

# Connecticut Department of Public Health - Safe Drinking Water Primacy Assessment

## Meeting Summary

October 4, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

Present: Yvonne Addo, Lori Mathieu, Rachel Nowek, Justin Milardo, Kate Keenan, Brie Wolf, Anne Foley, Kelly Sinko, Lori Vitigliano, Michelle Rakebrand, Mike Muszynski, Pat Kearney  
Via Phone: Steve Pratt, John Herlihy, Sam Alexander, Maureen Westbrook

### 1. September 20<sup>th</sup> meeting recap

### 2. Public Act 17-2 Section 677

Discussed the need for a “forever plan”, growth in the cap over time, the FAQ, and percentage of the Drinking Water Section costs funded by the assessment.

### 3. Legislative Concepts

Discussed why the program exists, who it affects, how the program works and when it will be implemented.

### 4. Discussion Summary

- a. A hybrid of flat fees and cost per service connection will continue to be utilized. The idea of one payment for flat fee community systems, instead of two, was proposed. General stakeholder agreeance with this concept.
- b. Flat fees for NTNCs will continue. General stakeholder agreeance with this concept.
- c. The idea of invoicing TNCs on a five year schedule, closely following the sanitary survey schedule, was proposed. DPH discussed invoicing 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the systems annually at a cost of \$150 (\$30/year).
  - Comments noted flat fee amount should not be in statute to allow for increases.
  - It was questioned whether the DPH should subcontract invoicing efforts. DPH and OPM noted that this would likely not result in cost savings.
  - Comment received that if DPH invoices TNCs based on their survey schedule then they should do that for Communities and NTNCs as well. In general, other stakeholders did not agree with this approach. Also noted that TNCs should be invoiced \$100/year.
  - A noted concern with timing of increases and how they would be calculated when TNCs are invoiced every five years.
  - Comment proposed reserving monies collected from TNCs in a so-called “rainy day fund.” DPH noted that we do not want to collect more than is needed.
- d. Necessary cost increases were discussed. DPH noted that the future of federal funding is unpredictable and therefore a way to allow for responsible increases is necessary. DPH proposed the general idea of having two caps: 1) percent increase and 2) amount increase.
  - Comments received from participants noted the importance in being careful with cost increases because the cost is passed on to customers. Suggested using

(Consumer Price Index) DPH spoke out strongly against using CPI as it has no correlation to federal funding levels.

- It was questioned whether there were existing innovative ways to collect fees that are being utilized elsewhere. DPH responded by noting how other states/agencies collect fees and noted the DPH Fee Study. The concept of using a formula in legislation was introduced, which would consider federal funding levels.
- e. Annual reporting was mentioned by DPH, including the number of FTEs supported by the assessment, primacy work and streamlining efforts. No opposition or additional requests from stakeholders.
- f. The idea of electronic invoicing and payment was proposed by DPH with no opposition from stakeholders.
- g. Non-payment was discussed by DPH and includes a total of 4 attempts to collect, 1.5% per month interest and a transfer to DAS if DPH collection efforts are unsuccessful. No opposition from stakeholders.

#### **5. Upcoming deadlines and next steps**

DPH discussed concluding consultation and finalizing language during October and November to allow for a 30-day public comment period during December. Final language will be submitted for legislative consideration by February 15, 2019.

#### **6. Meeting concluded at 4:00 p.m.**