

## Connecticut Water Planning Council

### February 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Video: [https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/250204\\_WPC\\_Meeting\\_Recording.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/250204_WPC_Meeting_Recording.mp4)

#### Members Present:

Martin Heft (chair)	<a href="#">CT Office of Policy &amp; Management</a>
David Arconti	<a href="#">CT Public Utility Regulatory Authority</a>
Christopher Roy	<a href="#">CT Dept. of Public Health</a>
Graham Stevens	<a href="#">CT Dept. of Energy &amp; Environmental Protection</a>

#### Other Participants:

Paul Aresta	<a href="#">CT Council on Environmental Quality</a>
Lauren Bergman	<a href="#">CT Water Co.</a>
Josh Cansler (WPCAG)	<a href="#">Southeastern CT Water Authority</a>
Ryan Carboni	<a href="#">CT Council on Environmental Quality</a>
Alicea Charamut (WPCAG)	<a href="#">Fisheries Advisory Council</a>
Kim Czaplá	<a href="#">CT Dept. of Energy &amp; Environmental Protection</a>
Kathy Czepiel (WPCAG)	<a href="#">Save the Sound</a>
Virginia de Lima (WPCAG)	
Carol Haskins (WPCAG)	<a href="#">Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition</a>
Ali Hibbard	<a href="#">CT Dept. of Energy &amp; Environmental Protection</a>
Iris Kaminski	
Patrick Kearney (WPCAG)	<a href="#">New Britain Water Dept.</a>
Dan Lawrence (WPCAG)	<a href="#">Aquarion</a>
David Murphy	<a href="#">Resilient Land &amp; Water</a>
Aimee Petras (WPCAG)	<a href="#">Farmington River Watershed Assoc.</a>
Justine Phillips-Gallucci	<a href="#">CT Office of Policy &amp; Management</a>
Hannah Reichle	<a href="#">MetroCOG</a>
Denise Savageau (WPCAG)	<a href="#">CT Association of Conservation Districts</a>
Martha Smith (WPCAG)	<a href="#">New Haven West River Watershed Coalition</a>
Jeff Ulrich	<a href="#">Aquarion</a>
Marcus Yancoskie	<a href="#">Rome, Smith, Kowalski</a>

\*WPCAG – Water Planning Council Advisory Group member

#### Staff:

Becca Dahl	<a href="#">CT Office of Policy &amp; Management</a>
Bruce Wittchen	<a href="#">CT Office of Policy &amp; Management</a>

#### Call to order and Seating of Council Members

Council chair Heft called the virtual meeting to order at 1:32, outlined meeting procedures, and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

#### Approval of draft 1/4/2025 Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [draft 1/4/2025 minutes](#) and the motion passed unanimously.

## Public comment on agenda items

Virginia de Lima pointed out an obsolete reference to the former Implementation Work Group in the meeting packet and said it should refer to the Education & Outreach Work Group and Council Chair Heft said that will be corrected.

## Business

### 1. 2025 Work Plan

#### a. Review of State Water Plan Recommendations

Council chair Heft recommended that the Water Planning Council (WPC) instruct the Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG) to review the recommendations of Sec. 5.2, 5.3, and 5.5 of the [State Water Plan](#), incorporating the survey being developed from Outreach & Education Workgroup. Council member Stevens pointed out the importance of agencies understanding what the next steps will be and that there is agreement on the approach. A motion was made and seconded to assign the review to the WPCAG and the motion passed unanimously.

### 2. Workgroups

#### a. Agency Responsibilities

Council Chair Heft noted that anticipated funding for WPC staff support is not available, so he has spoken with the other agencies about sharing administrative responsibilities for the various water groups. Agency assignments will be:

DEEP: Outreach & Education Workgroup  
DPH: Source Water Protection and Watershed Lands Workgroups  
OPM: WPC and Interagency Drought Workgroup (IDW)  
PURA: WPCAG

Council member Stevens added that although each group will have a designated agency lead, other agencies should also be involved. There was further discussion of that and of the intent being to prevent the needs of any group from slipping through the cracks.

### 3. Legislative watch list

Council Chair Heft outlined the process that would have to be followed if the WPC intended to submit testimony regarding legislation, with each independently needing to review potential testimony. He also spoke of agencies' legislation screening processes. He mentioned some bills relevant to the State Water Plan:

[SB 314](#), *An Act Concerning Civil Preparedness For Climate Change Trends, The Use Of Town Aid Road Program Funds For Climate Resiliency And Revisions To The State Water Plan*

[SB 732](#), *An Act Requiring The State Water Plan To Be Amended To Address Climate Change*

[SB 9](#), *An Act Concerning The Environment, Climate And Sustainable Municipal And State Planning*

Council member Stevens mentioned additional bills DEEP is tracking that are of interest to the WPC:

[HB 6830](#), *An Act Concerning Training For Members And Employees Of Inland Wetlands Agencies*

[HB 6777](#), *An Act Concerning Water Utility Systems And Water Quality And Treatment Surcharges*

He also mentioned DEEP's interest in any resilience bills.

