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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
PUBLIC UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

STATE WATER PLANNING COUNCIL

Regular Meeting held Via Teleconference on
July 6, 2021, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

H e l d B e f o r e :

JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, CHAIRMAN,
and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN

1 **A p p e a r a n c e s :**

2 **WATER PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

3 **MARTIN HEFT (OPM)**

4 **LORI MATHIEU (DPH)**

5 **GRAHAM STEVENS (DEEP)**

6
7 **ALSO PRESENT (on record):**

8 **MARGARET MINER**

9 **JOSH CANSLER**

10 **KAREN BURNASKA**

11 **MARY ANN DICKINSON**

12 **DR. REBECCA FRENCH**

13 **GANNON LONG**

14
15 **COUNCIL STAFF:**

16 **LAURA LUPOLI**

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1 (Begin: 1:34 p.m.)

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3 THE CHAIRMAN: So we will call the meeting of the Water
4 Planning Council for July 6th to order.

5 The first order of business will be the
6 approval of the minutes of the June 1st meeting.

7 Do I hear a motion?

8 LORI MATHIEU: So moved.

9 GRAHAM STEVENS: Seconded.

10 THE CHAIRMAN: Motion made by Lori, second by Graham.

11 Any discussion on the motion?

12
13 (No response.)

14
15 THE CHAIRMAN: If not, all those in favor signify by
16 saying, aye.

17 THE COUNCIL: Aye.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: We have on the agenda a presentation
19 from Rebecca French from DEEP, but it's my
20 understanding she's detained, and she will be
21 joining. She's actually at the Governor's bill
22 signing. She'll be joining us later on in this
23 Council meeting, and when she does we'll have her
24 come out and do her presentation.

25 Next, correspondence received -- and we can

1 take this up a little bit later. We did receive
2 an e-mail from Margaret Miner, and we can take
3 this up under new business, but it was -- I hope
4 everybody got a copy of the letter from Margaret
5 relative to the procedure for diversion permits,
6 particularly about the Greenwich system and what
7 the role of the Water Planning Council might be,
8 or might not be.

9 So if it's okay with the Council, we can take
10 that up later on to discuss?

11 LORI MATHIEU: Yes, that's fine with me.

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Graham, are you okay with that?

13 GRAHAM STEVENS: Agreed, yeah.

14 MARTIN HEFT: That's fine.

15 THE CHAIRMAN: The state water plan, the implementation
16 workgroup update, you should have received from
17 Dave and Virginia -- both of them, they must be
18 hopefully taking a long 4th of July weekend.

19 They can't be with us today, but they have
20 sent us a report in terms of what's been going on
21 with the implementation group, and talked about
22 what's going on with the report on the private
23 well quality report.

24 Also they talk about the draft subgroup, the
25 workgroup and the draft report, and they're going

1 to go actually talk about acceptance of that in
2 their July 13th meeting; talk about outreach and
3 education, implementation tracking. The subtopic
4 workgroup planned to initiate the meeting with
5 that, and talked about the survey update at the
6 workshop.

7 And Lori, do you want to say anything about
8 the well report, the draft report on well quality,
9 private well quality?

10 LORI MATHIEU: Yes. Thank you, Jack. So the
11 Department, the Department of Public Health for
12 many years has worked to try to get private wells
13 recognized more toward the end of location as well
14 as water quality.

15 So when all of this became part of the
16 discussion in the state water plan and in the
17 state water plan, as all of you remember who we're
18 part of it, private wells was a big part of the
19 discussion. And water quality testing, the
20 requirement only exists for when you drill a new
21 well.

22 And even on a property transfer there is no
23 requirement. Even though you do hear about it a
24 lot, you might think there's a requirement, but
25 there's not. So the good work by Mike

1 Dietz and -- or I should say Dr. Dietz and his
2 work team to take on the effort to implement a
3 piece of the state water plan when it comes to
4 understanding water quality better, and taking
5 some steps in that direction is a very good one.

6 So I'm very pleased with what I read and what
7 I've heard from my staff. There's two staff Ryan
8 Tetreault and Tatiana Shea that are part of that
9 group, that sub workgroup that Dr. Dietz runs, and
10 they've been able to provide a lot of great input.

11 We believe that this effort, as expressed in
12 this draft document, is a good step in the right
13 direction. It's not a hundred percent of
14 everything that would be necessary or needed to
15 fully understand drinking water quality every day
16 all day in private wells, however it is a step in
17 the right direction.

18 So one thing that -- we talk a lot about
19 legislative initiatives this time of year as a
20 department position. The long session just ended
21 and new session starts to be thought about moving
22 forward in our process internally.

23 So we've started conversations. And the
24 draft document, as Dr. Dietz and his group
25 have teed up, is part of the discussions within

1 our department. And so there's so much more to
2 come because those discussions just started, that
3 document just came out, but we're very excited to
4 see the work of that workgroup.

5 And the effort to implement this part of the
6 state water plan is a really important effort. On
7 behalf of the 800,000-plus people that consume
8 water out of private wells in our state, I know
9 one item that we want to know more about is, what
10 happens in other states?

11 Because if there is a movement toward that
12 end on a legislative initiative, that is one of
13 the very first questions that is asked about what
14 other states do. How does it work in other
15 states? What are some of the challenges in other
16 states? What are other states thinking about for
17 the future when it comes to private well water
18 quality testing?

19 So Jack, thank you for the opportunity to say
20 a few words, and I want to thank that work team
21 because they've done tremendous work, and look
22 forward to providing more information during the
23 coming months.

24 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thanks, Lori. And I know that's
25 something that you've been very passionate about

1 and we certainly do thank the group for working on
2 that.

3 Any other questions from Martin or Graham on
4 the written report that we received, or comments?

5 MARTIN HEFT: I don't have any.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Graham?

7 GRAHAM STEVENS: Jack, I'd just like to say echoing
8 some of Lori's sentiment, I mean, I think a very
9 concise excellently written report with a real
10 consumable attached to it.

11 That gets us towards our overall objective
12 and at some point I think it might be helpful for
13 us to discuss sooner rather than later legislative
14 initiatives that the Water Planning Council would
15 be supportive of and would endorse from the member
16 agencies.

17 And I think this being one as well as a
18 fixture initiative from -- that we kind of got
19 some traction on last session, but we need to
20 start laying some more groundwork on it in advance
21 of next session.

22 It might even behoove us to consider having
23 an open and transparent discussion about some of
24 the initiatives that we may be supportive of and
25 then to hear from stakeholders on that, maybe even

1 going as far as inviting certain stakeholders who
2 may not have engaged thus far in some of our
3 processes.

4 I think about, Lori, the homebuilders
5 association, the Connecticut CBA's, the real
6 estate section as well as the realtors -- just so
7 they can understand where the agency's and the
8 Water Planning Council's perspectives lay, and
9 what future the legislative initiative may be in.

10 And really try to solicit and entice a public
11 dialogue around this before we get into the
12 legislative session itself. And I know that that,
13 that idea carries with it some difficulties for
14 the agency representatives just because we may not
15 have our designated leaders sign off on all of the
16 legislative proposals, but certainly from the
17 Water Planning Council perspective that might be
18 something where we can talk about our intent, and
19 how these initiatives may align with our
20 respective missions.

21 So just something to think about. Maybe at
22 the next meeting we can put something like that on
23 the agenda, but I know that internally the
24 agencies will have to digest that information and
25 think about it.

1 THE CHAIRMAN: Well, that's a great idea, but if we're
2 going to do it we should probably do it at the
3 August meeting. Because before you know it, it's
4 going to be October 1st, and we're going to be
5 getting legislative proposals into OPM and the
6 Governor's office.

7 So I think, Lori and Graham if you could let
8 us know who'd you'd like to invite and we'll have
9 Ally get invitations out to them to come to our
10 August meeting. And the sooner the better,
11 because before you know it, it's going to be
12 deadline time and we're going to be in -- Mary Ann
13 Dickinson, who's on -- see, she can't stay away
14 from us. She's on the call today.

15 But she's telling us Massachusetts is beating
16 us and getting ahead of us with some of the water
17 fixture legislation.

18 MARY ANN DICKINSON: And Rhode Island just did it.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: And Rhode Island.

20 MARY ANN DICKINSON: So now you have Vermont,
21 Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York.
22 Connecticut is currently missing here.

23 THE CHAIRMAN: Jennifer, do you have a question?

24 Jennifer Barry?

25 Your hand was up. Okay. All right.

1 Well, that's got --

2 LORI MATHIEU: Jack, could I ask? Toward that and, are
3 you thinking of a special meeting in August just
4 for legislative initiatives? Or just to tack it
5 onto what --

6 THE CHAIRMAN: We're all busy. I think we should
7 probably tack it on. Do it, either -- probably at
8 the end, maybe at the end of a meeting.

9 I mean, unless somebody -- I'm open to
10 suggestions, but I'm just trying to make it as
11 easy as possible for people. And again, I don't
12 know when we're going to be back in the building.
13 For the foreseeable future we're going to be
14 doing, still doing remote meetings.

15 LORI MATHIEU: Because there was -- to Graham's point,
16 I remember we talked about this a while back I
17 think about who was on that committee that
18 represented real estate, and represented
19 homebuilding.

20 And I guess there was a person who
21 represented the realtors and had some comment to
22 add. But Graham, I think just to expand out to
23 these, to the groups and to the people who
24 have interest, or a lot of interest in the
25 stakeholders, including towns and local health

1 directors who have direct oversight. And town
2 government I think is really very important, and
3 maybe even council of governments, so.

4 GRAHAM STEVENS: That's a great idea, Lori.

5 No, I just think in this, this day and age --
6 and I know that our legislative colleagues may
7 disagree, but you know the legislative process
8 isn't always as open to as many as we would like
9 to assume.

10 And I just wanted to, as a body, just try to
11 extend that transparency as far as we can, and
12 frankly to hear from folks who may have a
13 differing opinion than we do. So that that can be
14 something that we internalize as part of our
15 decision-making process.

16 THE CHAIRMAN: Mary Ann --

17 GRAHAM STEVENS: (Unintelligible) too much bureaucracy
18 around that.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Graham.

20 In the other states -- of course, the other
21 states, I don't believe have anything like the
22 Water Planning Council. Do they go straight to
23 the Legislature, the stakeholders, people who have
24 various opinions?

25 MARY ANN DICKINSON: So I don't know what happened in

1 Rhode Island. And in Massachusetts I think it was
2 state sponsored as part of their climate change
3 work.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

5 MARY ANN DICKINSON: But many of the states -- or 14
6 states that have done this so far, and usually
7 it's a legislator who is a champion and just
8 submits it, and it goes through the regular
9 legislative process. So that's how it's been
10 handled in most states.

11 One of the more recent ones was the State of
12 Nevada where a legislator was a champion for it
13 last session, and now he's submitting further
14 refinements to it this session. I mean, he's
15 really motivated, and I'm sure -- I'm sure we can
16 find a similarly motivated legislator here in
17 Connecticut. In fact, we do know of already at
18 least one or two.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: Absolutely. Okay. If there's no more
20 discussion on this, let's move to the Water
21 Planning Council advisory group.

22 Josh?

23 JOSH CANSLER: Let me unmute, first I guess. Alecia is
24 on a vacation right now. So she's not here today.

25 We did hold our last meeting on June 15th and

1 in addition to the usual updates we had on the
2 implementation workgroup and the WUCC, and we also
3 had a long discussion about an update on
4 legislation that went through the last session.

5 Some of you -- or most of you probably
6 received an e-mail from Alecia on June 13th about
7 the source water protection white paper that the
8 advisory group is working on.

9 Alecia sent out a request for volunteers to
10 help write that white paper, and I do believe she
11 has received quite a few volunteers so far. So we
12 are working on that white paper and hopefully
13 we'll have that draft ready fairly soon.

14 On the watershed lands workgroup we had some
15 discussion on that. Karen, did you want to add
16 anything?

17 KAREN BURNASKA: No, I'll let you continue, Josh.

18 JOSH CANSLER: Okay. We had a discussion on the final
19 draft report and we were moving with that. And we
20 also talked about a solar siting. And of course I
21 believe the initial meeting of the draft solar
22 siting workgroup was June 16th, and I gave up my
23 spot to John Hudak who obviously has been much
24 more involved in solar siting in this state than I
25 have.

