

DRAFT Meeting Notes for the State Water Plan Implementation Workgroup

August 18, 2020; 11:30 – 1:15

Zoom Meeting

***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, Tom Tyler, Lou Burch, Denise Savageau, Gail Lucchina, Lori Mathieu, Mike Dietz, Matt Pafford (alt – OPM)

Note Taker(s): Dan Aubin, Abigail Davis

Public*: Mary Ann Dickinson (AWE); Bill Christensen (AWE); WPCAG member Alicea Charamut; DEEP Water Quantity Unit Ali Hibbard; WPC Chair Jack Betkoski; Judy Allen; Pat Kearney;

Meeting Starts 11:31am

Topics of Discussion

Changes to Agenda

- No changes

Approval/Modification of Notes from July 21, 2020 meeting

- One statement will be retracted from the final notes for inaccuracy: “‘Homeowners’ were invited to private well database meetings, but no one participated”
- Notes approved

Alliance for Water Efficiency – Update (Mary Ann & Bill):

- Rates Workshop Update
 - Planning task group includes Steve R, Alicea, Virginia, David R
 - Goal is to educate water utilities on ways to align rates with water efficiency and revenue stability
 - Tentative date: March 18th, 2021, 9am-3pm, lunch included
 - Small fee associated to cover costs and lunch, and to discourage non-serious registrations; reduced or waived for non-profits
 - South Central CT Regional Water Authority to provide a case study
 - Looking for another smaller, municipal case study as well
 - Private water company would not be included because they already have a Rate Adjustment Mechanism option available
 - The March 18th date will need to be moved because it conflicts with a RWA board meeting
 - Discussion over whether to push the workshop out further, or conduct virtually, given how COVID-19 is progressing; new date will continue to be reassessed
 - A draft agenda was shared with the group
- Nine (9) areas for review / improvement (as discussed previously) – all comments were compiled and scores were analyzed
 - Top score: fixture & appliance standards
 - Runner-up: water loss auditing and leakage reduction requirements
- Fixtures & appliance standards

- CT is following federal standards, but state standards could go further to increase water use efficiency (toilets, urinals, shower heads, spray sprinklers, etc.)
- At least 10 states currently have fixture consumption standards
- AWE Recommendations: update existing regulations and tie them to EPA WaterSense labels, add long spray sprinkler bodies to the regulations, and apply regulations to all points of sale and installation
- Water loss auditing and leakage reduction requirements
 - Room to expand on water loss standards
 - The state of Georgia leads in this area, requiring that all utilities conduct audits and providing a qualified water loss auditor training program
 - AWE Recommendations: move away from the term “percent unaccounted for water,” require water loss control programs (leak detection, leak repair), and offer technical assistance in conducting audits
 - Due to the high degree of impact and level of effort involved, any new requirements would likely need utility and regulatory buy-in
- Next steps: AWE will put together a matrix with more detailed information to aid the IWG in moving forward with these recommendations

Schedule for IWG meetings – Decision:

- While having virtual meetings, discussed whether meeting day and/or time should change
- General consensus that changing the meeting would be beneficial
- Meetings will be moved to every second Tuesday of the month @ 1:30pm

Inviting participants to topical sub-work groups – Decision:

- How do we invite new people to join these groups and manage their numbers?
- We want to strike a balance and create inclusive, yet effective groups that can be well-managed
- Discussion will continue under the marketing & outreach sub-work group report out

Drought Plan topical sub-work group – Update & Plans:

- Steve R was absent; Virginia gave a brief update on his behalf
- The group finished their analysis of the 2016-2017 drought
- Beginning to write the report using members’ “top ten things of note”
- Still aim to get the draft report completed by late fall 2020

Domestic Wells white paper – resolve questions, if any:

- Database needs to be updated and moved away from paper content
- Mike and Corinne will review feedback received on the white paper with the sub-work group
- Discussion related to the necessity of the private well database – could funding be better used elsewhere? Are we already getting this information from other sources?

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

- Drafted letter for invitees, looking for feedback before sending out

Outreach & Education topical sub-work group (Lou Burch):

- Discussion around two distinct audiences: 1) those who need to know about State Water Plan, such as agencies, businesses, and NGOs and 2) those who are a part of the general public, especially those working in education and around water issues
 - Possible stakeholders to include in group efforts: Council of Governments (COGs), Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commissions (CACIWC), Sustainable CT, and other large organizations involved in water quality or conservation
- Possible educator training through Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) and Project Learning Tree
- Developing a public forum to engage the public at large and some policy makers
- Developing a social media outreach plan, possible social media training

Regionalization & Interconnections topical sub-work group (David Radka):

- Revised proposal was amended to include wastewater, will be sent back to WPC for comment
- Noted that public attention and education is difficult relative to wastewater because of a “flush and forget” mentality

Public Comment:

- For the Outreach & Education group – some towns have a Clean Energy Task Force, work with students in schools, might be a good resource

Meeting Adjourned 1:00pm

Next Meeting: September 8, 2020 at 1:30pm