

Water Planning Council Advisory Group

October 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes

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

Agenda: <https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/24220>

Video: https://ctvideo.ct.gov/OPM/2024-10-15_WPCAG_Video.mp4

Members Present by video or phone:

Aaron Budris	Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
Josh Cansler	Southeastern CT Water Authority
Alicea Charamut	Fisheries Advisory Council
Kathy Czepiel	Save the Sound
Nicole Deziel	Yale School of Public Health
Carol Haskins	Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
Patrick Kearney	New Britain Water Dept.
Dan Lawrence	Aquarion
Alison McHorney	CT Office of Consumer Counsel
Darryl Newman	CT Nursery & Landscape Assoc.
Aimee Petras (alt.)	Farmington River Watershed Assoc.
Martha Smith (alt.)	New Haven West River Watershed Coalition
Kelsey Sudol (alt.)	Lake Waramaug Task Force
Tom Tyler	MDC
Steve Vitko	South Central CT Regional Water Authority

Other Participants:

Paul Aresta	CT Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)
Lauren Bergman	CT Water Co.
Kim Czapl	CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
Virginia de Lima (alt.)	
Lily Engbith	CT Office of Policy & Management
Ali Hibbard	CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
Iris Kaminski	
Barbara Masi	
Justine Philips-Gallucci	CT Office of Policy & Management

Members Absent:

Bonnie Burr	UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources
Sonia Marino	CT Association of Directors of Health
Denise Savageau	CT Association of Conservation Districts
Jeff Shaw	CT Outdoor Recreation Alliance
Steve Woltornist	Marmon Water Residential Filtration/Water Quality Assoc.
Vacancy	Electric Power
Vacancy	River Protection

Staff:

Bruce Wittchen	CT Office of Policy & Management
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1. Call to Order

Co-chair Alicea called the meeting to order at 1:33 and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of draft 9/17/2024 Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [draft 9/17/2024 minutes](#) and Dan Lawrence requested confirmation that the draft's description of Matthew Hallock's statements in the public comment section were accurate. Alicea showed that section onscreen and Carol Haskins suggested that the minutes spell out the SOLAR acronym he mentioned or provide a link to the website he mentioned. Bruce Wittchen said he will add that. After further review, the motion was approved unanimously, with Pat Kearney abstaining because he had missed the meeting. Dan Lawrence questioned if Matthew Hallock's extensive comments regarding a specific company were too much for public comment at a WPCAG meeting.

3. Old Business

a. WPC and work group updates

- WPC meeting

Alicea Charamut provided an overview, highlighting the upcoming annual report and WPC goals. She noted people's interest in funding a water plan update and funding staff for the WPC and mentioned action items discussed at the [WPC's 7/12/2023 retreat](#) that have not yet been fulfilled. This shows the need for funding.

- Annual WPC report

Alicea Charamut noted that no one had contacted her to volunteer and Virginia de Lima said the biggest job is obtaining reports from the subgroups. She added that the new system should make that easier. Reports should be submitted to her, Alicea, and Dan. There was a discussion of the period of time the report should cover for the work of ongoing groups and it was decided that the report should cover the calendar year. Alicea Charamut noted the extended gap in reporting prior to the past three years and there was a discussion of the timeline for other groups to submit their reports.

- Outreach & Education Work Group

Ali Hibbard said the group met on 10/1 and discussed topics for 2025, which will focus on extreme weather. She also mentioned the upcoming flash drought webinar:

Imagine A Day Without Water: Flash Drought
October 17, 2024 - 12-1 p.m.

Each year Connecticut takes part in the national Imagine a Day Without Water Campaign. This year our program will highlight a new phenomenon, Flash Drought. Although we are all familiar with the term “flash flood”, we normally think of drought as a condition that develops over time. Climate change has altered precipitation patterns and availability of water including here in Connecticut. Learn what flash drought is and its potential impacts to Connecticut.

Introductions by:

- Kim Czapl, Supervising Environmental Analyst, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Presenter:

- Eric Lindquist, Planning Specialist, Drinking Water Section, CT Department of Public Health

This is a virtual event, register here:
<https://ctdeep.zoom.us/join/77459478200>
<https://ctdeep.zoom.us/join/77459478200> The State Water Plan is developed by the Water Planning Council (WPC). This workshop is hosted by the WPC's Outreach and Education Committee.

TENTH ANNUAL
Imagine a Day Without Water 1
 October 17, 2024

- **Nominating Committee**

Committee chair Haskins showed the spreadsheet of members and alternates dating back to April but updated to highlight vacancies. She said they have recruited Len Green of [FirstLight Energy](#) for the electric power position and previous alternate Martha Smith for the river protection position. Maggie Favretti of the [Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed](#) would replace her as alternate. Lauren Bergman of CT Water offered to be the alternate for the investor-owned water utility position and Dan Lawrence mentioned Aquarion’s Ingrid Jacobs as being another option. Kathy Czepiel said [Save the Sound](#)’s Chase Lindemann can be her alternate for the land protection position.

Carol Haskins requested one-paragraph biographies of each person that can be sent to the WPC. Alicea Charamut said she is pleased to see Len Green getting involved based on previous experience working with him. She also mentioned the Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed’s close connection with SE CT’s indigenous population and also the benefit of increasing representation from that part of the state. A motion was made and seconded to forward the adjusted slate to the WPC and motion passed unanimously.

- **Source Water Protection Work Group**

Kim Czapl noted that comments on the group’s white paper were requested previously and said the group will meet to review those on 10/29. They will provide an update for the WPCAG’s review at its November meeting.

- Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis Work Group

There was no update.

- Watershed Lands Work Group [next *quarterly meeting is Sept. 13*]

There was no update.

b. Expectations for 2025 legislative session

Dan Lawrence said he has heard a new version of this year's [HB 5004](#), *An Act Concerning The Implementation Of Certain Climate Change Measures*, is coming back in 2025. Alicea Charamut recommended discussing water-related details at the WPCAG's November meeting and mentioned some concerns to address, noting the relevance to in-stream and out-of-stream interests. There was a discussion of who might be drafting the new bill and Alicea also mentioned 2024's [SB 11](#), *An Act Concerning Connecticut Resiliency Planning And Providing Municipal Options For Climate Resilience*, and said we're getting stuck and spoke of the benefits for in-stream and out-of-stream uses.

c. Other old business

- Website changes

Ali Hibbard said the group of agency staff that have been updating water webpages have paused pending upcoming system-wide changes. She invited people to suggest any changes needed in the interim and Alicea Charamut asked that completed reports be posted.

- WUCC update

Dan Lawrence said the western [Water Utility Coordinating Committee](#) (WUCC) met and DPH was there for a discussion of the next WUCC plans. DPH wants more frequent, but simpler information submission. They are preparing for the next WUCC plan and he noted the question of what should be included. Current plans include the location of every fire hydrant. He added that development has increased in some areas but decreased in others. He also listed the WUCC leaders.

- Interagency Drought Work Group

Bruce Wittchen noted that precipitation has been unusually low for the past month but close to normal across longer time periods because of the previously wet conditions. Ground water levels were fairly normal. He mentioned that water agency staff will be meeting to discuss planning for the drought tabletop exercise being planned for next year and the IDW will meet in early November to consider the drought measures.

Dan Lawrence asked about stream flows, noting that those he watches are low. Bruce said the unusually low recent precipitation has affected stream flows but short-term agricultural measures have not yet been affected yet. The IDW will consider the data

when it meets again in a few weeks. There was a discussion of the implications of conditions drying this time of year and Alicea Charamut mentioned that Carol Haskins had mentioned in the chat that the Pomperaug River is low but ground water in a nearby monitoring well is high. She added that Kelsey Sudol had mentioned that Lake Waramaug is very low. Alicea also encouraged people to sign up for the previously-mentioned flash drought webinar. Carol Haskins described a recent joint press release her organization issued with the CT Water Co. regarding conditions.

4. New Business

Alicea Charamut provided links to information regarding the ongoing process to revise septic system regulations:

[10/10/2024 DPH meeting](#)

[Comment Form](#)

5. Public Comment

Iris Kaminski mentioned a presentation she had given on 1,4-dioxane and said the potential problem seems to be most significant for private wells. She mentioned a multi-state advisory council and invited people to contact her for more information. They are just getting started and aim to develop recommendations for a future legislative session.

There was further discussion of the need for further assistance in completing the annual WPC report discussed earlier.

6. Upcoming Meetings

Oct. 15, 2024	Source Water Protection Work Group (9:00)
Nov. 5, 2024	Outreach & Education Work Group (9:00)
Nov. 5, 2024	WPC (1:30)
Nov. 7, 2024	Interagency Drought Work Group (1:00)
Nov. 19, 2024	Source Water Protection Work Group (9:00)
Nov. 19, 2024	WPCAG (1:30)
TBD	Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis

7. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:28.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM