

Water Planning Council Advisory Group

**June 16, 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
Josh Cansler	Southeastern CT Water Authority
Virginia de Lima	USGS CT Water Science Center
Len DeJong	Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
John Hudak	South Central CT Regional Water Authority
Henry Talmage	CT Farm Bureau
Robert W. Wesneski	Avon Water Company
Maureen Westbrook	Connecticut Water Company
Bob Young	Middletown Water & Sewer Department

Members by Phone:

Karen Burnaska	Endangered Lands Coalition/CFE
Vin Ringrose	Fisheries Advisory Council

Other Attendees:

Steve Anderson	DoAg
Aaron Budris	NVCOG
Tom Callahan	WPC project management
Alicea Charamut	CRWC
Corinne Fitting	DEEP
David Kuzminski	Town of Portland
George S. Logan	Aquarion
Matt Pafford	OPM
Bruce Rich (by phone)	Fisheries Advisory Council
Martha Smith	West River Watershed Coalition
Bruce Wittchen	OPM

Members Absent:

Eric Brown	CBIA
James Butler	SCCOG
Jennifer Kertanis	Farmington Valley Health District
Margaret Miner	Rivers Alliance
Denise Savageau	Town of Greenwich
Robert Silvestri	PSEG
Richard Sobolewski	OCC
Kevin Sullivan	Green Industry

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m. and, because new WPCAG member Josh Cansler was in attendance, Maureen Westbrook asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Approval of Minutes – April 21, 2015 and May 19, 2015

A motion was made and seconded to approve the [minutes of the April 21, 2015 meeting](#) and the motion was approved unanimously, with Josh Cansler and Len DeJong abstaining. A motion was made and seconded to approve the [minutes of the May 19, 2015 meeting](#) and the motion was approved unanimously, with Josh Cansler and Len DeJong abstaining.

3. Old Business

c. 2015 Legislative session update

Maureen Westbrook recommended the group start with 3.c, the legislative session update. Maureen said a lot remains to be done and noted that a large number of bills expected to be approved had only made it through one chamber of the legislature but not the other. Maureen added that such bills included some of interest to WPCAG members, such as the bill to modify the water plan approval process. She said the plan approval process will be raised again and there was a discussion of people's concerns about not knowing where things stand regarding a number of important issues. There was further discussion of the potential scope of the expected implementer bill and general agreement that it had been an unusual legislative session.

a. State Water Plan

Tom Callahan said the consultant hired to facilitate the Steering Committee workshop process has interviewed all Steering Committee members and has produced a draft report based on those interviews. That assessment forms the basis for the organization of the Steering Committee workshop to be held on 6/30 at UConn in Storrs.

Tom said the public is invited and that there will be opportunities for public input. To reach potentially interested people, notices will be sent to WPC and WPCAG members, with a request for each member to distribute the notice to other potentially interested people. Similarly, notices will be sent to people included on the distribution list for the water symposium held at UConn law school in 2014. Notices will also be provided to some interested members of the media.

Tom said DEEP Commissioner Klee hosted a reception for Steering Committee members last night and more than half attended. He said it was a social event for members to meet and get to know each other.

Maureen requested people provide any additional ideas they have for notifying additional people of the upcoming workshop. She suggested also notifying people on the WPC's public distribution list and on lists maintained by relevant organizations. Tom said the notice should be ready by the end of the week.

There was a discussion of Michael Sullivan replacing Betsey Wingfield as DEEP's designee to the Water Planning Council and the Steering Committee. Betsey will continue to participate as a key contributor to the water planning process.

Maureen Westbrook asked if the consultant's report is available to the public and Tom Callahan said the draft will be reviewed by the WPC and then the Steering Committee. It will not be available to the public prior to the Steering Committee workshop.

b. Other States' Plans Work Group draft report

Matt Pafford said the group's report has been distributed by email and there was a discussion of whether it will be posted online (**Note: it currently is available at <http://streamingwater.org/oswp/> and will be also be posted on the WPC website**). Maureen Westbrook noted that the work group had done a thorough review and presentation of its findings.

4. New Business

Len DeJong mentioned that he and other WPCAG members attended the June 9 DEEP informational session about [stream classification process](#) for the South Central Coastal Basin. He mentioned that it was a very informative session and that DEEP may consolidate the review of remaining three basins into one. Corinne Fitting confirmed that DEEP is discussing that option but has not yet made a decision to do so. Maureen Westbrook noted that Margaret Miner received the [Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition's](#) Dr. Marc Taylor Environmental Stewardship Award.

5. WPC Requests to WPCAG and Work Group Updates

a. Small Systems Work Group

Maureen Westbrook said the group has not met since its flurry of activity regarding DPH's legislative proposal. She said a little piece of what the group worked on appears in the approved version of Sen. Duff's [SB 569](#) (PA 15-89). That public act allows the state to step in to investigate the rates of small community water systems to ensure rates are adequate. Maureen noted that the bill was passed with additional language to phase in any increase exceeding 100%. She said the work group will return to this issues it had begun working on.

b. Drought Plan Work Group

Virginia de Lima explained that OPM's Eric Lindquist had compiled the various actions specified by the 2003 drought plan into a spreadsheet. This analysis highlighted the lack of consistency within the plan, with some activities starting or stopping abruptly while progressing through the drought stages. After she and Eric worked on this, she contacted work group member David Knauff, health director in Darien for his input, given his role in implementing aspects of the plan.

There was a discussion of the drought plan and the revision process. Virginia recommended the plan be organized so that it separates actions required of the state from actions required of industry. The work group had to cancel its last meeting because of schedule conflicts, but will meet soon.

Virginia asked Bruce Wittchen if he had anything to add about those findings and he said he believes the work group will make a number of changes based on what has been found. Given the potential scope of changes, the draft plan should be circulated to WPCAG and Interagency Drought Work Group members for their review and comment. WPCAG members represent a number of interests having a stake in the drought plan and the interagency group is responsible for implementing it. Their input will be important. Maureen Westbrook agreed that it would be beneficial for WPCAG members to contribute.

Maureen asked Len DeJong about Southbury's drought ordinance efforts and Len said that the workgroup facilitated by PRWC and convened for the purpose of bringing the local stakeholders together had met three times.

Len said there was consensus on the need for and the value of a drought ordinance, but concerns surfaced from the multi town private water supplier (HVWC) that an ordinance specific to one community's customers only would be confusing to their broader customer base. Similarly, workgroup members had concerns that given that the water supply is a regionally one (the Pomperaug aquifer) that all communities utilizing that supply should be subject to drought management.

Len said the adoption of a drought ordinance is now being proposed to be examined on a regional basis with the assistance of the COG. Len pointed out that Aaron Budris of the [Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments](#) (NVCOG) has been assisting in this effort and will continue.

c. Green Industry Conservation Work Group

There was no report.

d. Watershed Lands Work Group

Karen Burnaska said the group had been waiting for the end of the legislative session and will meet later this summer.

6. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7. Future Meeting Date

Maureen Westbrook recommended that members be polled in advance of the July meeting to ensure a quorum will be available. The next meeting is scheduled for 1:30 on Tuesday, June 16th, 2015 at PURA, in New Britain.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Bruce Wittchen, OPM