4. [Western CT Council of Governments Report on Public Water Supply Watershed Protection](#)

Council Chair Heft said this report is listed for awareness and provided an overview. Council member Stevens commended the [Western CT Council of Governments](#) (WestCOG) for producing it and provided additional details, highlighting that a large proportion of the mentioned releases are of wastewater and not to the Class A waters relied on for water supplies. He pointed out the exceptions can be significant and said DEEP responds to releases and ensures they are cleaned up to the extent possible.

5. [Outreach and Education Workshop – March 25 Program](#)

Council Chair Heft provided an overview of the Outreach and Education group's draft 2025 work plan provided in the agenda package. Denise Savageau described current plans for the 3/25 workshop and presentations by representatives of the [CT Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation](#) (CIRCA) and [US Geological Survey](#) (USGS). Council Chair Heft suggested that they consider holding this or a future event in person at the Legislative Office Building. She said they probably cannot organize that for March but would be interested in doing it in the future.

Due to the workshop being just three weeks after the next WPC meeting, Council Chair Heft recommended the WPC vote to authorize him to approve the workshop flyer/invitation when it is ready. A motion was made and seconded authorizing the Chair and approved unanimously.

6. [Next Meeting March 4](#)

a. Agenda topics

Council Chair Heft requested that people requesting an agenda item or have agenda packet materials to contact OPM one week in advance. He also mentioned that the March agenda will include WPCAG appointments and that a presentation by Council member Stevens is expected to be included on a future agenda.

## Workgroup Reports

### 1. Water Planning Council Advisory Group

WPCAG co-chair Dan Lawrence provided an overview of the WPCAG's January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, highlighting that a decision has been made to not establish the expected Conservation Pricing Rate Recovery Analysis topical group and to instead work with the Water Utility Coordinating Committees (WUCCs). He noted the need for water utility data that should be more accessible through WUCCs. He also mentioned the expected sale of Aquarion to the South Central CT Regional Water Authority. Council member Stevens thanked Dan and co-chair Alicea Charamut for pushing the conservation pricing effort to address declining water utility revenues.

#### a. Standing Work Groups

##### i. Nominating Committee

Carol Haskins provided an update on the status of the slate of WPCAG member candidates for the WPC to consider, including identifying a replacement for the recreation representative.

##### ii. Outreach & Education

Denise Savageau added to the previous outreach & education discussion by describing a potential 1-page infographic to be prepared for legislators in advance of the 2026 session. They have received no feedback to date regarding the draft survey they had distributed and she added that the goal is to include it on the agenda for the WPC's next meeting and to conduct the survey 3/22 – 4/22. She also noted the interest in learning what non-government organizations and private entities are doing that advances state water plan goals and suggested considering to be them state water plan stewards or champions.

##### iii. Watershed Lands

Kathy Czepiel said the group's next quarterly meeting will be March 14<sup>th</sup> and there was a brief discussion of the DPH's role in administering future meetings.

#### b. Topical

##### i. Conservation Pricing Rate Recovery Analysis

This was addressed earlier.

##### ii. Source Water Protection

Denise Savageau said the group is still wrapping up its work and mentioned limitations on the availability staff support. The document will probably be ready in April.

## 2. Interagency Drought Workgroup

Becca Dahl said CT remains in Stage 2 drought statewide, and noted that the group will meet 2/6 to consider current conditions and any need for changing the current stage.

### **Public Comment**

Pat Kearney asked how to have Ray Jarema of the Berlin Water Dept. designated as his alternate on the WPCAG and Council Chair Heft said he will be added to the new slate of members being prepared now.

Alicea Charamut mentioned water quality concerns regarding [HB 6566](#), *An Act Revising Nitrogen Runoff Reduction Requirements Concerning Residential Developments*, which she said seems intended to head off the inclusion of nitrogen standards in the septic system regulations DPH is preparing.

Alicea recommended the WPC consider holding an in-person meeting or retreat, noting the presence of two new members. There was a discussion of doing that at the Legislative Office Building and inviting legislators.

Denise Savageau said conditions are very dry and thanked the Interagency Drought Work Group for continuing to monitor. She also said the WPC should be aware of the current backlash against water and land use regulations, which are claimed to be a hindrance to developing affordable housing. She noted the majority leader's involvement and that this is at the same time as bills seeking to improve the state's environmental resilience. Denise also mentioned that the proposed sale of Aquarion would remove its ratemaking from PURA oversight and pointed out the greater improvements in conservation by utilities whose rates are set by PURA, not by a local or regional board.

Iris Kaminski mentioned [SB 884](#), *An Act Concerning The Maximum Allowable Concentration For 1,4-Dioxane In Household Cleaning And Personal Care Products And Cosmetics*, which she said is similar to a 2020 bill in New York. She said 1,4-dioxane from those sources can get into waterways, but she does not have data regarding its uses or environmental levels here. Council member Stevens recommended Iris talk with DEEP's Shannon Pociu and described some of the challenges in tracking its use because it sometimes is a byproduct and not listed in the contents of products.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40

*Minutes prepared by Becca Dahl and Bruce Wittchen, OPM*