

## Water Planning Council Advisory Group

### April 16, 2024 Meeting Minutes

A telemeeting of the Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG) was held by Zoom

Agenda: <https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Agenda/Download/24210>

Video: [https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2024-02-20\\_WPCAG\\_Video.mp4](https://ctvideo.ct.gov/opm/2024-02-20_WPCAG_Video.mp4)

#### Members Present by video or phone:

|                         |                                                                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aaron Budris            | <a href="#">Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments</a>                  |
| Josh Cansler            | <a href="#">Southeastern CT Water Authority</a>                          |
| Alicea Charamut         | <a href="#">Fisheries Advisory Council</a>                               |
| Kathy Czepiel           | <a href="#">Save the Sound</a>                                           |
| Virginia de Lima (alt.) |                                                                          |
| Carol Haskins           | <a href="#">Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition</a>                      |
| Sean Hayden             | <a href="#">Lake Waramaug Task Force</a>                                 |
| Patrick Kearney         | <a href="#">Manchester Water &amp; Sewer</a>                             |
| Dan Lawrence            | <a href="#">Aquarion</a>                                                 |
| Margaret Miner          | <a href="#">Rivers Alliance</a>                                          |
| Jeff Shaw               | <a href="#">CT Outdoor Recreation Alliance</a>                           |
| Tom Tyler               | <a href="#">MDC</a>                                                      |
| Steve Vitko             | <a href="#">South Central CT Regional Water Authority</a>                |
| Steve Woltornist        | <a href="#">Marmon Water Residential Filtration/Water Quality Assoc.</a> |

#### Other Participants:

|                     |                                                                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Paul Aresta         | <a href="#">CT Council on Environmental Quality</a> (CEQ)                |
| Jonathan Avery      | Hazardville & Jewett City Water Cos.                                     |
| Lauren Bergman      | CT Water Co.                                                             |
| Chris Bellucci      | <a href="#">CT Dept. of Energy &amp; Environmental Protection</a> (DEEP) |
| Ryan Carboni        | <a href="#">CT Council on Environmental Quality</a> (CEQ)                |
| Ali Hibbard         | <a href="#">CT Dept. of Energy &amp; Environmental Protection</a> (DEEP) |
| Iris Kaminski       |                                                                          |
| Martha Smith (alt.) | West River Watershed Coalition                                           |

#### Members Absent:

|                 |                                                                            |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bonnie Burr     | <a href="#">UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources</a> |
| Sonia Marino    | <a href="#">CT Association of Directors of Health</a>                      |
| Alison McHorney | <a href="#">CT Office of Consumer Counsel</a>                              |
| Darryl Newman   | <a href="#">CT Nursery &amp; Landscape Assoc.</a>                          |
| Denise Savageau | <a href="#">CT Association of Conservation Districts</a>                   |
| Vacancy         | Electric Power                                                             |

#### Staff:

|                |                                                            |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bruce Wittchen | <a href="#">CT Office of Policy &amp; Management</a> (OPM) |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|

#### 1. Call to Order

Co-chair Alicea Charamut called the meeting to order at 1:32 and everyone introduced themselves.

## **2. Approval of draft 3/19/2024 Minutes**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [draft 3/19/2024 minutes](#) and the motion was approved unanimously.

## **3. Discussion: Future of the WPCAG**

- WPCAG membership update

Alicea Charamut said the WPC approved the slate of WPCAG members discussed at last month's WPCAG meeting (see list in [meeting minutes](#)) and there was a discussion of the WPC's upcoming review of work groups.

## **4. Legislative Update**

Alicea Charamut highlighted [HB 5475](#), *An Act Concerning The Development Of Housing And Challenges To Certain Decisions Of Municipal Agencies*, which she described as an affordable housing bill that includes sections that would undermine the [CT Environmental Protection Act](#) and wetlands protections. There was a discussion of [Save the Sound](#)'s current effort seeking changes.

Alicea said [HB 5218](#), *An Act Concerning The Establishment Of Riparian Buffers And Revision Of Certain Inland Wetlands Provisions*, has died but its wetland commission training requirement is included in [HB 5170](#), *An Act Concerning Training For Members And Employees Of Inland Wetlands Agencies*.

Alicea Charamut also mentioned Sec. 21 of [HB 5004](#), *An Act Concerning The Implementation Of Certain Climate Change Measures*, which has been called the "Green Monster Bill." She noted that utilities have expressed concern about its potential stream flow requirements and Dan Lawrence said it could extend [stream flow regulations](#) to well near cold water streams. He added that the nature of how such a well impacts a stream is very site-specific and would be difficult to regulate. Virginia de Lima said she thinks those wells should have already been covered by the stream flow regulations.

Alicea mentioned 2024's legislative conveyance proposals, which can be seen on the [Government Administration & Elections Committee](#) page, highlighting concerns regarding four resulting bills. [HB 5522](#), which would convey state forest land in Woodstock to the YMCA for use as a camp and [HB 5520](#) would convey state park land in Berlin to a private owner. Alicea also mentioned [SB 460](#), which would convey undeveloped Dept. of Corrections land for uses that could degrade a nearby stream, and [HB 5521](#), which would convey additional aquifer protection land in Cheshire for economic development.

## **5. Old Business**

### **a. WPC and work group updates**

- WPC meeting

Alicea Charamut noted that the WPC had approved the slate of WPCAG members

discussion of the work of the USGS Data Collection Work Group and Chris Bellucci said DEEP is making some requested clarifications to the report. Virginia de Lima said it is not appropriate to request changes to the report of a work group and Chris explained that the change is only to maintain consistency in terminology.

- Nominating Committee

Carol Haskins pointed out that some alternate positions must still be filled and Alicea thanked the nominating committee for the work they did.

- USGS Data Collection Work Group
  - final [draft Report on the Evaluation of the USGS Data Collection Programs](#)

Ali Hibbard described the changes to maintain consistency in wording and provide specific references to the [state water plan](#). There was a discussion of options for the follow-up to that report.

- Watershed Lands Work Group

Alicea said the group has not met since the previous WPCAG meeting.

- Source Water Protection Work Group

Alicea said the group has not met since the previous WPCAG meeting.

- Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis Work Group

Alicea Charamut said she will schedule the next meeting of this group following the legislative session.

- Outreach & Education Work Group

Ali Hibbard said the recent [aquifer protection area webinar](#) was a success and a similar webinar regarding source water protection is planned, possibly for September. Alicea Charamut described plans for work groups to have individual webpages and added that she will distribute each work group's original proposal.

b. Other old business

- Website changes

Ali Hibbard said DEEP and OPM staff will meet to make further website updates and welcomed any suggestions.

- [Water Utility Coordinating Committee](#) (WUCC) update

Dan Lawrence provided an overview of WUCC roles and processes for new WPCAG members. Jonathan Avery provided further background and noted that there is some overlap with WPC work groups.

- Interagency Drought Work Group

Bruce Wittchen said the group met this month and, due to the generally wet conditions, the focus was on potential drought plan changes and related activities. There also was a discussion of ground water monitoring results and Alicea Charamut showed the map of current monitoring results.

## 6. New Business

- a. [New EPA regulations](#) for PFAS in drinking water

Dan Lawrence provided an overview the [overview of the presentation](#) he gave at this month's WPC meeting. He described the history of the use of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and of regulatory efforts. He also explained the state's classification of public water systems and showed the extent of Aquarion's CT systems and the number with PFAS detections and the number exceeding proposed EPA limits. Aquarion's preliminary estimate of capital costs for PFAS treatment is \$260 M to \$280 M.

Dan provided further information regarding the specific PFAS impacts experienced by Aquarion, as detailed on Slide 7 of his presentation, and summarized the expected funding needs to address the contamination for four systems in CT and one each in MA and NH. He outlined the terms of settlements with PFAS manufacturers 3M and Dupont, highlighting that the potential cost recovery is based on the flow rate and PFAS levels of a system, not on the expected cost to address the contamination for the system.

Dan described water industry concerns regarding their potential liability if EPA designates PFOS as hazardous substances and described their desired liability exemption. There was a discussion of the settlement and of water utility responses to detection of PFAS, with Steve Vitko describing the Regional Water Authorities experiences and response, directing people to the [RWA's PFAS webpage](#).

Iris Kaminski said Brita is marketing says its new filtering water pitcher removes PFAS and there was a discussion of filters. Carol Haskins noted that new WPCAG member Steve Woltornist had to leave this meeting early but works in the filtration industry. She recommended asking him about PFAS filtration. There also was a discussion of granulated carbon and other filter media and filter disposal issues.

- b. Other

Alicea Charamut said the CT Fisheries Advisory Council is spreading the word regarding the decline of river herring populations due to trawling. The New England Fishery Management Council is [accepting comments](#) through April 30 regarding annual catch limits. Alicea also mentioned that the Farmington River is included on this year's [list of America's most endangered rivers](#) and provided some details.

## **7. Public Comment**

There were no additional public comments.

## **8. Next Meeting Date**

Upcoming meetings include (subject to change):

|              |                                                         |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| May 7, 2024  | Outreach & Education Work Group (9:00)                  |
| May 7, 2024  | WPC (1:30)                                              |
| TBD          | Conservation Pricing and Rate Recovery Analysis (11:00) |
| May 9, 2024  | Interagency Drought Work Group (1:00)                   |
| May 21, 2024 | Source Water Protection Work Group (9:00)               |
| May 21, 2024 | WPCAG (1:30)                                            |

## **9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 2:41.

*Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM*