

Friday, February 28, 2025 | 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

## GreenerGov Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

### Introduction

#### 1. Commissioner Dykes, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)

The meeting opened with an introduction and welcome by the three Co-Chairs of the GreenerGov initiative: Commissioner Dykes of the DEEP, Secretary Beckham of the Office of Policy Management (OPM), and Commissioner Gilman of the Department of Administrative Services (DAS).

Commissioner Dykes welcomed and introduced DEEP members and then announced new developments since the previous Steering Committee Meeting in 2023:

- Development of new project review criteria for considering requests for Lead by Example Bond Funds, including energy-efficient projects and all initiatives related to GreenerGov sustainability targets. There is now a standardized project proposal and budget format to ensure consistency.
- Updates to the GreenerGov website including new bond funding information, clarified and accessible information on EnergyCAP, and new materials from the 2024 GreenerGov Challenge. An Interactive Map showcasing agency initiatives linked to all Executive Order targets was also created.
- A new survey tool to help streamline the collection of annual Sustainability Performance Plans (SPPs) submitted by Agencies' Senior Sustainability Officers (SSOs).

#### 2. Secretary Beckham, OPM

Secretary Beckham opened with a recognition of OPM members working on GreenerGov initiatives. The Secretary emphasized interagency cooperation on important issues pertaining to sustainability and energy-efficiency.

Secretary Beckham acknowledged aspects of GreenerGov which OPM members continue to support, such as the CT Open Data Portal and the Interactive Map. He also announced new data availability on brownfields, EV charging stations, and more.

Secretary Beckham also acknowledged a proposal to incentivize municipalities to share services, with coordinators for each regional government council to work on initiatives.

### 3. Commissioner Gilman, DAS

Commissioner Gilman opened with a recognition of DAS members working on GreenerGov initiatives and gave updates on sustainability projects within DAS, including:

- A proposal for DAS to receive funding to install solar photovoltaic on state properties.
- Review and evaluation of responses from a request-for-proposals for EV software.
- Plans to plant native, pollinator-friendly plants at DAS Headquarters in Hartford to support biodiversity.

Commissioner Gilman also announced that DAS will hold its first Green Team meeting soon, collaborating for office sustainability.

## Presentations

Becca Trietch, Director of the Office of Building and Transportation Decarbonization at DEEP, reviewed the meeting agenda.

### 1. GreenerGov Annual Report Presentation, OPM

Pauline Zaldonis, Open Data Coordinator at OPM presented on the GreenerGov 2024 Progress Report. Ms. Zaldonis reviewed sustainability goals which Agencies are working toward in Executive Orders 1 and 21-3.

- Executive Order 1, established in April 2019, targets mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, water, and waste by 2030 for all Executive Branch agencies:
  - 45% reduction in GHG emissions below 2001 levels.
  - 25% reduction in waste disposal from a 2020 baseline.
  - 10% reduction in water consumption data from a 2020 baseline.
- Executive Order 21-3, established in December 2021, further strengthens GreenerGov targets with interim targets including specific goals relating to organics and food waste, electricity purchased, light-duty fleet vehicles, heating and cooling systems, and more.

Ms. Zaldonis announced that the Annual Report has been finalized and will be published soon on the GreenerGov website. The Report includes updates on sustainability projects conducted by the agencies in the past year, as well as updated data on utility use, cost, and progress on sustainability goals established in Executive Orders 1 and 21-3. Data used in reporting are pulled from EnergyCap, the state's utility tracking system. Data was pulled for the Report on February 10, 2025. Ms. Zaldonis acknowledged that the data is preliminary and subject to updates to the EnergyCAP database, and that the data in the Report serves as a glimpse into the data on the day it was pulled.

Ms. Zaldonis presented on data showing progress toward meeting goals in Executive Orders 1 and 21-3.

- **GHG Emissions.** As data on GHG emissions in 2001 is not available, the goal has been adapted to a reduction in GHG emissions of 32.53% from a Fiscal Year 2019 baseline by 2030. Data showed that GHG emissions in the Executive Branch reduced over 30% from Fiscal Year 2019 to Fiscal Year 2023.
- **Water Consumption.** Data shows a decrease in Executive Branch water and sewer use by over 15% from Fiscal Year 2019 to Fiscal Year 2023, but Ms. Zaldonis acknowledged that some of the decrease may be attributed to incomplete data.

- **Waste Disposal.** Ms. Zaldonis expressed the need for consistent data on waste disposal at Executive Branch facilities in order to measure progress, with a goal to implement more consistent measurement methodologies to incorporate facility-specific factors.

Data used in the Annual Report can be found on the GreenerGov CT Reporting Dashboard.

## **2. Net Zero Projects, DEEP & Department of Corrections (DOC)**

### **DEEP Western District Headquarters, DEEP**

David Cooley of DEEP Engineering presented on the new DEEP Western District Headquarters, which is a multi-use building at Black Rock State Park, Watertown, CT. The new building was designed to achieve a net zero energy goal, and to meet the LEED Platinum Certification.

The new building was designed with energy efficient features such as geothermal wells and renewable HVAC, solar photovoltaic, and a trombe wall allowing for thermal and passive solar heating.

### **Reducing Fossil Fuel Dependency, DOC**

Chris Iwanik of the Department of Corrections presented on the large solar projects at DOC sites in Cheshire, Enfield, and Somers. The DOC partnered with the Connecticut Green Bank on the projects.

The solar fields have provided 32% energy savings to the DOC, with over \$600,000 in savings annually to Agencies and the State. Mr. Iwanik acknowledged supply chain issues as obstacles in construction of their solar fields.

## **3. Transportation Electrification, DAS**

Ryan Ensling of DAS presented on efforts to electrify a portion of the state's light-duty vehicles and to install electric vehicle (EV) chargers on state properties. DAS has new electric vehicle supply equipment contracts on software, hardware, and maintenance and installation. DAS has also implemented a consistent EV charging fee across state agencies for public charging.

## **4. Facility Electrification, Department of Transportation (DOT)**

Peter Zelez of the DOT presented on the DOT's initiatives within the Office of Transit and Ridesharing toward zero-emissions leased or purchased bus fleets for CTtransit. CTtransit Stamford's fleet includes 55 buses, 13 of which are electric.

CTtransit Stamford has completed Phase 1 of their electrification process, installing electric bus plug-in chargers at the facility. Phase 2 is under construction for an electric bus storage and charging building employing pantograph chargers, which lower from the charging station and connect to an electric bus' battery through rails on the roof of the bus. The facility is on track to be 100% electric by 2027.

DOT was awarded funds under the Federal Transit Administration's "Low or No Emissions" grant to help support the purchase or lease of low- or zero-emission transit buses, including acquisition, construction, and leasing of the required facilities.

Mr. Zelez acknowledged challenges toward electrification, like supply chain issues, lack of grid capacity, and lack of funding.

#### **5. Transportation Electrification, Military Department (MIL)**

Matthew Wilkinson of the (MIL presented on the MIL's EV charging station initiative, with 48 charging stations active, pending, or in construction across the state.

#### **6. Decarbonization Study, DAS**

Nick Ross of DAS presented on DAS' HVAC Decarbonization Study, engaging Arup as a consultant for the study. The purpose of the study was to retrofit existing fossil-fuel based HVAC systems to efficient systems at nearly 4,000 Executive Branch facilities throughout the State.

As part of deliverables for the study, DAS is working on a Decarbonization Action Plan and a Comprehensive Decarbonization Database Tool. Phase 1 is complete, and Phases 2-4 are underway, beginning in early March 2025.

#### **7. University of Connecticut (UConn) Waste Initiative, UConn**

Michael White of UConn presented on the multitude of green initiatives UConn Dining Services has implemented, including trayless dining, centralized napkin dispensers, recycling, staff training, and more. Their efforts have enabled them to achieve the Certified Green Restaurant title, the first public university to have all of their dining halls certified.

#### **8. Sustainability Efforts and Data Integration**

##### **The Interactive Map, DEEP & OPM**

Jimena Fernandez of DEEP presented on GreenerGov's new Interactive Map. The Interactive Map showcases Agency sustainability initiatives across the state. The Interactive Map shows the State's commitment to sustainability and increases transparency for the public.

Ashley Benitez, GIS Coordinator within the Data and Policy Analytics Unit of OPM, gave a walkthrough of the Interactive Map, emphasizing different features that can help users to explore Agency initiatives through various filters.

##### **EnergyCAP, DEEP**

Wvarrda Saulat of DEEP presented on EnergyCAP. EnergyCAP is the energy management software used for managing utility bill data for the Executive Branch agencies. The software helps GreenerGov to analyze energy use, costs, energy consumption patterns, and track progress toward Executive Order targets.

Agencies are required to upload billing data, and should manage their building inventory data and resolve any bill flags to ensure there are no data gaps. DEEP is working on dashboards for each Agency to visualize utility bill data and make it easier for Agencies to track their bills. Ms. Saulat gave a walkthrough of EnergyCAP features which will be included on the dashboard.

### Better Climate Challenge, DAS

Ryan Ensling of DAS presented on the State's commitment to reducing GHG emissions, developing a GHG reduction plan, and providing energy performance and GHG emissions data to the U.S. Department of Energy as a part of the federal Better Climate Challenge.

The initiative is moving forward, and the Better Buildings, Better Plants summit will be held in April.

### 9. Overview & Discussion of Funding Resources for SSOs

Becca Trietch of DEEP presented on different opportunities for funding GreenerGov projects: on bill financing, Lead by Example bond funds, federal funding, and other Agency funds.

Dr. Trietch also mentioned that agency Senior Sustainability Officers will be sent a survey in the coming weeks to determine the best way to move forward with relaunching GreenerGov subcommittees or otherwise increase collaboration across Agencies.

## Public Comment

Suzie Huminski of Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) commented on the University's switch to pollinator friendly plants, emphasizing the importance of planting native, pollinator-friendly plants at state facilities. "Pollinators give us hope."

## Closing Marks

Commissioner Gilman provided closing remarks and directed all inquiries to email [LeadByExample@ct.gov](mailto:LeadByExample@ct.gov).

[GreenerGov CT Website](#)

[GreenerGov CT Reporting Dashboard](#)