

**CT Water Planning Council – Regular Meeting
October 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes****Video:**<http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=25396>**Members Present:**Martin Heft (chair)
Christopher Roy
Graham Stevens[CT Office of Policy & Management](#)
[CT Dept. of Public Health](#)
[CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection](#)**Other Participants:**Paul Aresta
Lauren Bergman*
Aaron Budris*
Bonnie Burr*
Alicea Charamut*
Kathy Czepiel*
Virgina de Lima*
Nicole Deziel
Carol Haskins*
Ali Hibbard
Iris Kaminski
Pat Kearney*
Sonia Marino*
David Murphy
Mary Pelletier
Justine Phillips-Gallucci
Aimee Petras*
Hannah Reichle
Denise Savageau*
Meghan Sloan
Jeff Ulrich
Charles Vidich[Council on Environmental Quality](#)
[CT Water Company](#)
Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
[Fisheries Advisory Council](#)
Save the Sound
[Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition](#)
[CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection](#)
[Yale School of Public Health](#)
[New Britain Water Department](#)
[Town of Guilford Health Department](#)
[CT Office of Policy & Management](#)
[Farmington River Watershed Association](#)
MetroCOG
[CT Association of Conservation Districts](#)
MetroCOG
WestCOG

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CT Water Planning Council
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue, MS #54SLP, Hartford CT 06106
<https://portal.ct.gov/water>

Steve Vitko*

[Regional Water Association](#)

**denotes representative or alternate of Water Planning Council Advisory Group*

Staff:

Becca Dahl

[CT Office of Policy & Management](#)

Bruce Wittchen

[CT Office of Policy & Management](#)

Call to order and Seating of Council Members – Chairman Heft

Council Chair Heft called the virtual meeting to order at 1:31 pm, outlined meeting procedures and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Approval of minutes – September 2, 2025

A motion was made by Graham Stevens and seconded by Christopher Roy to approve the minutes of September 2, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Public comment on agenda items

There was no public comment.

Business

1. Water Planning Council Advisory Workgroup vacancies

Council Chair Heft noted that there are no recommendations for the WPCAG vacancies at this time and no action is needed. He also noted that the Recreation position still needed to be filled along with 9 alternate positions.

2. DEMHS Emergency Planning and Preparedness Initiative (EPPI) – report

State Drought Coordinator Becca Dahl was called on to speak about this Initiative. She shared that this was a statewide emergency exercise, run by DEMHS, for state agencies and municipalities. This year's exercise focused on wildfires occurring during a time of extreme drought in the state. She mentioned that it was a great opportunity to exercise the state drought plan and bring more awareness around the threat of drought, as well as bring awareness of the WPC and the Interagency Drought Workgroup. A final report on this Initiative should be provided.

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3. Second annual Sustainability and Resiliency Week
Council Chair Heft shared that this took place last week, with a total of 62 events, including a webinar from the WPC Outreach and Education Workgroup.
4. Imagine a Day Without Water. What Would You Do? – October 16, 2025
Council Chair Heft shared this event and noted that the next webinar from the WPC Outreach and Education Workgroup will be on October 17th and will tie into this event.
5. Source Water Protection Final Report Recommendations – Watershed Protection Workgroup assignment
Council Chair Heft noted that this is a standing item as the new Watershed Protection Workgroup will be working on going through the recommendations of this report and reporting back to the WPC.
6. Creation of WPC Youtube Account/Channel
Council Chair Heft noted that this concept was reviewed at the September WPC Meeting and that the proposal is for the Outreach and Education Workgroup to create a YouTube Channel specific for the WPC.

A motion was made by Graham Stevens and seconded by Christopher Roy to establish a WPC YouTube account. The motion passed unanimously.
7. Next Meeting November 4, 2025
Council Chair Heft noted that the next WPC meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 4th. He shared that the meeting will cover the 2026 theme, the 2026 workplan, and the 2025 Annual Report.
8. Other Business
Council Chair Heft shared that he will be speaking on panels at the CT Water Environmental Association annual meeting and the CT Council of Small Towns Conference. They will be discussing alternative state funding programs for protected sewer capacity and how this also ties into the State Water Plan and the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan.

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Graham Stevens shared that DEEP recently announced the next round of Climate Resilience Fund and all Information can be found online, [at DEEP's website](#), Including a notice of funding opportunity, request for proposals and an Informational webinar.

Workgroup Reports

1. [Water Planning Council Advisory Group](#) (WPCAG)

WPCAG Co-Chair Alicea Charamut noted that it would be helpful to know what agency staff are available to help with the Annual Report. She shared that at the last WPCAG they discussed the criteria for the prioritization exercise that will take place at the WPCAG retreat at the end of the month, on Tuesday October 28th at Regional Water Authority and looked for the WPC's guidance on this exercise.

Council Chair Heft noted that he feels comfortable with the WPCAG moving forward with this criteria and the discussion at the retreat.

WPCAG Co-Chair Alicea Charamut noted that they will look at the various categories of Section 5 in the State Water Plan and use the criteria developed to rank priorities. Additionally, the WPCAG would like to understand what recommendations have been completed, are In-progress, or have yet to be started.

WPCAG Co-Chair Steve Vitko added that the criteria has been refined to include fewer categories which should provide clarity and that there is a weighted system to evaluating each recommendation.

Council Chair Heft asked about the Outreach Survey and if these results would be incorporated into the discussion. WPCAG Co-Chair Alicea Charamut confirmed that these would be further discussed by the WPCAG.

Standing:

i. Nominating Committee

- Carol Haskins shared that the Committee met on September 12th to discuss the vacant Recreation seat.

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ii. Outreach and Education Workgroup

- Denise Savageau thanked the WPC for approving the proposal to create a WPC YouTube account. She noted that they plan to use this for webinar recordings and would like to develop additional content on the WPC to post online.

The Outreach and Education Workgroup held their webinar September 30th (Floods and Water Quality) and will post this online. Denise Savageau suggested that the WPC have Mike Dietz from UConn at an upcoming meeting to discuss private wells and outreach.

The next webinar will be on October 17th (Drought and Water Quality) and will discuss issues like algal blooms and drinking water quality issues.

The workgroup has discussed webinar topics for 2026 and will discuss this further their next meeting, and is considering non-point source pollution, resiliency, and nature-based solutions. Denise Savageau also noted that Ali Hibbard is working on wrapping up analysis of the Outreach Survey.

Graham Stevens added that discussions on infrastructure needs (to protect and manage water) in a changing climate would be good topics for the 2026 webinars.

iii. Watershed Protection Workgroup

- Kathy Czepiel noted that the Workgroup met on September 26th and spent the meeting reviewing the Source Water Protection White Paper recommendations, and identified six of eleven recommendations to pursue further.

Steve Vitko added that this discussion and review will aid in the

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WPCAG retreat prioritization exercise and that the workgroup should be able to take on action items from the WPCAG retreat.

2. [Interagency Drought Workgroup](#) (IDW)

Becca Dahl shared that the IDW last met on October 2nd and made the recommendation to the Office of the Governor to place Fairfield, Middlesex and New Haven counties in a Stage 2 drought per the State Drought Plan. She noted that conditions are generally looking drier and that she and IDW staff are continuing to monitor drought triggers. The IDW will meet on November 6th at 1 pm and will meet earlier if needed.

Public Comment

Alicea Charamut expressed concern and a request for more information from DEEP and DPH on the status of programs on subsurface sewage systems and how this pertains to the legislative working group on this issue. Council Chair Heft noted that he has passed this information on to DEEP and DPH to address this further. Graham Stevens responded that DEEP will continue to be engaged with the working group.

Denise Savageau expressed concern about the sewage legislative working group being led by the homebuilder's association as well as concerns about private wells and septic systems being located near one another and shared that she believes this should be further addressed by the WPC. Graham Stevens responded that DEEP is keeping a close eye on these systems and their impacts. Council Chair Heft recommended contacting state legislators on this issue.

Mary Pelletier expressed concerns about development in Hartford and the consideration of watershed management plans. Council Chair Heft recommended relaying the concerns directly to DEEP.

Sonia Marnio shared that the subsurface sewage working group will have sub-groups to further address environmental issues, regulations and legal concerns, and process and funding.

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Adjourn

Graham Stevens made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Christopher Roy. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by Becca Dahl, OPM

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