

Draft Meeting Notes for the State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup

April 21, 2020; 12:00 – 2:00

This Will Be A Remote Meeting, Only Accessible Online Or By Phone

Join Online (Zoom): <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85304525639>, Meeting ID: 853 0452 5639

Join By Phone: 1-929-205-6099, Meeting ID: 85304525639#

One tap mobile: +19292056099,,85304525639#

***Please note, due to the nature of this meeting, all attendees may not be accounted for. If someone is missing from this list, please suggest a modification.**

Members: Virginia de Lima, David Radka, Corinne Fitting, Steve Rupar, Lori Mathieu, Bruce Wittchen, Mike Dietz, Denise Savageau, Lou Burch, Tom Tyler

Note Taker(s): Dan Aubin, Abigail Davis, Kevin Veilleux

Public: Water Planning Council Chair Jack Betkoski; WPCAG members Alicea Charamut and Brenda Watson; Iris Kaminski

Meeting Starts 12:00pm

Topics of Discussion

Changes to Agenda

- No changes

Approval/Modification of Notes from February 18, 2020 meeting

- No changes; notes approved

Domestic Wells topical sub-work group (Mike Dietz):

- Did not hold a work group meeting last month
- Corinne and Mike participated in a meeting with DEEP, DPH, Department of Consumer Protection (DCP)
 - DCP has been working on a private well database
 - Hoping to have a live version available this summer
 - All key fields for well data from the well-completion reports are there; has the ability to plot lat/long
 - DCP has verbally committed to managing the database (ownership)
- Older records are still in question, would need funding to hire someone to enter that data
 - David R: Could the white paper be reworked to develop cost estimate for interns/student labor?
- Corinne: We want to test the database a little more to ensure its accuracy and performance
- CT Geological Survey is interested in a lot of the data
 - Looking into potential funding through USGS to work through the backlog of old completion reports
 - DCP has scanned in many of the well completion reports from 1970 through today
 - DEEP has reports from 1950-1970 which will be scanned in as well

- Lori M: DPH Drinking Water Section takes on interns from UConn each summer; they might be available to help log in the older data
 - She will discuss this option further with Mike D.
- Next work group meeting to be determined (may not need to meet); Mike will send an update

Drought Plan topical sub-work group (Steve Rupar):

- Planned to have two meetings in March; met March 6th, but cancelled the meeting in late March
- March 6th meeting focus was on answering “asks” from WPCAG
 - Use of municipal drought restrictions
 - Review of statewide or regional drought indices
 - If the new drought plan had been used, would the response to the 2016-2017 drought have been different today?
- Planned to get a draft report to the IWG by November of this year (this was before COVID-19 impacts; timeline might be different now)
- Currently reviewing the interagency workgroup’s (IAWG) response to the 2016-2017 drought; have reviewed actions up through August 2016 thus far
 - Found they had acted according to plan and in a reasonable way
- 3-4 more meetings to get through the IAWG minutes from 2016-2017 drought, then 3-4 more meetings to write up a draft report
- David R: Has there been any movement on an outreach effort in identifying the emergency coordinator for drought response within local communities? Has it moved forward?
 - Bruce: We are still brainstorming on how to reach out; the initial circular letter that went out had less than a 10% response rate
 - Lori M: Maybe later this year we will reach back out, keep it on the forefront

Developing slate for second year and Filling vacancy (out-of-stream rep)

- Single-year term up for some members of the IWG
 - Those who volunteered initially for one year were asked if they would continue for a second year
 - Agreed to continue: Bruce W., Corinne F., and Denise S.
 - Steve R. will continue but is open to seeing if there is other interest
 - Virginia will continue serving at the will of the WPCAG
 - Virginia asked Alicea to discuss with WPAG co-chair, Josh Cansler
- Members will be serving a two-year term going forward
- Jack B: Keep the core group the way it is, but we can solicit subject matter experts outside of the group when needed
- Discussed the vacancy for an out-of-stream rep, hoping to bring in someone from agriculture
 - Someone to represent the Dept of Ag? Bryan Hurlburt not available; Joan Nichols had been discussed
 - David R recommended that if we cannot fill this position with someone in agriculture, then someone from the water utility sector may be willing to become a member
 - Denise agreed, but would like to reach out to other stakeholders first since the water utilities are already involved; agriculture is a big user of water and should be represented
 - Brenda asked about Landlord’s Association for the vacancy

- Jack said he would talk with Bryan.

Status of website (Bruce Wittchen):

- Still in development
- Eric Lindquist has a beta version up and running that he shared with Virginia
- Virginia: The beta looks very good so far, Eric has populated the site with the IWG and WPCAG workgroup info, and meeting notes are posted up through February
- It's been difficult to work on the website remotely

Break (12:45-1:00)

Presentation: Alliance for Water Efficiency Recommendations to WPC (Mary Ann Dickinson)

Follow-Up Takeaways:

- David R: Do you have a sense of the degree CT utilities may have already used AWE's rate setting material?
 - Mary Ann: We don't have a lot of CT members: CT Water & Aquarion, so far.
 - Sense that most CT utilities have not used the materials (some of which are free); they need the workshop to educate and push them to follow through
- David R: Importance of outreach to rates decision makers and the people in the utility who make the decisions, what was the experience in MA like?
 - Mary Ann: Cast a wide net on the agenda and special pitch to local authorities. Rate recommendations discussions must have the decision makers there. It takes political strength and will and to fight what consumers may not think are necessary.
- RAM – Revenue Adjustment Mechanism
- In-Person Workshop is critical to educating and involve all types of individuals, possibly in the fall of 2020 have the workshop, but should be mindful of COVID-19 and that many public health issues might still be in place.
- IWG/ WPCAG to support moving forward without locking in the Workshop piece as the first component. Meaning, the prioritized list could still be addressed while we wait for a better time for an in-person workshop.
- Alliance for Water Efficiency will work with the States in multiple methods, such as providing testimony and drafting language for legislative purposes. Will provide support and backup but not take the lead.

Next Meeting: May 19, 2020