

15 This was -- one of the items on there was for
16 once that the advisory group had been, you know,
17 redone and everything, would be to look at our
18 workgroups, whether they be standing, ad hoc,
19 topical for those, and just kind of review those
20 to make sure that they're all still needed, that
21 they are still, you know, represented properly.

22 Could they be done by the advisory committee
23 versus having it be an ad hoc, or something? Who
24 should be their direct report? Should it be back
25 to the advisory group? Or should some of those,

1 if it's a standing one, should it be -- should
2 they just be not under the advisory and a direct
3 report to WPC?

4 You know, these are just things that I've
5 just made notes from our little summit that we had
6 there. So I did want to just bring it up and ask
7 that, you know, perhaps we have our advisory
8 workgroup take a look at those on there and come
9 back with any recommendations that they may have,
10 you know, for that for just process.

11 And it may come back as being no changes are
12 needed, which is fine. I'm just trying to make
13 sure that we go through all those steps that we
14 talked about in the summit. And you know, we have
15 other items that came out from that as well that
16 we'll be bringing up later, such as you know,
17 reviewing the, you know, the state water plan, you
18 know, as an interim and long-term process and
19 everything else, which will be coming down, you
20 know, the pike as well.

21 So that was kind of why this was popped on
22 the agenda today.

23 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Martin.

24 Alicea, is that something you think you would
25 like to undertake?

1 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Yeah, absolutely. We'll put it on
2 the agenda for our meeting in a couple weeks.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: It makes sense, and then it comes back
4 to us.

5 MARTIN HEFT: Yeah, great. Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

7 The next meeting, the 6th -- I wanted to,
8 under public comment, and I think all of you are
9 aware that there was a special session last week.
10 And that there was, I consider a major piece of
11 legislation was passed where the regional water
12 authority of New Haven was given the opportunity
13 to submit an RFP to Aquarion, which everyone knows
14 is owned by Eversource, and which is going to be
15 in the process of maybe being sold.

16 And I know I had some conversations with some
17 of you. Alicia and I had some conversations
18 regarding it. There was some criticism of a bill
19 like this not going through a hearing process and
20 due diligence.

21 However, you know a lot of it's been around
22 for a long time. It did pass. There was a lot of
23 discussion on it, but I want to make it clear that
24 even if the bid, any bid that's accepted by
25 Eversource, that is going to still have to be

1 voted by PURA. PURA has got to approve the sale
2 making sure that any entity that comes in, that it
3 has the financial and managerial and technical
4 ability to do business in the state of
5 Connecticut.

6 That being said, hypothetically, if RWA was a
7 successful business, and we did in fact approve
8 it, we no longer regulate it because they're their
9 own quasi -- there they're their own entity, just
10 like MDC is another municipal water company.

11 So it was an interesting week, to say the
12 least -- an interesting a couple of days. I'm
13 looking at Alicea, who went through, and there's
14 been -- there's been some back and forth with
15 newspapers and that kind of thing covering it.

16 But Alicea, you were in the thick of it, I
17 know. So would you like to comment?

18 ALICEA CHARAMUT: Yeah. After listening to all of the
19 discussions in the House, you know, this did bring
20 up a lot of bigger issues with legislators. And
21 basically, because the difficulty it put so many
22 folks in, in having to consider this, seeing
23 language, you know; for the Senate, it was the
24 morning of, and for the House, it was, you know, a
25 little bit more than 24 hours.

1 And I think it really highlights the need for
2 us to move forward on water planning, to make sure
3 that you know our water remains, to the extent
4 that it can be, that we have that opportunity for
5 local control when it presents itself.

6 And you know, and there are a lot of -- it
7 also highlighted the complexity of all of this.
8 Right? And this is such a big opportunity for
9 anyone involved in water planning to really stand
10 up and say, folks, this is why we need resources
11 put into planning for our water resources.

12 Because it, you know, a lot of folks are
13 paying attention to it now. And it's highlighted
14 the fact that we could have a good portion of our
15 water resources essentially under the control of a
16 faceless investor conglomerate, a global investor
17 conglomerate. And I think we really need to seize
18 this opportunity in making people understand why
19 it is really important to make sure we're managing
20 our water for Connecticut's citizens.

21 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Alicea.

22 Denise?

23 **DENISE SAVAGEAU:** Yeah, I just want to piggyback on
24 what Alicea said. And with the understanding that
25 the change from a private water utility to a

1 regional water authority, although, like you said,
2 PURA gets to approve that, then they're no longer
3 under the jurisdiction. And I'm not going to
4 opine on whether that's a good thing or bad thing,
5 with one exception, and that has to do with the
6 workgroup that Alicea has been leading, and this
7 is the conservation pricing rate recovery.

8 As you know -- and I worked for the Town of
9 Greenwich for many years and was intimately
10 involved in multiple droughts down there and with
11 the water utilities, and with the Department of
12 Public Health. The challenges of water and not
13 putting on mandatory restrictions in terms of
14 irrigation is really important. It's something we
15 haven't wanted to tackle at the state level
16 because of the rate case, but it's something that
17 cannot be ignored.

18 In the areas that Aquarion is managing now,
19 they've done a great job. The success of not
20 having had additional major drought restrictions
21 having to put -- come into play in Southwestern
22 Connecticut, as well as in other areas, is in part
23 due to the restrictions that have been put in
24 place. And we know that there's challenges for
25 folks, and this is why this rate, the rate

1 analysis and how we deal with that is really,
2 really important.

3 So I just wanted to stress that the
4 differences between these are -- I'm not saying
5 which is good or bad, I'm just saying that there
6 is one challenge that we haven't taken care of
7 yet, because I think there's a lot of positives,
8 particularly from a source water protections
9 perspective, and the work that regional water
10 authorities, not just this one, but all of them do
11 in terms of preserving land and doing source water
12 protection, they're just outstanding. So there's
13 benefits to both types of water utilities. But I
14 do want to make sure people understand, you know,
15 one of the challenges -- the challenges and this
16 challenge before us.

17 And again to Alicea's point, it gets into the
18 state water plan and us addressing the irrigation,
19 you know, basically the lawn irrigation problem,
20 and we can't continue to ignore it because we have
21 this rate issue hanging over our heads.

22 Thank you.

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

24 Any other comments?
25

1 (No response.)

2
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other public comments from anyone
4 else? Iris.

5 IRIS HERZ KAMINSKI: Hi. I just want to -- I'm really
6 concerned of what Alicea just mentioned. That's
7 my main concern of having a faceless owner of our
8 water. And so I'm very interested in this topic,
9 not only because of the fact if we could restrict
10 the usage of water, but also like the fact that
11 private owners could manipulate the uses/usage of
12 the water.

13 And for me, I really -- I really did not
14 understand the diff -- I mean, well, I should not
15 be acknowledging that. But with regional water
16 authority, I understand it's not private, but so
17 it's partially municipal, municipal owned over
18 managed, but it's -- it acts as in some aspects as
19 if it's private.

20 So if anybody wants to clarify and again,
21 say, you know, I don't know what the benefits or
22 the advantages or disadvantages are, and what
23 should be what would what we should aspire for as
24 companies. We need companies to manage our water,
25 and I'm grateful for them, but what is the best

1 management perspective from the public's
2 perspective?

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, you're raising it. I mean, and
4 again, no matter what happens in the future in
5 terms of who's going to bid on Aquarion, it's
6 going to have to come to us and it will be people
7 will be given the opportunity to come in and weigh
8 in on it in terms of all the stakeholder groups,
9 and Office of Consumer Counsel and how DEEP and
10 other groups come in and talk about it. So it's
11 not going to be like a rubber stamp by any stretch
12 of the imagination.

13 So even though the bill was passed, there's
14 still a process for it to go through. And we
15 could very well -- you know you never know what's
16 going to happen.

17 So are you all set, Iris?

18 IRIS HERZ KAMINSKI: Yeah, thank you.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: You're welcome.

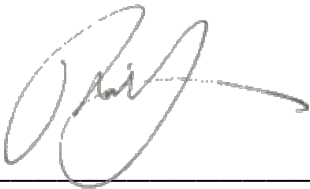
20 Any other comments? Any other public
21 comments this afternoon?

22
23 (No response.)

24
25 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, our next meeting is on August

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 36 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Regular Meeting of the Water Planning Council, which was held before JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, CHAIRMAN, and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN, via teleconference, on July 2, 2024.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M #857

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 6/30/2025

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