1 So he is representing the advisory group on
2 that, on that effort -- and I believe Alecia as
3 well. I don't think she was at the June 16th
4 meeting.

5 Graham, I think that's your area. So I won't
6 get into what happened with that work plan as
7 well.

8 In new business Denise Savageau, I don't
9 believe she's on online here. She brought up the
10 subject of hydrilla. We had a long discussion on
11 that and the efforts to create a task force, and a
12 letter that's requesting Senator Blumenthal's
13 support for the Army Corps of Engineers to get
14 involved with the hydrilla.

15 And specifically I guess it has become an
16 issue in the last few years along the Connecticut
17 River. So we did have a long discussion on that,
18 and Denise did send out quite a bit of reference
19 material on that and asking people to get
20 involved.

21 And I believe that's the only other we had.
22 Again, we had a long update from the
23 implementation workgroup as well, which everyone
24 already saw the e-mail on. That's all I've got.

25 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Josh.

1 Any questions for Josh?

2 LORI MATHIEU: I just have a quick, quick one. I know
3 that I've asked a couple Department of Public
4 Health staff to participate on this source water
5 protection white paper. I'm wondering if the most
6 recent draft has an actual mission statement or an
7 intent written on it?

8 JOSH CANSLER: Well, that's something they're working
9 on. I have not seen the most recent draft.
10 Alecia is working on it.

11 LORI MATHIEU: Okay.

12 JOSH CANSLER: So I would have to reach out to her to
13 get you a final answer on that.

14 LORI MATHIEU: Yeah, because I'm still confused as to
15 what the mission is.

16 JOSH CANSLER: My understanding is that the goal is to
17 look at the roles of the Water Planning Council
18 and all the agencies in source water protection,
19 and how it is being addressed in the State.

20 But again, I'd have to get at Alecia because
21 this has been kind of her bailiwick, exactly what
22 the mission statement is.

23 LORI MATHIEU: My suggestion would be that before more
24 work happens, that an actual mission statement is
25 produced so that we -- I know which staff to add

1 to the team so that we can get the most input from
2 the right people at the Department of Public
3 Health.

4 JOSH CANSLER: All right. Well, I'll talk to her about
5 that and we'll discuss it at the next advisory
6 meeting.

7 LORI MATHIEU: Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Any further questions for Josh?

9
10 (No response.)

11
12 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Josh.

13 Karen, anything additional on the watershed?

14 KAREN BURNASKA: No, I think we're all set. The
15 watershed lands workgroup has not met since your
16 last meeting. This is kind of a tough time to
17 get, you know, people together.

18 So I believe, you know, Josh handled it well.
19 He looked over several of us -- John made a very
20 good -- John Hudak, a very good presentation to
21 the DEEP, a scoping webinar and, you know, we're
22 going to keep tabs on that. And hopefully we'll
23 have some more information for you at your office
24 meeting.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

1 Lori, any -- oh, Margaret Miner has a
2 question.

3 **MARGARET MINER:** Yes, hi. I had a question relating to
4 the work we're doing on source water protection
5 and watershed lands looking at a couple of
6 projects where the impact is to -- within a
7 drinking water watershed or a AA watershed, the
8 impact is to the headwater streams, and the
9 headwaters and the streams.

10 And it may be in some cases a little remote
11 from the reservoir, the public reservoir or a well
12 field. And so I think the water companies are
13 reluctant to provide negative comment if there's
14 not a kind of -- you can see the sediment coming
15 straight from the hilltop into the reservoir.

16 But I'm thinking, shouldn't we be paying
17 attention to the possibility, and in some cases,
18 probability that we're going to lose that
19 headwaters as a source in the course of
20 development that won't directly impact the
21 reservoir? But if it actually imperils the
22 headwaters or impairs them, in first water
23 streams, shouldn't we be looking a little beyond
24 where we usually look?

25 And I think that probably is something that

1 will taken up in the white paper on source water
2 protection, but I think our watershed lands are,
3 you know, we've been looking fairly close to the
4 source. And I'm looking -- I'm wondering maybe
5 your reservoir won't be impaired, but can it do
6 without this, this upland headwaters if they
7 disappear altogether?

8 And then the second question I've been
9 running across is, when you're looking at a
10 fragile site, is a hundred-year storm design
11 adequate? It seems to be not and that we should
12 somehow revisit that.

13 So those were the two, sort of, watershed
14 lands questions that I've been running into on the
15 ground or in the field in the last few weeks.

16 That's all.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much.

18 Lori, would you like to talk any WUCC update?

19 **LORI MATHIEU:** There isn't a lot to update. I know
20 that in the central WUCC area there is an ongoing
21 concern I believe in the Town of Berlin. And
22 there's sort of a dispute about a certain service
23 area that I know Eric McPhee, who' is the lead
24 from DPH, is working with the WUCC leadership
25 there to address.

1 But you know, there's nothing else beyond
2 that. I know they continue to work on their
3 sub-teams and implementation, and I know all of
4 you are -- some of you have been participating,
5 and all of you are more than welcome and invited
6 to attend the WUCC meetings.

7 And if there's anyone here that doesn't get
8 those notifications, please let me know. I'll
9 make sure that you are on the list.

10 And Jack, that's all that I have.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, and I think you
12 already gave the private well update.

13 LORI MATHIEU: Okay. All right.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I mean, unless you have more to add?

15 LORI MATHIEU: No. I think what Graham said is very
16 true. I think upfront, proactive and stakeholder
17 involvement is critical. You know this is
18 important to a lot of people, and there are a
19 lot -- you know there can be a lot of challenges
20 in moving something like this forward.

21 It affects a lot and people. It affects many
22 things like property value concerns, but for us in
23 the Health Department it comes down to public
24 health. And one item that I really like about
25 what Dr. Dietz added with the team is adding in

1 requirements on property transfer of testing for
2 arsenic and uranium.

3 And next month we're having USGS along with a
4 couple members of my staff from the Department of
5 Public Health to present on the most recent
6 information and study on arsenic and uranium in
7 the State of Connecticut, which captured a lot of
8 attention when we worked on our press release.

9 So that's an exciting piece of this, and I
10 think we don't want to lose sight of the fact that
11 this is a public health initiative as well. It is
12 an important aspect when people buy a new home so
13 that they can understand fully what they are
14 purchasing and then what they would be consuming
15 every day.

16 So you know, I do think it's an important
17 initiative. It's very important to get all
18 stakeholders to the table.

19 So, Jack, thank you.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN:** You're welcome. And again, Lori, you
21 talked a little bit about the water conservation
22 fixtures and how we would like to proceed. I
23 don't know if there's anything further you want
24 like to add to that?

25 **LORI MATHIEU:** Well, I see Mary Ann there. And Mary

1 Ann and I had a wonderful conversation. She's
2 always great. I believe she is retired, like a
3 lot of you -- but you keep coming back, which is
4 wonderful.

5 So Mary Ann, we had a wonderful conversation
6 on Friday just about what other states are doing,
7 the fact that Connecticut is behind.

8 But Jack and Graham, I know that I'll look to
9 both of you. I know that you both have worked on
10 this working with our sister agency. So I don't
11 know if you have anything else you want to add
12 about -- we do have to get Consumer Protection,
13 the Department of Consumer Protection involved and
14 the Department of Administrative Services involved
15 because it does affect other, those two other
16 agencies with building codes and fixtures.

17 And when we put something in place we also
18 want to make sure it's enforced and well
19 understood, so --

20 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Lori, you just raised a good point. I
21 think we should probably invite -- if they can,
22 come to our next meeting. I mean, if we get
23 representatives there we're going to have
24 stakeholders come in and talk about the proposed
25 legislation. So they should hear directly from

1 these individuals, so we can --

2 LORI MATHIEU: That would be good.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: Graham, did you have anything to add?

4 GRAHAM STEVENS: Yeah. I mean, I just -- from my
5 perspective and I don't want to speak for the
6 Department of Consumer Protection, but I imagine
7 they are pretty flat out right now dealing with --

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Is something going on over there?

9 GRAHAM STEVENS: Yeah, apparently. They have a
10 stand-up and online betting and, you know, a
11 recreational cannabis program in the next couple
12 weeks. So they're just a little bit busy,
13 understandably, to launch two new comprehensive
14 programs in a short period of time -- but
15 certainly we can ask.

16 Hopefully they can provide somebody to attend
17 that meeting. I'm happy to coordinate with you,
18 Jack, on that.

19 THE CHAIRMAN: We'll do that.

20 MARY ANN DICKINSON: But I did -- I did offer, Jack, to
21 Lori, that if a presentation on why Connecticut
22 should do this and what other states have done --
23 if that would be helpful, I would be happy to do
24 that.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: I think that we would love that. Thank

1 you very much. Maybe when we have this meeting --
2 and I think what we're going to try to do is
3 condense the rest of the agenda and have a good
4 portion of this meeting to deal just with this
5 subject, and I'll talk to my colleagues on the
6 Water Planning Council before that.

7 LORI MATHIEU: And Jack, it does say Rebecca here. And
8 it does dovetail nicely into climate change,
9 because it is conserving our water supplies in a
10 more proactive manner instead of, you know, the
11 droughts that Mary Ann and I talked about. What's
12 going on in California is horrible, and we don't
13 want to be in that position.

14 It's positioning ourselves to be in the right
15 place, and it does very well with what Rebecca has
16 been leading the charge with the GC-3, and I
17 believe it is mentioned.

18 MARY ANN DICKINSON: And it saves energy, too, and we
19 have done some calculations on how much energy
20 would be saved by these standards. So that could
21 be part of what we pass on.

22 And if you want to have a separate sidebar
23 before the August meeting, I'm happy to attend
24 that just for what you need. Thank you.

25 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you so much. Okay. Why don't we

1 just do Martin's update, and then we'll go to
2 Rebecca.

3 **MARTIN HEFT:** Sure. Good afternoon, all. It will be a
4 very quick update because we did not meet last
5 month. And since we do not have the sub working
6 group draft report I don't really have anything to
7 report on, and this week's meeting that's
8 scheduled for Thursday will be canceled.

9 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Well, we certainly got plenty of rain.
10 That's for sure.

11 **MARTIN HEFT:** Yes.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much. Rebecca, you've
13 had a busy day. We appreciate you being with us
14 today, and you can introduce yourself and tell us
15 what you're going to talk about.

16 Thank you for being here.

17 **REBECCA FRENCH:** Hi. Good afternoon, everyone. Thanks
18 so much for having me. Apologies for the switch
19 in the schedule. The Governor decided to sign the
20 bill that I'm actually going to talk to you about
21 this morning.

22 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Great. Our timing is great then. It's
23 literally hot off the press. That's great.

24 **REBECCA FRENCH:** So I have a brief presentation where I
25 can go over the Governor's Council on Climate

1 Change -- I'm sorry. I should introduce myself.
2 I'm Dr. Rebecca French. I'm the Director of the
3 Office of Climate Planning for the Connecticut
4 Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

5 And one of the main objectives for my office,
6 starting off at least, was to assist Commissioner
7 Dykes who is the Chair of the Governor's Council
8 with administering the Governor's Council on
9 Climate Change.

10 And so I'm going to give a brief overview of
11 what that organization is and a high-level of what
12 all the recommendations are, because there were
13 many. And then close out -- one of the bills -- a
14 little bit of the explanation of the bill the
15 Governor signed this morning, although there were
16 many other pieces of legislation that were
17 influenced by or directly -- also directly
18 implemented, but this is one of the bills that the
19 Governor led. So -- and I'm happy to take any
20 questions.

21 So I can share my screen, I'm assuming. It
22 looks like I have permission to do so. That
23 works.

24 How does that look?

25 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Very good.

1 REBECCA FRENCH: All right. Okay. So the Governor's
2 Council on Climate Change, this council is formed
3 by executive order. Governor Lamont signed this
4 executive order on September 3, 2019, Executive
5 Order 3.

6 There was a Governor's Council on Climate
7 Change under the previous Governor Malloy. And so
8 Governor Lamont was reconstituting it, but
9 expanded the objectives of the council beyond just
10 mitigation -- and today I'm using the word
11 "mitigation" in terms of greenhouse gas emissions
12 reductions.

13 And so the council was charged with
14 monitoring and reporting on the State's
15 implementation of greenhouse gas emissions
16 reduction strategies, many of which were developed
17 under the previous council.

18 But then also this was -- the main expansion
19 is to develop and implement adaptation strategies
20 to assess and prepare for the impacts of climate
21 change. And again, I said having to find
22 mitigation adaptation means the adjustment in
23 natural or human systems in anticipation of or in
24 response to a changing environment, in this case,
25 climate change. And resilience means the ability

1 to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to changing
2 conditions; and withstand, respond to and recover
3 rapidly from destructions, again in the context of
4 climate change.

5 The GC-3 is -- what we call it for short, was
6 divided into the two subcommittees based on those
7 two objectives, one charged with mitigation, and
8 the other with adaptation resiliency. But the
9 bulk of the work was done in working groups, and
10 these working groups started meeting around
11 January/February of 2020; continued to meet even
12 when everything went online, in recognition of the
13 other Governor's executive order of stay safe,
14 stay home, and were remarkably successful under
15 those conditions and doing a huge amount of work.

16 And in no small part to the chairs of all
17 these working groups here have made progress on
18 mitigation strategies, equity, environmental
19 justice, working and natural lands, science and
20 technology, financing, adaptation and resilience,
21 infrastructure and land use adaptation, public
22 health and safety; and then assessing
23 vulnerabilities in state assets and operations
24 actually just started meeting this year.

25 But I would particularly thank Lori Mathieu

1 and her Deputy Commissioner Heather Aaron from the
2 Department of Public Health for cochairing the
3 public health and safety working group which was
4 extremely successful.

5 So all of these working groups put out their
6 own reports with recommendations that then were
7 filtered up to these subcommittees and resulted in
8 61 recommendations for the Governor's Council on
9 Climate Change, and that those came out in a
10 report that we put out by January 15, 2021.

11 And then we're in this sort of phase two of
12 the GC-3. The executive order does have some
13 remaining objectives and those will be reported on
14 by December 31, 2021, the close of this year.

15 This is a quick sort of overview of the
16 different aspects of the process.

17 There are 23 members of the council. They
18 were half state agencies and the other half were
19 representatives from the business community,
20 non-environmental, nonprofits, a foundation,
21 council of government, and a municipal
22 representative.

23 But again, those working groups, when we
24 bring everyone who's involved in the working
25 groups together, we're talking about 231 people

1 involved as working group members representing
2 over a hundred organizations. And they held 186
3 public meetings in 2020. So again, a massive
4 effort.

5 And they were working in on these objectives
6 of the Governor's zero-carbon target for the
7 electricity sector by 2040, which was also in
8 Executive Order 3, and working on those mitigation
9 strategies so that we meet our statutory goal of a
10 45 percent reduction in carbon emissions levels by
11 2030, and produced the statewide adaptation and
12 resilience plan.

13 And again, this is that report I keep
14 referring to where each of the working groups,
15 their recommendations were then filtered into 61
16 recommendations in this report, taking action on
17 climate change and building a more resilient
18 Connecticut for all, which you can find on our
19 website and I can put a link in the chat when I'm
20 done presenting.

21 So that report included those
22 recommendations. It also provided through the
23 science and technology working group an overview
24 of the impacts of climate change, which we're
25 already seeing in Connecticut. And I know this

1 will be familiar to this workgroup and to the
2 Water Planning Council, because of course you're
3 the authors of the state water plan -- which also
4 acknowledged many of the impacts of climate
5 change.

6 We've seen, you know, we've seen huge impacts
7 from storms. This is looking back at Irene in
8 2011, which I think really started a much larger
9 conversation on climate adaptation and resilience
10 in the State. You're looking at a substation in
11 Bridgeport where we came within just a few inches
12 of a massive disaster of, you know, having major
13 damage to a substation.

14 Which, you know, if a substation is
15 significantly damaged, parts for these things are
16 not around. So it can literally take months to
17 rebuild a substation. So we have some significant
18 vulnerabilities to our grid in low lying areas all
19 along the coast.

20 We've also seen damage from storms like
21 Hurricane Sandy, where we saw, you know, houses
22 taken off their foundations from flooding and wave
23 action, downed trees; road flooding both from
24 coastal storm surge, but also from precipitation
25 and flooding of roads, rain events.

1 And this, it's coastal, but you would also
2 see situations upland as well where, you know, we
3 have road flooding. You know, here we're -- this
4 is Route 146, a state road that's a main
5 conducting road for the coastal communities --
6 actually where I just was this morning. Guilford
7 and Branford use this road and it connects many of
8 their businesses and residential areas.

9 And on, you know, not a named storm, not a
10 major event -- they'll have flooding in these,
11 these parts of the roads that are just low lying
12 or where they go under a railroad pass. Just by
13 necessity the road dips down so that you have the
14 clearance that that if it happens to be in an area
15 that's also a floodplain, it becomes a place where
16 you get flooding sometimes just at high tide.

17 So in many of these places the, you know,
18 people who live down there would say, oh, yeah.
19 Yeah, that pretty much floods every day now. And
20 so this is a regular occurrence that we're already
21 seeing and will be further impacted as sea levels
22 rise.

23 We've also in the last couple weeks been
24 introduced to the increasing frequency of heat
25 waves in Connecticut where we're having more and

1 more days over 90 degrees. I always tell you that
2 there's, you know, public health impacts of this
3 that are significant, especially for vulnerable
4 populations.

5 And then again, this is also very important
6 to the state water plan. We've experienced some
7 drought in 2020, and I'm going to talk a little
8 bit about what the predictions are for the science
9 and technology group about the frequency of that.

10 So this, it's very important when we talk
11 about climate adaptation. And in fact, at the
12 bill signing this morning we got a question from a
13 reporter that was sort of getting at this issue
14 of, well, you know, can you just adapt to things
15 if we don't mitigate, you know? And that's --
16 that's not the case.

17 These are parallel efforts and it's because
18 the impacts of climate change that we will see
19 between now and the year 2050 are from emissions,
20 greenhouse gas emissions that are already in the
21 atmosphere. So we've already baked these impacts
22 into our climate, and the climate is responding
23 and we will see these impacts go through 2050.

24 The science says, however, that impacts after
25 2050 are sensitive to how much carbon we put into

1 the atmosphere now and going forward. So that's
2 why we can make a real difference on our climate
3 and prevent the worst impacts of climate change,
4 which is by far the best option for public safety,
5 the environment, costs, everything.

6 It is much, much more effective to prevent
7 impacts than to try to adapt to them afterwards --
8 but like I said, we've also already changed
9 things, so we have to adapt to that. So it's
10 really critical that we do both. It's not an
11 either/or. It's both.

12 And so again, here's a very short version.
13 I'll definitely refer you to the report for a
14 little bit more detail on the impacts of climate
15 change the science and technology working group
16 put forward.

17 We expect to see stronger storms and more
18 frequent and longer droughts, up to 20 inches of
19 sea level rise along the Connecticut coast by
20 2050. With that sea level rise, that equates to
21 an increased frequency of coastal flooding with
22 levels of those seen in Sandy, every -- on a
23 frequency level of every five to ten years.

24 And again, increased frequency of days over
25 90 degrees Fahrenheit. We were an average of only

1 five per year before the year 2000, and by mid
2 century we'll be at an average of 25 per year.

3 And I put these slides in after the heat wave
4 we had in June just to show you that as we have
5 this increased frequency of days over 90 degrees,
6 we're getting them, you know, we're getting these
7 high heat waves in June now when our schools are
8 still in session.

9 So we're seeing these cascading impacts
10 where, okay. Now we're getting heat waves.
11 Schools are still in session. Schools now need to
12 adapt to these conditions. Whereas, you know, me,
13 growing up, there were very few days if ever that
14 we had these kind of conditions where it was too
15 hot at my school. My school didn't have air
16 conditioning.

17 So these are things that -- we had 62 school
18 districts closed in that first heat we had in June
19 when they were open, and that was for a variety of
20 factors, but you know many of our schools, again,
21 they don't have air conditioning. So this is a
22 real adaptation need for them.

23 And when it gets hot that also impacts the
24 air quality. So we had our first air quality
25 alert day that same time that we had the heatwave,

1 and those were directly connected. When it gets
2 hot the conditions are right to generate ozone and
3 result in a poorer air quality.

4 So then the cost of inaction. So like I
5 said, the good news/bad news is that after 2050
6 we, if we make drastic emission reductions now we
7 can stave off some of the worst impacts.

8 So we could, if without immediate action, we
9 could have sea levels up to 80 inches by the end
10 of the century. And if not, if we do not mitigate
11 emissions we'll have increased and accelerating
12 warming -- but science also says it will stabilize
13 if we get those emissions down.

14 And again, these are Connecticut statutory
15 targets. There's a bit of a data lag -- so I
16 can't exactly tell you where we are in 2020,
17 because we don't have 2020 data from EPA yet, but
18 we're tracking our 2020 target of a 10 percent
19 emissions reductions below 1990 levels. And then
20 our 2030 target is 45 percent below 2001 emissions
21 levels, and 2050 is an 80 percent emissions
22 reduction target by 2050.

23 In addition to the impacts of climate change
24 the report also looked at all of our
25 recommendations through an equity lens -- and for

1 time's sake, I'm not going to go through this, but
2 this is from the Intergovernmental Panel on
3 Climate Change at the IPCC, which is the
4 international body of scientists who have been
5 reporting to us on what the impacts of climate
6 change are.

7 And they recognize that the impacts of
8 climate change are not shared equally. People who
9 are socially, economically, culturally,
10 politically, institutionally or otherwise
11 marginalized are especially vulnerable to climate
12 change, and also to some adaptation and mitigation
13 responses.

14 And so we had this equity environmental
15 justice working group that helped review all of
16 the recommendations, advised us on individuals
17 they thought would be helpful in each working
18 group to advise on those issues, and then put out
19 some of their own recommendations as well
20 specifically to address equity and environmental
21 justice in climate planning as the standalone
22 issue.

23 And they give us some guidance on what
24 equitable planning means; in any -- really in any
25 context, but applying it to climate planning that

1 you include core concepts of distributive and
2 procedural justice, you consider existing
3 disparities and provide communities with
4 meaningful opportunities to participate in the
5 policy process in order to further climate justice
6 and mitigate environmental racism, and it requires
7 that community perspectives and viewpoints be
8 considered in adaptation and mitigation decision
9 making and planning.

10 And these are the definitions of those
11 different types of equity that we applied to our
12 recommendations. Distributive equity being --
13 placing the most vulnerable communities at the
14 forefront of any potential benefits a policy might
15 create and ensure that there's equitable
16 distribution of those benefits.

17 Procedural equity, that you do planning and
18 partnership with BIPOC -- or bi-pock [phonetic] is
19 how it's pronounced -- communities.

20 Contextual equity, assessing the
21 vulnerabilities of communities across Connecticut
22 to climate change through the legacy of racial and
23 income inequality and other factors; and
24 corrective equity, providing communities with
25 clear processes to hold the State accountable to

1 its commitments to pursue equity.

2 And this was also embedded in Executive Order
3 3, signed by the Governor, that we should
4 prioritize integrated advanced equitable
5 distribution of costs and benefits for our
6 mitigation, meaning of greenhouse gas emissions
7 reductions, strategies, and that we prioritize the
8 protection of our most vulnerable communities.

9 So this is an overview of the 61
10 recommendations, again in that report. From the
11 equity in environmental justice area they
12 recommended -- or the council recommended we
13 prioritize mitigation adaptation strategies in
14 vulnerable communities that will feel the impacts
15 of climate change first and worst through
16 launching a statewide environmental justice
17 mapping tool, and focus planning and resources in
18 those communities, including developing and
19 implementing a no less than 40 percent equity
20 funding or benefit commitment.

21 Under progress of mitigation strategies, we
22 should protect and harness energy efficiency funds
23 to improve building heating and cooling, and move
24 to decarbonize our building sector. Achieve a
25 zero-carbon electric supply by 2040 through

1 increased use of solar, wind, battery storage, and
2 a smarter and more responsive grid while creating
3 green jobs.

4 Reduce emissions for methane and
5 hydrofluorocarbons. Otherwise, it's not just the
6 CO2, that these are other sources of greenhouse
7 gas, greenhouse gases.

8 Promote mitigation strategies in planning and
9 materials management.

10 Move toward a decarbonized transportation
11 sector through implementing the transportation and
12 climate initiative program, and putting electric
13 vehicles and EV infrastructure on the road, and
14 advanced initiatives to reduce vehicle miles
15 traveled.

16 The working natural lands working group
17 really worked across both mitigation strategies
18 and adaptation and resilience. They recommend we
19 harness the power of nature-based solutions to
20 adapt and make Connecticut's vulnerable cases more
21 resilient to the impacts of sea level rise such as
22 coastal and riverine flooding, drought; while
23 creating/enhancing ecosystem services, and move
24 the State to net-zero emissions through carbon
25 sequestration and storage in forests, wetlands and

1 agricultural landscapes.

2 This is sometimes referred to as negative
3 emissions. We're talking about taking CO2 out of
4 the atmosphere and having it stored longterm in
5 our environmental resources.

6 Infrastructure and land use adaptation had
7 recommendations around building back better with
8 resilient and sustainable infrastructure and land
9 use that are informed by the best available
10 science and engineering standards.

11 Public health and safety adaptation. Again,
12 these are summary level.

13 So Lori, just this is a representative of a
14 multipage report. It's a very quick overview.
15 Lori can tell you more details about what's in
16 here, but recognize that climate change is also a
17 public health crisis -- and prepare Connecticut
18 for heat stress, air quality impacts, vector-borne
19 diseases while ensuring safe drinking water and a
20 climate informed emergency management system.

21 And finally, the financing and funding,
22 adaptation and resilience working group was
23 charged with, how do we pay for this. And they
24 made recommendations around leveraging federal,
25 state and municipal funding sources to implement

1 adaptation resilience projects while building new
2 financing mechanisms, including the creation of
3 resilience authorities, stormwater utilities, and
4 an environmental infrastructure bank.

5 And again, the science and technology also
6 provided some recommendations in addition to
7 providing those science impacts on impacts of
8 climate change between now and 2050, an overview
9 of ensuring Connecticut's decisions continue to be
10 informed by the best available climate science and
11 support climate science education.

12 And there's a few remaining objectives in
13 Executive Order 3 that we're working on now, this,
14 establish a framework in consultation with the
15 State's chief data officer in coordination with
16 CIRCA. That's Connecticut Institute for
17 Resilience in Climate Adaptation, UConn. Their
18 ongoing vulnerability assessment for state
19 agencies to compile and maintain an inventory of
20 vulnerable assets and operations; that working
21 group is currently meeting and working toward
22 establishing that framework.

23 And then we're also beginning to work with
24 our State agencies to take all of these
25 recommendations that were put forward and work

1 through how we can align them with our regular --
2 the planning that we do everywhere including the
3 state water plan is listed here, and was listed in
4 the executive order.

5 So how do we take all these recommendations
6 and make sure they're part of these other planning
7 processes?

8 And so finally, I'm going to talk about the
9 bill, An Act Concerning Climate Change Adaptation.
10 This is the bill that kept me from joining you at
11 my first scheduled time. This was a governor's
12 bill, so Governor Lamont introduced actually three
13 bills at the beginning of the legislative session
14 that were his recommendations on how to implement
15 the recommendations on the Governor's Council on
16 Climate Change.

17 This is a bill that made it all the way
18 through the process. The other bills were passed
19 out of committee but did not get a vote by the
20 full legislature, including the transportation and
21 climate initiative and putting the 2040 electric
22 supply goal into statute.

23 But I am happy to say that climate change
24 adaptation did go all the way through. This act
25 which is Public Act of 21-115 -- now that it's

1 signed into law, it authorizes municipalities the
2 option to create stormwater authorities to address
3 more frequent flooding and pollution. It adds
4 flood prevention and climate resilience to the
5 purview of municipal flooding aversion control
6 boards and clarifies they can use their existing
7 special assessment authorization to cover
8 operations and maintenance costs of resilient
9 infrastructure. And it expands the Connecticut
10 Green Bank to include an environmental
11 infrastructure fund to finance adaptation and
12 resilience projects.

13 There's a lot within each of these three
14 things. There's almost, like, three bills into
15 one that passed. I think it's important to note
16 that the stormwater authority, is actually --
17 people, most people think of it more as a water
18 quality program, but it turns out the stormwater
19 is also very much a flooding and resilience issue.

20 When we talk to municipalities about what
21 some of their regular challenges are they say,
22 well, we have heavy rain storm events. We get
23 stormwater flooding in our streets. And that's
24 related to, you know, the fact that we're getting
25 more and more frequent heavy rainfall events, but

1 it's also about an aging storm water, storm sewer
2 system that's not built to handle those kinds of
3 events, and certainly not built to handle them on
4 a more regular basis.

5 So this provides municipalities with the
6 option, if they choose to enact it, of setting
7 fees that are really based on the concept of the
8 user pay fees for use of that storm sewer system.
9 And they can use that now as a regular source of
10 revenue to make sure that we get those critical
11 infrastructure upgrades. That also can include
12 nature-based solutions like what you see here in
13 this image from New Haven where they've built bio
14 swales where stormwater is coming off the street.

15 And instead of going into a pipe and being
16 conveyed to a pipe, or if it's been combined,
17 being conveyed to a wastewater treatment plant --
18 which we don't want, that it's actually now
19 being -- in this situation it's being directly
20 filtered back into the soil system. And so we're
21 using nature to manage and clean up that, that
22 stormwater runoff.

