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

STATE WATER PLANNING COUNCIL
(Steering Committee)

Special Meeting held Via Teleconference on
February 23, 2024, beginning at 10:04 a.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 **LORI MATHIEU (DPH)**

5 **GRAHAM STEVENS (DEEP)**

6 **MARTIN HEFT (OPM)**

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

9 **VIRGINIA de LIMA**

10 **MARGARET MINER**

11 **DAN LAWRENCE**

12 **CAROL HASKINS**

13 **ALICEA CHARAMUT**

14 **BARBARA MASI**

15
16 **Staff:**

17 **LAURA LUPOLI**

18 **ALYSON AYOTTE**

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1 (Begin: 10:04 a.m.)

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3 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Good morning, everyone, and
4 welcome to the special meeting of the water
5 planning council. We have a full quorum of
6 council members here today.

7 The only thing on the agenda today is to go
8 through the screening, slash, nominating process,
9 the application process for the Water Planning
10 Council advisory group. There's been some
11 discussion and meetings on this already, but I'm
12 going to turn it right over to Martin, and then
13 we'll open up for questions.

14 So good morning, Martin.

15 MARTIN HEFT: Good morning. And thank you, Jack.

16 Good morning to everybody. I'm just going to
17 do, you know, a quick, high level overview. I
18 apologize to some of you that may have heard this
19 before, because I did attend the Water Planning
20 Council's advisory group earlier this week and did
21 the same thing, and answered questions on that as
22 well.

23 So thank you Alecia and Dan for allowing me
24 to speak at that meeting on the topic and answer
25 questions on that.

1 So just as, you know, kind of -- I'll try to
2 keep it, you know, high level without going into
3 all, you know, individual details, but from the
4 start of the process of us looking at
5 consolidating, you know, the water planning
6 advisory group implementation group, you know, and
7 for whatever terms we want to use of just having,
8 you know, a new group -- effective originally we
9 thought, you know, come January with new terms
10 staggered everything -- this goes back to our
11 October meeting when we talked about doing this
12 and consolidating/establishing, you know, new
13 terms talking about, you know, not having state
14 agencies on the advisory group because they're
15 reporting back to the state agencies.

16 Some of this all stemmed from the overall
17 summit that we had down in Rocky Hill, that
18 Virginia was wonderful and did the -- putting all
19 that together. So I reviewed at that October
20 meeting kind of an outline for how we are going to
21 kind of process this and kind of our goals moving
22 forward.

23 So you can review back into the minutes, you
24 know, of that whole meeting, as well as the
25 November 7th meeting on it where we've talked

1 about where we, you know, we're going to revamp
2 the advisory workgroup, and you know the
3 membership and the guidelines. Even at that time
4 we talked about, you know, everyone that was
5 current, currently on would just continue on until
6 the consolidation was done and we just reappoint
7 vacancies.

8 February 7th, we did send out after our
9 meetings everything we noticed seeking applicants.
10 It was sent out to the WPC list, e-mail list. We
11 had it posted several, you know, spots on the
12 Water Planning Council website. We did send
13 notice out to various organizations, you know,
14 planner's association, UConn CLEAR, Association of
15 Conservation Inland Wetlands, Waterworks
16 Association, asking them to try to just, you know,
17 help spread the word, as well as asking the
18 advisory group to work with their nominating
19 committee to make recommendations, you know as
20 well. And that was obviously a separate motion
21 that was done at that meeting additionally.

22 So you know, in the notice that you know went
23 out saying, you know, obviously any interested
24 applicants, send a letter of interest, you know,
25 resume into our Chairman. And we also said that

1 we would forward those to the advisory group with
2 the nominating committee any that have come in.

3 I know as of today, we received two new ones
4 in, and then one that's a current member as well
5 had sent interest in. So there's, you know, only
6 three that we've received; two would be completely
7 new people from my understanding; one would be,
8 you know, seeking a reappointment.

9 But we've said from the very beginning that
10 we would be doing all new terms starting with the
11 advisory group, but no one is adverse to having
12 anyone be reappointed, if you will, onto those
13 boards -- but all new terms starting when we
14 finalize, you know, the listing there so
15 reappointments can be done.

16 I know that Carol has worked very hard and
17 she's even presented, you know, a preliminary list
18 and everything through that, you know, and
19 discussing with current members that are on either
20 implementation group, or the advisory group that
21 are interested in serving that could be part of
22 recommendations.

23 And then kind of what happens from that point
24 there is, obviously the recommendations that the
25 advisory group nominating committee has will get

1 presented to the Water Planning Council.

2 Obviously, we'll look at those in addition to any
3 others that we receive in up through the 27th.

4 I'm not foreseeing that there would actually
5 be a vote at the March meeting of the members,
6 because obviously our deadline of the 27th, there
7 may be, you know, if there's late submissions in
8 that don't get a chance to get reviewed or vetted
9 if you will.

10 So there may be additional ask of, you know,
11 the advisory group to -- hey, we got some
12 additional ones in. Would you take a look at
13 these as well?

14 Obviously, we as the Water Planning Council
15 have to look through all the recommendations, any
16 others that we receive in doing our due diligence
17 for that, making them, you know, any, you know,
18 changes or recommendations that we have.

19 I would project -- this would just be my, you
20 know, personal outline of it -- that would all
21 happen during, you know, the month of March.
22 April we would, you know, make appointments
23 official, you know, after, you know, review and
24 any additional vetting the Water Planning Council
25 wants to do as well as selecting the, you know,

1 chair and cochair.

2 So that's kind of more, you know, high level
3 and kind of just overall process for that, but you
4 know to reiterate, you know anyone that's a
5 current member on either of those that are
6 interested in serving should either directly reach
7 out to, you know, our Chair, or can directly reach
8 out to Carol with the nominating committee to say,
9 hey. You know, I'm interested in, you know,
10 serving or reserving.

11 I know they're looking, you know -- and Carol
12 has been great. She sent me a preliminary list
13 with her breakdown of three years and everything
14 when we were going through this process a little
15 earlier doing the guidelines, you know, trying to
16 stagger terms and everything that way.

17 So that's greatly appreciated.

18 And then obviously, as we said, anyone
19 that's, you know, may not, you know, come through
20 this nominating process of, you know, through the
21 advisory group, you know there is an additional
22 way to be able to get an application in, you know,
23 if you will, which is the same process the
24 Governor's office uses for any state boards and
25 commissions for that.

1 Obviously, the intent here is to reach out to
2 as many people as possible and look out there to
3 make sure there is availability and there's notice
4 that if someone is interested in serving, they
5 have the opportunity to do so, and that's really
6 the -- just of making sure that we have several
7 avenues for this process to happen and to, you
8 know, get members.

9 But Jack, I'll turn it back to you to go
10 through any questions or anything that anyone has
11 either from our guests or from our council
12 members.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Martin. Appreciate that
14 overview. Do we have any comments from the
15 council members, and then I'll open up to the --
16 but is there any comments from council members at
17 this point?

18 **LORI MATHIEU:** Yeah. Jack, thank you.

19 And Martin, I just want to thank you for the
20 organization and your explanation. I think it's a
21 very well formed structured approach, you know,
22 rooted in -- as you just mentioned, rooted into
23 what government typically does. Right? And maybe
24 people are not used to this happening in this way.
25 I know I haven't -- we haven't done this like this

1 in the past.

2 But during the retreat I recall hearing that
3 it would be really great to get more people
4 involved, and that this is a really great way to
5 recruit more people into our arena that -- you
6 know that we are responsible for.

7 So Martin, thank you for that.

8 Appreciate it.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: Graham?

10 GRAHAM STEVENS: I mean, nothing that I could add would
11 be new. So thank you.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Do we have questions from
13 any of the WPCAG, or the nominating committee, or
14 anybody else?

15 I'll open it up.

16 ALECIA CHARAMUT: So first of all, I just want to thank
17 you guys for getting the word out. I mean, had we
18 had this sort of support from the Water Planning
19 Council on vacancies over the past years, I think
20 we probably would have been able to bring a lot
21 more folks in.

22 So I want to thank you guys, and hope that we
23 continue to get that support from the Water
24 Planning Council.

25 Process-wise I really think, just to be fair

1 to Carol and the advisory group, just to
2 understand how this is going to move forward for
3 our timelines, and also to understand just for
4 folks who are willing to stay on and be
5 reappointed, you know, what that's going to mean
6 going forward as we're looking at new folks who we
7 would absolutely love to bring on in some way.

8 But I think just to be fair to the folks that
9 are interested in staying on, what would that look
10 like going forward? Would you be replacing
11 someone because you think there's a better
12 candidate?

13 And again, I just want clarity so that the
14 folks that have been serving for a while
15 understand the process going forward.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Martin?

17 MARTIN HEFT: Jack do you want me to start with that?

18 Thanks. Thanks, Alecia, for the comments.
19 And you know, definitely -- I mean, I agree that,
20 you know, the Water Planning Council probably
21 should, you know, should have been doing more
22 helping to do outreach and everything else that
23 way, and I think the whole retreat, everything
24 helped regenerate and everything else that way.

25 So yes, you know, believe me going forward

1 that's obviously why it's written that way in the
2 guidelines as well, that there's responsibility of
3 the Council, the responsibility of the advisory
4 group and everything. So hopefully, you know,
5 moving forward that will continue.

6 You know, for that I think, you know, I'm
7 going to speak from, you know, I was a former
8 municipal official that had to make appointments
9 on boards/commissions. I know the Governor's
10 office and having worked for the former lieutenant
11 governor that chaired those board commission
12 process.

13 They go through -- they look at every
14 candidate that is, you know, has put an
15 application in; review whether it is for
16 reappointment, whether it is for new appointment,
17 and you know, consider with that.

18 Obviously, you know, we have kind of probably
19 a little difference, you know, uniqueness here
20 because, you know, we've got to point people into
21 certain categories, you know, for that there. So
22 you know, where, you know, there may be -- oh,
23 here's a couple of people under this category that
24 now we've got to look at someone that has served
25 on here and someone new that might be, you know,

1 that's interested.

2 We as a Water Planning Council then have to
3 look at that, you know, and take all things into
4 consideration and then make a selection of best
5 candidate to fill that spot, you know, on that.
6 And you know some of those things, you know,
7 looking at is, you know, if it's a reappointment,
8 you know, what's their attendance record, you
9 know, on it? Certain things that you would look
10 at there.

11 If it's a new member, what are they bringing
12 different, you know, to this? Or who are they
13 representing? You know, why are they interested
14 in doing it? You know, so there's a vast variety
15 of things that are going to be looked at for
16 appointment if there's going to be, you know,
17 multiple people for one position that are
18 interested in that seat.

19 Hopefully that helps clarify a little bit.

20 I mean, you can't say that there's any
21 guaranteed seat, you know, on it. Every board
22 commission appointment, you know regardless, you
23 know, going through whether you're the municipal
24 government or other things are -- you know when
25 the term is up, they're up.

1 And you, the appointing authority looks at,
2 you know, all -- all potential members for that
3 position and selects who they feel is best to fill
4 that role, obviously -- you know, in
5 consideration.

6 That's why I said, you know if it's
7 reappointment, how has their work been on that, on
8 the board or commission? What has their
9 attendance been, you know, and everything else
10 that way? Those are factors including, you know,
11 for that.

12 So I'd hope that the advisory group, you
13 know, looking at, you know, anyone that's being
14 reappointed, have they been active? Have they not
15 shown up for six months? Okay. Then why are we
16 recommending reappointing that person if that be
17 the case? You know, factors that we would all
18 look at.

19 So hopefully that helps explain it.

20 **ALECIA CHARAMUT:** And also -- and Carol, I don't know
21 if you were still considering this, but it seemed
22 like a good way forward is, I think we would like
23 to get -- just putting a Google form together,
24 because I feel like there are other questions that
25 need to be answered that may help make decisions

1 going forward.

2 Like, you know if someone definitely wants to
3 stay on, but there's a middle ground -- right?
4 I'll stay on if you can't find anybody else. And
5 if there's someone else that needs to, you know
6 that has an interest, you know that person may
7 just be willing to go to the alternate spot and
8 let this person take that spot if they -- if
9 they're sort of in that middle place of, I want
10 out, or I really want to stay on.

11 You know, you can capture the 'meh.

12 And I think there were a few other things
13 that you know certainly would be helpful for you
14 guys to have to be able to look at this and move
15 people around.

16 And Carol, I don't know if you have -- I know
17 there are a lot of questions you needed
18 process-wise on this, and I want to give Carol an
19 opportunity.

20 Well, first of all, I'll let you -- is that
21 fine? We send some -- a form out that's going to
22 make things a little bit easier for Carol to
23 (unintelligible) --

24 **MARTIN HEFT:** So if I may? So I mean, I think that's
25 great. I mean, it's actually -- I wouldn't

1 consider a form.

2 So the Governor's office, they actually have
3 an official application form, the Governor's
4 office. Of course, and it's very long because it
5 goes through everything from ethics to everything,
6 you know, through that.

7 We actually, you know, two associations or
8 committees that OPM appoints members to, we
9 actually use that form, you know, where it talks
10 about, you know, all their background and
11 everything else. And they are required to submit
12 that as their application along as with their
13 intent to do.

14 It's almost that you know we should develop a
15 form or an application for serving on the Water
16 Planning Council's advisory workgroup -- is what
17 I'm hearing from you, you know, this questionnaire
18 of this is the information I need and everything
19 else.

20 It's almost like an application so you can
21 gather the information that you need would. It
22 would also be helpful for us because then we could
23 look at those if -- you know, yes, I'm willing to
24 serve as an alternate, or I'm willing to serve as
25 this, you know. Or, yes, I've been a past member.

1 Well, what is your attendance record?

2 You know, the questions that you may need to
3 also help you are going to help us. So I think
4 it's a wonderful idea. You know, I think --

5 ALECIA CHARAMUT: But we don't have time to develop a
6 full application at this point. Right now I'm
7 just talking about something to go out to the
8 current members just to really kind of gather in
9 an organized manner.

10 MARTIN HEFT: Right.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: I don't want to over complicate this.
12 You know we've had this council for 20 -- or this
13 advisory group for 20 years. I don't think we
14 want to get to a degree it looks like when I apply
15 for my job. It's quite different.

16 I think you put a one-page or whatever, four
17 or five questions together. I think we don't --
18 the nominating committee can do that, come up with
19 a format and send it out, and for the things that
20 you have questions about you send out. That's it.

21 I mean, Carol I see your want to talk there.

22 CAROL HASKINS: Unmuting. Yeah, I think there is a
23 middle ground here in terms of creating something
24 that's really simple that's going to be a really
25 useful tool in terms of capturing all this

1 information.

2 So whoever is on the nominating committee or
3 whoever is the chair of it or who, you know, for
4 the folks that are on the Council itself, it's a
5 simple form of your name, your e-mail. Which
6 category are you interested in serving in? Do you
7 want to be a regular member, or an alternate? You
8 know, are you available to serve or attend
9 meetings on this day consistently every month?
10 You know, pretty simple questions here, or, you
11 know.

12 And then to the point of, you know, speaking
13 to the credentials we don't need a full resume I
14 don't think at this point, but just, you know, a
15 brief bio. So if you're considering somebody new
16 from that call out to, you know, this broader
17 list, you have some kind of frame of reference
18 that, you know not all of us have the
19 institutional knowledge like Jeff Shaws knew. And
20 I'm picking on you just because you are new -- you
21 know, what is your background? Or Kathy Czepiel
22 from Save the Sound.

23 Like you know, these are folks I didn't know
24 two months ago, but quickly learned a quick
25 background on them -- just in a few, like, in a

1 paragraph, in five sentences, you know what they
2 can bring to the table. And that's kind of the
3 simplicity of what I'm thinking as far as being
4 able to capture that using a Google form so I'm
5 not inundated with 40 e-mails and trying to track
6 down those 40 e-mails and missing something. It's
7 just going to go right into one central repository
8 for us.

9 And I will say, Martin, I very much
10 appreciate that the Council will consider a
11 nomination list, but recognize that it's not
12 likely to be approved in March. I think that's a
13 very realistic timeline given some of the
14 confusion that we've had, and the timeline for
15 seeing when the cutoff is to get responses back
16 from the larger call out.

17 So that, that is very reassuring to me. I
18 was a little panicked about trying to figure out
19 how to get the nominating committee together next
20 week to pull something together to submit to you
21 guys by next Friday.

22 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Which is a great segue.

23 Do we want -- I'll ask my council colleagues,
24 do we want to give it a little bit more? Lori
25 texted me -- do we want to give it a little more,

1 maybe another week?

2 LORI MATHIEU: That's what I'm thinking maybe for us.

3 I know we want to get this done, but to be fair to
4 people in listening to everyone speak about this,
5 that maybe we need to just extend it.

6 I know the deadline is coming up. Right?

7 The end of February, or the 27th?

8 THE CHAIRMAN: February 27th.

9 LORI MATHIEU: So it's Monday. Right? And so there's
10 a lot of questions. I don't want people to
11 lose -- the whole concept, the whole notion of
12 this is that we get more people in. Right? So
13 what is another three weeks?

14 If we give people another three weeks, and we
15 get this form set and we work together on what the
16 form and the format is, you know, the whole idea
17 is to bring new people in and to learn about them.

18 I really love the idea of, you know, I don't
19 know who Jeff is. I see Jeff's picture there.
20 I've never met Jeff. You know, I'd like to learn
21 more.

22 So that you know, Carol, to your point, when
23 it comes to us, the four -- there he is.

24 Hi, Jeff.

25 That we know more about who, who these people

1 are, what they bring to the table, what's their
2 level of interest. I'd love to hear that. Like,
3 I'd love to have an open-ended question, what's
4 your level of interest? Why do you want to be
5 part of this? You know, it's kind of a cool
6 question, and I'd love to hear people's ideas and
7 thoughts, because I think that would just help us.

8 So, Martin, I don't know if that -- and Jack,
9 and Graham, I don't know if you're willing to
10 consider a little bit more time.

11 MARTIN HEFT: Yeah, I have no problem with that. You
12 know, that's why we kind of started out saying,
13 you know, and see if a list was ready in March, we
14 wouldn't even be voting on it yet. And if we
15 needed more time, more than happy to that.

16 I mean, if it works and says, okay. April,
17 you know, in our April meeting, you submit us the
18 recommendation list, that's fine. I mean, we --
19 there's no -- you know when we voted, you know,
20 the whole consolidation and everything, we didn't
21 put a specific date on this.

22 We said, you know, by the spring, we kind of
23 set a target date, you know, on it and everything
24 else. And although it's still four weeks from the
25 official first day of spring, you know, the April

1 would, you know, coincide with that if we wanted
2 to say, okay. You know, let's pick a date, you
3 know, in mid-March to have everything in by. And
4 that way by April provide us with, you know, all
5 the recommendations and everything.

6 No issue with that. Obviously, we want
7 everything to be vetted properly and, you know,
8 make sure we've got the best, you know, qualified
9 people that are serving us and going to be our
10 advisory, you know, group.

11 So I have no concerns with that at all.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Graham?

13 **GRAHAM STEVENS:** Sorry, Jack. I just had to step away
14 with a phonecall I had to take. My apologies.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN:** So the question is, do we want -- and no
16 apologies necessary.

17 Do we want to extend the application deadline
18 for applications to the Water Planning Council
19 advisory group given the fact there was some
20 confusion? So now that we're getting to what's
21 clarity that we extend it and then we can look at
22 applicants at our April meeting?

23 **GRAHAM STEVENS:** That sounds fine to me. And you know
24 that might help with respect to further
25 opportunities to increase the interest.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

2 Alecia, I see a hand -- oh, I'm so sorry,
3 Martin.

4 MARTIN HEFT: I'll let Alecia speak first. Go ahead.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, Alecia.

6 ALECIA CHARAMUT: I was just going to say, if -- I
7 think it would be helpful if we had a deadline
8 before our March meeting, which is the 19th,
9 because that will give us a chance to -- Carol,
10 you know, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think
11 that will give the nominating committee a chance
12 to meet and then just bring it to the advisory
13 group at the March meeting, and cut out an extra
14 meeting.

15 CAROL HASKINS: I did get the nominating committee
16 committed to meeting next week on Thursday, on
17 leap day. Yeah, Thursday at one o'clock.

18 So we are on track to meet, and then just
19 thinking about if we are going to move forward
20 with a Google Form, would you like -- would
21 someone from the Water Planning Council or a
22 couple members of the Water Planning Council like
23 to review the questionnaire before we go live with
24 it?

25 MARTIN HEFT: So I'm more than happy to work with you,

1 Carol, as I've been kind of spearheading it, but
2 obviously if any other council member want to, you
3 can take a look.

4 LORI MATHIEU: Yeah, I would be willing to take a shot
5 and looking at it as well.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. So we have two members of the
7 Council willing to work with you, but let's zero
8 in on that.

9 MARTIN HEFT: I'd like to make a motion, Mr. Chairman?

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Yeah?

11 MARTIN HEFT: I'd like to make a motion that we extend
12 the deadline for applications for the water
13 planning advisory group until to Monday, March 11.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: You're anticipating -- you're reading my
15 mind here. That's exactly what I wanted to do on
16 that.

17 Do I hear a second?

18 LORI MATHIEU: Second. I second that.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made and seconded that we extend
20 the deadline for applications to the Water
21 Planning Council advisory group to Monday, March
22 11.

23 Any questions on the motion?

24
25 (No response.)

1 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, all those in favor signify by
2 saying aye.

3 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Opposed?

5
6 (No response.)
7

8 THE CHAIRMAN: The motion carries.

9 Thank you, Martin.

10 All right. I see Margaret and I see

11 Virginia. Margaret?

12 MARGARET MINER: Hi.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Good morning.

14 MARGARET MINER: Good morning. Thank you all for
15 coming. To go back to the retreat, which is good
16 to reference, the concept of bringing more people
17 in, I definitely agree with, but I didn't think
18 there would be such an emphasis on bringing more
19 people onto the Council, which after all would
20 only be a half a dozen people or whatever.

21 I thought that the emphasis would be on
22 getting people to come to the Water Planning
23 Council, realize what it does, and participate,
24 come as visitors as to be informed as to our
25 issues.

1 Because many times I tell people, this might
2 be something for the Water Planning Council. Why
3 don't you, you know, attend it. And that's really
4 not easy. We don't have very much participation
5 from people that come in that I think of as coming
6 in from different parts of the state with
7 different issues.

8 So I'm a little confused, you know. I don't
9 think a coming in should be limited to having a
10 few different people on the advisory group -- and
11 so that's my opinion. And my question is, it
12 seems to me that the process that we've had -- I
13 think we have a pretty good group. Business and
14 industry is always empty, always struggling on
15 that one, but I agree every group can use
16 refreshing.

17 But maybe, Martin, you could explain. It
18 seems to me that the role of the advisory group in
19 the process of finding people and recommending
20 them and so forth is different now under the
21 process you're suggesting.

22 In particular, I think it's different in
23 going from knowing that there's a person who's
24 interested, whoever knows it, and then I think it
25 goes -- I think it used to be like the advisory

1 group would weigh in at that point. It sounds to
2 me now like that will go straight to the Water
3 Planning Council that will do appointments.

4 So is there a change in that roadmap in those
5 steps for the advisory group what they used to do,
6 and what they'll be doing now?

7 **MARTIN HEFT:** So thanks, Margaret. And I think, you
8 know, your first part of that is definitely, you
9 know, getting other people to come to meetings and
10 everything -- completely different than membership
11 of the advisory group.

12 So you know that's obviously something that
13 we can help work on as well as getting word out
14 about meetings, or if there's particular issues
15 that, you know, obviously the public is welcome to
16 come to any meetings, you know, because they are
17 public meetings.

18 Your second part about, you know, process and
19 everything else, it's always been under the
20 authority of the Water Planning Council to appoint
21 the members of the advisory group. That has
22 always been. That is in state statute.

23 In the past from my, you know, my term, you
24 know, time on this, there's been a vacancy or
25 there are updates, you know, on a regular basis.

1 The advisory group through its nominating
2 committee has made recommendations to the Water
3 Planning Council. The Water Planning Council has
4 taken action, you know, on those.

5 The only difference now is that the Water
6 Planning Council has also just reached out to
7 various organizations, members of public,
8 announcing that, hey, we have openings or there
9 may be openings, you know, for the, you know, for
10 that but we also at, you know, last meeting,
11 authorized the advisory group to, you know, vet
12 candidates and do everything that way.

13 So that whole process is all still the same.
14 The only thing different is that we're trying to
15 broaden that area out by putting some notices out
16 on that, that that's part of it because that is
17 the role, that statutorily of the Water Planning
18 Council, is to make those appointments.

19 So we're trying to -- and obviously we're all
20 here working together for the same goals on that,
21 but we're creating different pockets for people
22 that might not know the advisory group to be able
23 to apply directly that way. So we're giving them
24 the option to apply right through the Water
25 Planning council. That's the only difference.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

2 Any further follow up there, Margaret?

3 MARGARET MINER: (Inaudible.)

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Go ahead, Virginia.

5 VIRGINIA de LIMA: My question follows on what you just
6 said, Martin, in terms of the vetting of the
7 candidates. And I would appreciate some
8 clarification on the role of the nominating
9 committee.

