

Water Planning Council Advisory Group

**January 20, 2015
Meeting Minutes**

A meeting of the Water Planning Council Advisory Group (WPCAG or group) was held at the [Public Utilities Regulatory Authority](#) (PURA), in New Britain, Connecticut, at 1:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Gil Bligh	City of New Britain
Virginia de Lima	USGS CT Water Science Center
Len DeJong	Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
John Hudak	South Central CT Regional Water Authority
David Knauf	Darien Health Dept.
Margaret Miner	Rivers Alliance
Vin Ringrose	Fisheries Advisory Council
Kevin Sullivan	Green Industry
Henry Talmage	CT Farm Bureau
Robert Wesneski	Avon Water Company
Maureen Westbrook	Connecticut Water Company

Members by Phone:

Greg Leonard	Southeastern CT Water Authority
Robert Silvestri	PSEG
Bob Young	Middletown Water & Sewer Department

Other Attendees:

Tom Callahan	OPM state water plan project management
Corinne Fitting	DEEP
George S. Logan	Aquarion
Gail Lucchina	PURA
Nicholas Neeley	PURA
Matt Pafford	OPM
Nick Salemi	MDC
Terri Schnoor	DEEP
Martha Smith	West River Watershed Coalition
Glenn Warner	CT Institute of Water Resources
Bruce Wittchen	OPM

Members Absent:

Eric Brown	CBIA
Karen Burnaska	Endangered Lands Coalition/CFE
James Butler	SCCOG
Denise Savageau	Town of Greenwich
Richard Sobolewski	OCC

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes – December 16, 2014

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [minutes of the December 16, 2014 meeting](#), subject to the correction of two errors noted in the dates at the top of the 1st page. The motion was approved unanimously, with Len DeJong and John Hudak abstaining because they had not attended the meeting.

3. Old Business

a. State Water Plan – WPC, WPCAG & work group roles

Margaret Miner asked Bruce Wittchen what motions the WPC had voted on at its 1/13/2015 meeting. Bruce said he could recall two from the meeting minutes he is writing. The first was to adopt the organization structure shown in Attachment 5 of Tom Callahan's [1/13/2015 project management report](#) and the second was for the Steering Committee to include the four WPC members and two representatives of the WPCAG, chosen by the WPCAG. Margaret asked if the WPC had voted on a motion later in the meeting to work with the [New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission](#) (NEIWPC) and Bruce said he did not remember if the WPC had and he has not yet reached that point in the draft minutes.

Maureen Westbrook provided further information regarding the discussions at the WPC meeting, explaining that the WPC plans to have the new Steering Committee include WPCAG representatives, as well as other members representing sectors not represented on the WPCAG. She said that, prior to committing to that arrangement, it is important for the WPCAG to know how large of a group its two representatives would be part of.

Tom Callahan said he has had only two working days since the WPC meeting, so not much has changed. As mentioned, the WPC is looking for the WPCAG to designate two people to represent it on the Steering Committee. He noted that Council member Wingfield had mentioned other, at-large representatives being on the Steering Committee with the WPC members and WPCAG representatives. The WPC is considering its options.

Tom said the WPC is looking at NEIWPC regarding the prospects for facilitation, contracts management and other services to support the planning effort. Further information will be available by the next WPC meeting.

Maureen Westbrook said it is not clear which WPCAG members would be the most appropriate representatives on the Steering Committee without knowing who else will be included. There was a discussion of this role and of the outreach role delegated to the WPCAG in Attachment 3 of the 1/13/2015 project management report. Virginia de Lima asked if the intent is for each member to reach out to the sector that member represents or if the WPCAG, as a group, is to reach out to the media and others. Tom Callahan said the scope of work has to include a plan for communication and outreach. What he has in mind is for the WPCAG to develop such a plan for the Steering Committee and to help guide its implementation. The scope will also help define the costs.

Margaret Miner said the project management report says NEIWPC will be receiving \$100,000 and asked who will write the plan. She read from the Description of

Qualifications in Attachment 7 of the project management report and said some people here can do those things. Tom explained that the request for information was based on a document used in the process of developing the [state energy plan](#) and is not a response to a proposal or contract. The overarching goal is to simplify the procurement of needed professional services to support the water planning initiative. NEIWPC might not be selected. He described the three options available to the WPC: to do procurement on its own, to hire from a state list of contractors or to go through an organization such as NEIWPC.

Margaret said the state energy plan came in late and required a re-write by DEEP. Tom Callahan said the intermediary comparable to NEIWPC that was used in that process did not write the plan. Another organization was responsible for that. Maureen Westbrook said she can understand not going out to bid for \$20,000 of work, not so for \$100,000. Margaret Miner asked how tasks can be divided between the WPC, Tom Callahan and others. Tom said the WPC will have to consider the available options.

Virginia de Lima said NEIWPC is good at coordination and using NEIWPC can help expedite the procurement process. She said, however, that she had the experience of NEIWPC charging 17% overhead for a project that required minimal effort by NEIWPC. Tom Callahan said NEIWPC's current federal limit for overhead is 12.5%, but could rise. Glenn Warner said that, in his experience, NEIWPC's in-house technical experience is primarily with pollution-related issues. Tom said the organization does have significant water resources experience, but noted that DPH's Lori Mathieu has expressed some reservations about the depth of NEIWPC's direct experience with public drinking water matters.

John Hudak said he thinks the WPC should issue a request for proposals (RFP) and Tom said the goal at this time is to get scoping underway and the scope could go out as an RFP. There was a discussion of this process and Len DeJong drew attention to the responsibilities listed in Attachment 3, while noting the colors are not consistent with Attachment 1. Maureen Westbrook read the listed responsibilities of the WPCAG and there was further discussion. Len DeJong asked if the Other States group's responsibilities have changed and there was a brief discussion of that group. Margaret Miner mentioned having a conversation with Other States group co-chair Pat Bresnahan about those needs.

Returning to the discussion of procurement, Virginia de Lima pointed out that the simplicity of contracting is the reason for working with NEIWPC. Pursuant to their contract with the state, they can function as banker and can facilitate the retention of other professional services firms as needed for specific tasks. That is role that they have frequently played for both DEEP and EPA.

Margaret Miner said she is concerned that there might not be any money for this. Tom Callahan said the point Virginia made about contracting gets to John Hudak's request for an RFP. The funding made available to date for this effort is in OPM's budget and NEIWPC should be viewed a vehicle for contracting. It may, or may not be desirable for NEIWPC to perform some of the substantive work.

Margaret Miner asked what the WPCAG do at this point. Maureen Westbrook listed three issues to address. First, is the group comfortable designating two

representatives to the Steering Committee? Second, what does the group think about the outreach responsibility? Third, what does the group think about NEIWPCC or other options?

Maureen Westbrook suggested the WPCAG consider designating two members to represent it on the Steering Committee, while reserving the option to reconsider based on the ultimate membership of that group. Vin Ringrose made a motion to nominate Maureen and Margaret to have that role. Margaret Miner said the WPCAG should retain the option to revise that assignment. There was a discussion of the WPCAG designees representing all sectors included in the WPCAG and Robert Silvestri added that the official designees might want the option of having alternates.

Len DeJong said the WPCAG must be integral to the process and not just see things at the end and there was a discussion of the WPC role. Tom Callahan said he presumes the WPCAG would be integral in the Steering Committee and Margaret and Maureen would seek input as needed from other members. That is consistent with how the process was mapped out and how it has been discussed.

Glenn Warner asked about the Policy Group shown in Attachment 5 and Tom explained the current expectations of the groups reporting to the Steering Committee and that they will include other people too. Maureen and Margaret mentioned complications that arose with establishing multiple groups to assist in the [stream flow regulation development process](#).

John Hudak asked about the proposed retreat and what work product it is expected to yield. Tom Callahan said the Steering Committee would be involved and described what he considers to be some of the goals. The first is to review prior water planning work product to identify what remains useful in this new process. The second need is to consider if the scope is to include contentious issues such as whether the Class B waters prohibition, the current organization of state water programs and existing diversion registrations might be changed.

John Hudak asked if such questions can be addressed later, after there has been some determination of need to consider such changes. There was a discussion of the possibility that considering certain changes might result in the plan being dead on arrival, but that not considering such questions during scoping can undercut the ability to craft an informed water plan. There was a discussion of how to address contentious issues.

Maureen Westbrook said such issues might be addressed as potential future options, not as immediate yes/no questions. Glenn Warner said they should be approached as conditional questions, such as in what circumstances might the state change its approach to Class B waters or to registered diversions.

There was further discussion of possible approaches to such questions and Tom Callahan said they should be addressed early in the process so data are developed to answer them. There was further discussion and Virginia de Lima suggested using an iterative approach to determine the circumstances in which each should be considered. Gil Bligh asked how significant the MDC's registered diversion is if the MDC was not unable to serve UConn.

Tom Callahan said the WPCAG, in addition to spotting problematic issues, can also suggest alternatives through the co-chairs. He noted caveats regarding the interests of other Steering Committee members, other tasks to be completed, and the availability of alternative approaches.

There was further discussion of WPCAG representation and Vin Ringrose said the co-chairs should be able to send experts from the WPCAG in their place when the Steering Committee will be considering a particular issue. There was a discussion and the previous motion was to also allow the WPCAG co-chairs to designate someone having greater expertise to represent the WPCAG when the Steering Committee is addressing such issues. There was further discussion and the motion was further modified so that the WPCAG reserves the right to request additional representation on the Steering Committee, depending on the final form of the Steering Committee.

There was further discussion of Issue 4 from the project management report. Margaret Miner said she would like to see greater detail regarding the spending of the \$100,000. Who will write the plan? Who will do what at what cost? Virginia de Lima said that can be a chicken and egg question. Margaret said the WPC should not commit to spending any more than \$20,000 at this time.

There was further discussion of the \$100,000 currently available to fund water planning and Tom Callahan said the WPC anticipates additional funding may be provided in this legislative session. Virginia de Lima said she would be more comfortable if issues were brought to the WPCAG before the WPC considers them. There was further discussion and Maureen Westbrook said she would be comfortable with moving forward with using up to \$20,000 for facilitation. Margaret Miner said they should spend no more than that.

Vin Ringrose said the money should be available for the WPC's use without the WPCAG budgeting it. It's time to move. There was a discussion of how to approach this and Vin asked Tom for his thoughts. Tom said he is surprised at the difficulty in starting this process. He would not want to have to come back to the WPCAG for approval if facilitation is going to cost \$21,000, not \$20,000. He added that if NEIWPC is an appropriate mechanism for procurement and contracting, NEIWPC should be allowed to do it.

There was a discussion of the project management report's Attachment 7 and that it is not a response to a proposal by NEIWPC. There was further discussion of expectations for this stage of the process and of NEIWPC's capabilities. Virginia de Lima explained its role in a large [Long Island Sound Study](#) project she had participated in. She said NEIWPC has considerable experience with logistics and there was further discussion. Tom Callahan explained that NEIWPC might organize the desired retreat or assist in the procurement and contracting process for it.

There was further discussion of members' concerns with the process, including overhead rates that might be charged. Vin Ringrose said the minutes should reflect that members have expressed such concerns. A motion was made and seconded to support this first step in the planning process and that the WPCAG will monitor it moving forward. The motion passed unanimously. There was a brief discussion of

waiting to see what funding will be proposed in the Governor's budget and of the WPCAG's role moving forward.

b. WPC annual report

Bruce Wittchen noted that the draft WPC report had been circulated to WPC members and then to WPCAG members last week and explained the rationale behind changing it. He added that it includes potentially controversial statements and said WPC members have not yet approved all such statements. There was a discussion of members' concerns regarding statements in the cover letter and Virginia de Lima said such statements would be better framed as examples of potential problems.

There also was a discussion of the need to highlight the need for continued funding. Maureen Westbrook recommended adding a brief section highlighting planning-related steps undertaken in the past year or so, beginning with the legislative summit process of a year ago. Other editorial comments were also provided and Bruce said he would revise the draft to reflect these concerns and suggestions.

c. WUCC update

There was no update.

4. New Business

a. Other

Maureen Westbrook said this might be the last WPCAG meeting attended by DEEP's Terri Schnoor, who is retiring at the end of February. Members thanked Terri for her participation in WPCAG activities.

5. WPC Requests to WPCAG and Work Group Updates

a. New Work Group – Other States Work Group

The group will meet again next week.

b. Small Systems Work Group

Maureen Westbrook said the group met again before this meeting to review DPH's legislative proposal.

c. Drought Plan Work Group

There was no report.

d. Green Industry Conservation Work Group

Kevin Sullivan provided information regarding projects in CT recently selected for funding through the [Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#) (RCPP). He explained that one is a multi-state lands management project intended to improve water quality in Long Island Sound. It will receive \$10 million of funding. A

separate \$400,000 project, focused on CT, is intended to improve irrigation and reduce the impact of drought.

e. Watershed Lands Work Group

Margaret Miner said the group will meet next week and there will be presentations by three speakers regarding agricultural and forest land management.

6. Public Comment

There was further discussion about the water planning effort, the pace of that effort and whether the WPCAG should provide additional input to the WPC.

7. Future Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for 1:30 on Tuesday, February 17th, 2015 at PURA, in New Britain, but it might need to be rescheduled.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM