

Water Planning Council Meeting
PURA
January 5, 2016
MINUTES

WPC Members present: John Betkoski, PURA; W. David LeVasseur OPM; Ellen Blaschinski, DPH, Mike Sullivan, DEEP.

Attendees: Tom Callahan, UConn; Margaret Miner, Co-Chair WPCAG; Maureen Westbrook, Co-Chair, WPCAG; Robert Wesneski, Avon Water Co.; Lori Vitagliano, SCCRWA; Gail Lucchina, PURA; Bruce Wittchen, OPM, Corinne Fitting, DEEP, Betsey Wingfield, DEEP; Cheryl Chase, DEEP; Nick Salemi, MDC; Nick Neeley, PURA; Alicea Charamut, CRWC; Lori Mathieu, DPH; Virginia de Lima, USGS; Betsy Gara, CWWA; Charles Rothenberger, Rome Smith & Lutz; Eileen Fielding, FRWA; David Sutherland, The Nature Conservancy

Call to Order

Council Chairperson Betkoski called the meeting to order at 1:39 PM.

Approval of the December 1, 2015 Minutes

Virginia made a clarification to the minutes and noted that she was not present for the December meeting. She stated that she would like to clarify some of Margaret's comments about Virginia's suggestion regarding a water security conference. She clarified that she did make a suggestion regarding a conference on water security and she recommended Len DeJong take a lead role because of his expertise. She also suggested that out of state experts be involved and that it be hosted by the WPC.

Chairperson Betkoski made a motion to approve the December minutes and Vice Chairperson LeVasseur seconded. Council member Blaschinski abstained, noting that she was not present at the December meeting. The minutes were approved with the above stated clarification accepted.

Business

- a. The RFP Criteria and Consultant Selection Committee was discussed. WPC Chairperson Betkoski advised that Gail Lucchina (PURA), David LeVasseur (OPM), Betsey Wingfield (DEEP), Ryan Tetreault (DPH), and Tom Callahan would be on the committee. The Chairperson asked if there were other submissions and Maureen suggested the new MDC Steering Committee member be added. Jack stated he thought that since Mr. Banker was just coming on board this would not be appropriate. WPC member Sullivan concurred. Virginia suggested Len DeJong and Chairperson Betkoski stated that this was an excellent suggestion. The Council unanimously approved extending an invitation to Len DeJong to join the RFP Criteria and Consultant Selection Committee. The Chairperson also stated that Susan and Jane from NEIWPC had developed a time schedule for this committee.
- b. WPCAG Status Report to the Legislature – Maureen clarified that her comments regarding the report were her own as well as Virginia and Len and Jim who also filed individual comments. Chairperson Betkoski stated that he was taking these

- comments under advisement and that he would be fine tuning the report with Gail Lucchina and he would determine if the comments appropriately should be included in the report. The Council voted and unanimously accepted Jack reviewing the comments and finalizing the report.
- c. Selection of a new member (MDC) for the Steering Committee – Chairperson Betkoski stated that he had been approached by the administration of the MDC and they felt strongly that they would like to nominate David Banker to sit on the Steering Committee. Lori stated that she has worked with Mr. Banker and he is an extremely competent engineer. Nick Salemi also spoke to Mr. Banker’s expertise and qualifications. Margaret stated that she would like to add that in her opinion, adding a member of MDC would bring a lot to the discussion but Rivers Alliance did an analysis of how many environmentalists are involved and they are very outnumbered. Their sole mission is to protect the fish and habitat and this imbalance will be further imbalanced with the MDC addition. She stated that it was a good addition but a greater imbalance. WPC member Sullivan concurred with Margaret. He thinks MDC is a good addition but he is also concerned about the imbalance. Chairperson Betkoski stated that the MDC are environmental stewards. Margaret stated that MDC works on wastewater but there is a big difference when your primary allegiance is to a corporation. Chairperson Betkoski stated to Margaret that was a point well taken. Vice Chairperson LeVasseur made a motion to accept David Banker on the Steering Committee. Council member Blaschinski seconded and the vote was unanimously approved.
 - d. Vice Chairperson LeVasseur stated that NEIWPC had signed the MOU and it was distributed by Tyra. David also reported that he is setting up an account to make the first installment of fees next week. He stated that the RFP Criteria and Consultant Selection Committee will be beginning work and a lot a progress has been made in the last two weeks. Chairperson Betkoski added that the last Steering Committee meeting was great and a lot of good dialogue took place.
 - e. Project Management – Tom stated that he thought it might be helpful if he reiterated what he sent to the Council regarding project management duties. He stated there are three pieces to his duties: 1) project coordination – He will ensure that the work of the various groups is accomplished; 2) NEIWPC point of contact - He will serve as the point of contact with NEIWPC and will make certain that all contractual obligations are met; 3) Establish an Implementation Team – He will establish this team from the staff of the various agencies. He will coordinate and sequence their activities. Tom stated that he will work from home for the most part. In cases where this is not possible, he has asked to be reimbursed for mileage and parking. Chairperson Betkoski made a motion to accept Tom’s proposal and Ellen so moved and David seconded. The vote to accept the proposal was unanimous. Tom stated that he will spend this month getting organized and he stated in relation to Margaret’s comment about the Steering Committee, it was first thought that smaller would be better but then the thought process was to get larger to have broader representation. Tom advised that he encourages the WPC to consider adding another member but that the Steering Committee should not get much larger.

- f. WPC Website: Dave stated that Eric has the site up but he needs the names of some environmental people to help with that content. Council member Blaschinski state that the website looks very good and Chairperson Betkoski concurred. Maureen advised that she is going to bring it up at the next WPCAG meeting to discuss comments. She mentioned that Len had made comments. Chairperson Betkoski informed Maureen that he and the Vice Chairman will soon be talking with legislators about the approval process. Nick added that they will be talking to the people seen as the authors of the legislation. The Chairperson stated that he will keep the group apprised.
- g. FOIA – Margaret stated that she was waiting to hear about FOIA. Council member Sullivan stated that we have been having the same conversation about it and he said it would organize a more formal discussion of what changes might be needed to accomplish what we need to have done. He said his schedule made this impossible for this meeting but his goal is forward movement on this subject. Margaret advised that she reviewed the CWWA proposal and she looks forward to a discussion. Her interest is if one of her members sees a stream dried up, can they find out why? This is very important to Rivers Alliance. Right now she advised that she is told the information is not available.
- h. Council member Sullivan stated that he wanted to get back to the subject of balance on the Steering Committee. He informed the group that DEEP had gotten together with a group of its environmentalists to make sure their concerns get to the WPC table. He further stated that right now Margaret is the only voice and she cannot do it all. Council member Sullivan stated that increasingly nature conservancies and environmental folks have been coming to meetings.
- i. WPCAG – Maureen stated that they mainly discussed the Water Plan approval process. Margaret also discussed the Kinder Morgan Pipeline Project. She noted that it came out of a discussion in a Watershed Lands Group meeting. This resulted in a WPCAG letter to the WPC. Margaret stated that it is a complex issue and many agencies are involved. She asked that the WPC debate what this proposal means. She said some of the issues concern what monitoring is needed and what is the impact during and after construction and what are the precedents regarding Class I and Class II lands. She said it is critical to protect Class I lands. Council member Blaschinski responded that Commissioner Mullin submitted written comments and the Acting Commissioner will seek Intervenor Status. She added that DPH concurs with Margaret and Ellen says she sees Margaret as a public health advocate and for that she thanks her. Chairperson Betkoski said it is complicated for DEEP and PURA because their Departments are involved in the process. He said there is the Comprehensive Energy Strategy and the Governor's plan that must also be considered but that it is a very important issue and they will be updated and if something adverse is happening then it is critical that we apprise our respective agencies.

Maureen added that the Health Director has stepped down and she is uncertain if David Knauff can fill the role. Ellen thinks there is a distinction in that David is a municipal health director and she has raised the issue and so far they have not picked up another volunteer.

- j. **Other States Report Table of Contents** – Chairperson Betkoski stated that he had received Ellen’s comments and they were very good. Margaret stated that she was out of the country and missed the opportunity to comment but that she would take a quick look and get back to the WPC as soon as possible.
- k. There was no **Executive Session**
- l. **Adjourn** - The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates:

The next WPC meeting will be held at PURA on March 1st.

Minutes prepared by Gail Lucchina, PURA