10 Are you asking the nominating committee to do
11 that vetting and make a choice, and send that
12 along to you? Or are you council members wanting
13 to see the applications so that you do that
14 vetting yourselves?

15 MARTIN HEFT: I'll speak for myself, and I'm going to
16 say both. I would like to see the applications.
17 I would like to see the questionnaires on it,
18 because obviously we are the appointing authority.

19 But obviously, you know, we're going to look
20 at the recommendations made from the committee
21 reviewing all of that -- but obviously, you had
22 that question on a candidate, or similar when
23 we've had vacancies come up. It's presented,
24 here's the background information on this person,
25 why we're recommending them and everything else.

1 Obviously, that's an important factor for us
2 for consideration as well, but you know,
3 personally I would like to see that, you know, the
4 background information on those as well as other
5 people that weren't selected or nominated by the
6 nominating group, you know, because we do need to
7 vet, you know, and look at all of them overall.

8 LORI MATHIEU: Martin, I would agree with that. I
9 think we, you know, with this new Google form and
10 gathering all of this information I think it
11 would -- it's going to be extremely helpful for
12 the nominating committee, but as well as us.

13 But we value dearly your, you know, what you
14 think as a committee about, you know, the people
15 that have come, and you know have an interest.

16 So yes, I think from my point of view I would
17 like to see all of the information and also, you
18 know, a discussion of how you've made, you know,
19 your choices and your decisions, and what are they
20 based upon. So I think that that's important for
21 us to know as well.

22 GRAHAM STEVENS: Which I don't think is wholly
23 dissimilar from what we've done in the past. I'm
24 typically a pretty optimistic person and I hope we
25 have, like you know, a wave of people interested

1 and participating. And it's good -- I think it's
2 good for us, you know, to know who all those folks
3 are and understand some of their backgrounds, you
4 know, at somewhat of a high level.

5 Because you know we're not going to be able
6 to, you know, necessarily give opportunities for
7 all those folks to participate in, you know, in an
8 appointed role, but it doesn't mean that we
9 shouldn't then be following up with them and
10 ensuring to -- I can't remember if it was Alecia's
11 point about, you know, trying to get more people
12 involved in the Water Planning Council, you know,
13 at large. Right?

14 We want to grow the importance of this
15 Council. We want to, you know, increase public
16 awareness. You know what we do, and you know the
17 broader the coalition, the greater the potential
18 for outcomes. So I think this is really going to
19 be, if anything, hopefully a recommitment of the
20 water planning councilors to helping with
21 appointments and recruitments.

22 And you know, also, you know, modernizing to
23 some extent, you know, based on newer rules, you
24 know, like, you know how we get people into
25 official appointments. And we want to help, is

1 what we want to do.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Okay. I think we're all in agreement
3 that we would like to -- certainly, we'll look at
4 the recommendation of the Water Planning Council
5 advisory group nominating committee, but we want
6 to kind of see the other candidates as well and
7 the applications, and that type of thing.

8 Dan Lawrence?

9 **DAN LAWRENCE:** Just one really quick administrative
10 question. So if nominations are due into you
11 guys, the request by the 11th of March, what is
12 the process to get that recommendation to you?

13 Because it's based on a sequence of how the
14 meetings are set up. So we need to figure out
15 whether the Water Planning Council advisory group
16 needs to have a special meeting, because we meet
17 normally after you, quote, unquote, in the month.

18 So if we could lay out, like, the timetable,
19 that will be helpful Martin or Jack, or Lori --

20 **MARTIN HEFT:** Well, I think as -- and I won't speak for
21 our Chair, but I think what's happened is as he's
22 received them in he's been forwarding them along,
23 all along -- and he's receiving them. So that
24 way, you know -- obviously through that.

25 So I don't think there's a special meeting

1 that has to happen, because we're just forwarding
2 those applications.

3 DAN LAWRENCE: No, no. I didn't -- Martin, I didn't
4 mean --

5 MARTIN HEFT: I'm not sure about --

6 DAN LAWRENCE: Yeah, I meant, like --

7 MARTIN HEFT: -- your question.

8 DAN LAWRENCE: -- if March 11th is the last date,
9 quote, unquote, people can send in applications --
10 right? Then when are you guys expecting the
11 nominating -- the Water Planning Council advisory
12 group to present a nominating slate to you?

13 THE CHAIRMAN: I would think before the April meeting.

14 LORI MATHIEU: Before our April meeting. Right?

15 THE CHAIRMAN: Before our April meeting, correct.

16 LORI MATHIEU: Right. So that I think Alecia, you had
17 mentioned -- when is your next meeting? Or
18 somebody --

19 ALECIA CHARAMUT: March 19th.

20 LORI MATHIEU: March 19th? Okay, does that give you
21 enough time?

22 ALECIA CHARAMUT: And I guess the question is to Carol,
23 if -- if she thinks that the nominating committee
24 can get something to the advisory group by the
25 March 19th meeting with a March 11th deadline?

1 CAROL HASKINS: Yeah, I think that, you know, if we
2 know this timeline today, we're already planning
3 to meet next week, and we can, you know, solidify
4 what that form looks like.

5 That still gives a couple weeks for people to
6 submit responses and -- or, you know, at least ten
7 days for folks to submit something through a form
8 so we can formalize that and then meet after the
9 11th, but before the, the 19th.

10 I'm just looking at the calendar for what
11 days those fall.

12 Yeah, we should be. We should be able to get
13 that group together between the 12th and the 15th
14 I would think, and then have something to send
15 along to Bruce to circulate for the Water Planning
16 Council advisory group for consideration for the
17 meeting on the 19th. And then that would give
18 ample time to send a recommended slate and summary
19 of, you know, the applicant pool up to the Water
20 Planning Council.

21 MARTIN HEFT: And if, you know, for some reason we, you
22 know, have a thrust of applicants come in whatever
23 else, and more time to -- obviously just, you
24 know, communicate with us and we'd say --

25 CAROL HASKINS: It's a good problem to have.

1 MARTIN HEFT: -- we've got to adjust the time. That
2 would a wonderful problem to have, you know, on
3 that.

4 CAROL HASKINS: Yeah, absolutely.

5 MARTIN HEFT: So obviously you know we can work with,
6 you know, whatever else. I mean, if we wind up
7 getting 30 applicants and, you know, and it's
8 like, wow. Now we've got to process all this and
9 everything -- we need more time. What a wonderful
10 problem to have.

11 CAROL HASKINS: Absolutely.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: We like that.

13 CAROL HASKINS: Yeah. You know, can I just add in, you
14 know, I think because this is a quote -- that's
15 referring to the new advisory group, so it's
16 really -- it's kind of resetting the slate of, you
17 know, it is the existing members, but we're
18 looking at new terms. And because of that, you
19 know, just wanting to get that, everybody
20 consolidated.

21 And I feel like I have a much clearer sense
22 of this in really casting that net wider. And I
23 think the help -- the discussion today has been
24 very helpful to provide a lot of clarity and get
25 the sense of what the timeline is.

1 And when we get to the next round of, you
2 know, filling vacancies or people stepping off
3 because their term has ended or something like
4 that, we're not going to be looking at every
5 single seat here. And I think the process is
6 going to be that much clearer going forward.

7 And I just think it's -- because it's out of
8 cycle for us, it's new -- it's everybody. It's
9 just been a little confusing and, but I think
10 we're getting there.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Carol.

12 CAROL HASKINS: I think we are there.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: So in that spirit, let's clarify. Now
14 if somebody is on the Water Planning Council
15 advisory group now, they should send a quick note
16 to you saying they would like to continue.

17 Is that what we want to do?

18 CAROL HASKINS: I would like to use a Google Form for
19 that so I'm not tracking 40 e-mails and getting
20 them lost in the shuffle.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Maybe we can do that to simplify, but
22 Alecia sent me a beautiful application.

23 CAROL HASKINS: Okay. Yes, I saw that, one sentence.
24 But to that point of having that -- like, if
25 Alecia was brand new, like Jeff -- sorry to pick

1 on you Jeff. I'm really not -- you're just the
2 one name I thought that was a newbie.

3 But you know, someone that you guys may not
4 be as familiar with, Alecia has been around the
5 block here for a long time -- you know, to have
6 that paragraph just kind of summarizing what her
7 case is. I think it's fair --

8 ALECIA CHARAMUT: You might learn something new about
9 me, though.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: I was impressed. I was impressed.

11 Okay.

12 ALECIA CHARAMUT: Sorry to interrupt.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Dan's got to go. Thank you, Dan.

14 Okay. Barbara Masi, you have your hand up?

15 BARBARA MASI: Yeah, hi. Barbara Masi.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Hi, Barbara.

17 BARBARA MASI: I'm member of the public. And so if
18 you're looking for public questions let me know,
19 or otherwise I'll step back.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: For?

21 BARBARA MASI: Oh, I'm a member of the public also
22 representing faculty at Yale School of Public
23 Health, Environmental Health Sciences.

24 And so first of all, thank you for sending
25 the notices far and wide. Certainly, you've

1 captured the interest of our faculty in the
2 environmental health sciences.

3 And so now my question is, there are 20 spots
4 on the advisory council. If all 20 members decide
5 they would like to remain, would any other
6 applicants that might be
7 nominated/recommended/considered by your group
8 then be considered as alternates?

9 MARTIN HEFT: Yes. The simple answer, Mr. Chairman is,
10 yes, they could be considered as alternates.

11 But you know the way the guidelines are
12 written is that the person who's in that seat
13 recommends the, you know, the alternate, you know,
14 for the position they are -- obviously being in
15 the same field and everything else, but you know.

16 So there, you know, there's kind of a process
17 for alternates as well, and I'd refer you to the
18 guidelines that are published on the website.

19 ALECIA CHARAMUT: Well, to be clear, Martin --

20 MARTIN HEFT: Yes, of course.

21 ALECIA CHARAMUT: Even if there isn't an official spot,
22 we would not want to lose the interests --

23 MARTIN HEFT: Oh, correct, yes.

24 ALECIA CHARAMUT: -- of anyone who has expertise.

25 We're an open group. Right? If the only thing

1 about membership is, you know, you fill the spot
2 that you know statutorily they recommend, and you
3 have voting -- but we rarely even have to utilize
4 that. It's usually only for official votes, you
5 know, like the minutes and stuff like that.

6 But we have several committees that are
7 working right now. They can always, always,
8 always use expertise, and whether someone has a
9 spot or not, I would love to see more people with
10 expertise there to help us get the work done that
11 needs to get done.

12 Because you know it's for a whole bunch of
13 volunteers trying to do good work; we can always
14 use an extra set of hands, more brain cells, and
15 expertise.

16 LORI MATHIEU: And that's what this, frankly, what this
17 process is all about. And Barbara, thank you for
18 the interest from Yale. Right?

19 We need -- to Alecia's point, we need
20 everybody at the table, because what we're facing
21 with climate change alone is very serious. Right?
22 And we need everybody's thoughts, and everybody's
23 research, and everybody's work.

24 All hands on deck. That's what I say.
25 Right? Let's bring it on. I'd love to have Yale

1 have a number of people involved; I'd love to have
2 UConn, a number of people involved. Any other
3 college that wants to come, university that wants
4 to come and help, absolutely we need that help.

5 So thank you, Barbara, for being on.

6 BARBARA MASI: Thank you. And you'll be thrilled to
7 know that because of the issues of climate change
8 and environmental justice, it's really been
9 turning the research toward more practice driven,
10 more community based, looking at these issues
11 among environmental health scientists. And so I
12 think it puts the scientists in a better position
13 to engage with the advisory group.

14 You know sometimes they get very sciencey.
15 I'll say that as a scientist for 30 years, but
16 they really are reorienting and so there's -- it
17 would just be such a thrill to contribute.

18 LORI MATHIEU: Excellent.

19 ALECIA CHARAMUT: We need more sciencey.

20 We'd love the sciencey.

21 LORI MATHIEU: I love the sciencey, and the research
22 and the understanding.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Barbara.

24 Any other comments from council members,
25 public stakeholders?

1 (No response.)

2
3 MARTIN HEFT: I make a motion to adjourn.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: I was just going to recap that we have
5 extended the date until March 11th for
6 applications, that the Water Planning Council
7 advisory group nominating committee is going to be
8 working on a concise application that we're going
9 to get to us to take a look at.

10 And Virginia, I see your hand up.

11 VIRGINIA de LIMA: Yes, thank you, Jack.

12 You had mentioned earlier that the form that
13 Carol is going to be developing or the nominating
14 committee is going to be developing would go to
15 the current members of the advisory group. I
16 would like it to also go to the current members of
17 the implementation workgroup.

18 And perhaps either have it for anybody who
19 was interested in applying just for consistency
20 and being able to quickly compare one candidate to
21 another -- but definitely to the implementation
22 workgroup.

23 MARTIN HEFT: Well, when the form is done we'll put the
24 link into the announcement, page 2 on it, so that
25 way it's all there so everything is consistent

1 amongst.

2 VIRGINIA de LIMA: Great. Thank you.

3 And just quickly to follow up on what Alecia
4 said to Barbara, not -- we're making all this
5 discussion about the membership of this committee,
6 but all the meetings are open.

7 Barbara, as you might be very well aware,
8 Iris has been attending very regularly all these
9 meetings and making wonderful contributions. And
10 so anybody who is present at the meeting is
11 welcome to speak, is encouraged to speak in the
12 main meetings as well as serve on the various
13 workgroups.

14 So please consider yourself and your
15 colleagues welcome.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Virginia.

17 VIRGINIA de LIMA: Thank you.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: We thank you all. I thought this was an
19 excellent meeting. Appreciate you all getting
20 together on a Friday morning.

21 LORI MATHIEU: And Jack, I have one more point. Given
22 Virginia's point -- and I'm sorry to delay,
23 because I know a lot of us have to run to other
24 things.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: That's okay.

1 LORI MATHIEU: But just the point of we have these
2 subcommittees. Right? We have quite a few of
3 them. But maybe we need different subcommittees
4 and new subcommittees.

5 And the ones that we have maybe need to
6 evolve into something new and different, or you
7 keep what we have and we continue to add. Because
8 that you know the more people that we bring to the
9 table, the more we're going to realize that we
10 maybe have been static for a long time.

11 And this is a time to renew and refresh and
12 get ourselves positioned for what's coming at us,
13 and what we're dealing with right now.

14 So there's a lot to think about.

15 ALECIA CHARAMUT: There is. Can I just say that --

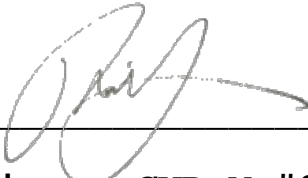
16 MARTIN HEFT: A point of order. Point of order? This
17 is a special meeting; we can discuss the
18 membership of the WPC advisory group only as a
19 special meeting.

20 So I would hold that discussion until our
21 regular meeting, please?

22 ALECIA CHARAMUT: Can I just add one thing as it is
23 related to membership, though, and related to this
24 process? That it would be very helpful for any
25 call for subcommittees to have the same level of

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 44 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Special Meeting of the Water Planning Council (Steering Committee), which was held before JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, CHAIRMAN, and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN, via teleconference, on February 23, 2024.



Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M #857

Notary Public

My Commission Expires: 6/30/2025

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