23 And I think another exciting one -- well,
24 they're all exciting to watch, but this is a
25 massive expansion of the Green Bank. I know I

1 kind of rattled it off, like, yeah. They're just
2 now going to do environmental infrastructure --
3 but they've never done that before. So it's an
4 huge, huge expansion of what they can do.

5 And so look for -- I think they have to go
6 through a year-long planning process now to set up
7 what their environmental infrastructure fund will
8 be. And so hopefully, you know, into 2022 we'll
9 start seeing the Green Bank leveraging funds to
10 finance projects as well.

11 And so with that, I'm really happy to take
12 any questions. There was a lot in there, so
13 anything you want to know more about -- that was a
14 quick high-level overview.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much, Rebecca. That was
16 really terrific. So much work that the group has
17 done since it's inception, and a lot of
18 information there.

19 So do we have any questions from the Council
20 for Rebecca?

21 Unfortunately, Lori Mathieu was just called
22 out -- oh, there she goes. She was just called
23 out to another meeting at DPH. She didn't plan on
24 that, so --

25 **LORI MATHIEU:** Yeah. I just wanted to -- before I

1 leave I just wanted to say thank you to Rebecca,
2 Dr. French, for an amazing amount of work.

3 And the effort that was undertaken was
4 enormous during the time of the pandemic. It was
5 so well attended, so much good input, but just one
6 thing -- and this is not a "but." This is an
7 "and."

8 You know there's so much synergy between what
9 you did and what the state water plan has. So it
10 just seems to me that we need to work together to
11 fully understand all of the 61 recommendations,
12 because there's so much there.

13 It's so thick with information. There's some
14 overlap between the state water plan and the GC-3
15 items, no doubt because there's some people that
16 were on committees -- the same people. Right?

17 So there's stuff on drought, stuff on source
18 protection. There's stuff on water quality and
19 quantity. There's a lot there, and what you just
20 talked about, Rebecca, is really an excellent,
21 excellent idea on the stormwater utilities,
22 because the time has come to focus on these areas
23 and deal with flood prevention.

24 So congratulations to the you and the passing
25 of that, of that House Bill 6441, a

1 significant effort. So I just wanted to say that
2 while I have to leave.

3 So I look forward to working with you,
4 Rebecca. Take care.

5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks very much, Lori. Appreciate it.

6 LORI MATHIEU: Thank you. Sorry.

7 THE CHAIRMAN: Any other questions from the Council,
8 Martin or Graham, for Dr. French?

9 MARTIN HEFT: No questions.

10 I just want to thank you. It's a great
11 presentation. I know I've had staff that have
12 worked on a lot of the subcommittees and
13 everything through this. It's great to see this
14 whole presentation kind of encapsulating everything
15 together as kind of an overview. So thank you for
16 all your hard work and for the presentation.

17 REBECCA FRENCH: Thank you.

18 GRAHAM STEVENS: Yeah. And I would just say it's
19 really nice to see hard work to come to a
20 conclusion with the successful passage and the
21 signing of the bill today. Really pleased with
22 that.

23 And one thing I'd just like to comment on is
24 it's interesting how even in the midst of the
25 pandemic you were able to really leverage these

1 online resources to increase participation and
2 access for all to a massive undertaking that is so
3 important for the future of Connecticut, and our
4 future citizens of Connecticut.

5 So something to think about. As terrible as
6 the pandemic is and continues to be, it's good to
7 try to take some of the lessons learned through
8 that pandemic and apply that to our future lives.
9 So thank you.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Graham.

11 I'm going to open it up to any stakeholders
12 that would like to ask any questions of
13 Dr. French.

14 Anybody out there?

15
16 (No response.)

17
18 **THE CHAIRMAN:** I don't see any questions.

19 **GRAHAM STEVENS:** I think the presentation has just
20 wowed people into --

21 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Yeah, there you go.

22 **REBECCA FRENCH:** Into silence.

23 **GRAHAM STEVENS:** -- introspective silence.

24 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you so much. We appreciate you --
25 talk about great timing, I mean, with the Governor

1 signing it into law today, it's wonderful. We
2 really appreciate you being with us today.

3 REBECCA FRENCH: Thank you.

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Take care.

5 Okay. I want to move quickly back to new
6 business. I wanted to discuss the e-mail that was
7 sent to us by Margaret Miner.

8 And it was relative to the Council looking at
9 diversion permits, what our role could be.

10 And I don't know. Margaret, are you still on
11 the line?

12 There's Margaret. I think Margaret is still
13 here.

14 MARGARET MINER: Yes. I sent an e-mail basically
15 putting in writing comments that I made about the
16 WPCAG, and in the Water Planning Council. So I
17 have put it into writing.

18 I don't know if there's a need to go over it
19 so much, but I'm concerned with the amount of time
20 and resources including money that have gone into
21 our planning efforts and continue to go into them
22 relative to really focusing on one or more steps,
23 one of more steps sort of in the field, in the
24 real world there that will make a difference -- I
25 think.

1 And I think I managed it with drought
2 planning. It's still very difficult to get
3 coordinated action statewide. It's a problem that
4 we've -- since I've done Rivers Alliance they were
5 talking about it, taking about adaptation and
6 resiliency, what's an immediate -- and the upland
7 concerns came up particularly in Dr. French's
8 presentation on the legislation.

9 But the stormwater -- and one step that I
10 mentioned, which I think is badly needed in the
11 upland area is we're not concerned with sea rise.
12 We're concerned with the water coming down. The
13 hundred-year standard for construction just seems
14 to be inadequate, and I have to look in the light
15 of climate predictions, what we have today and
16 what we're going to have.

17 So I'm just thinking a relatively simple
18 thing would be to upgrade that standard so at
19 least new construction is not contributing unduly
20 to runoff and erosion and the stream contamination
21 and in stream flooding.

22 So that's kind of my focus, is to look at
23 steps we can take that are indicated in our
24 planning, and that maybe we can do right now if we
25 focused on it.

1 Those might not be the two best steps. Maybe
2 there are others, but I'm sort of saying, no more
3 plans. Let's pull out some things and do them.
4 So I guess that's my plea for the end of summer.

5 Thank you for listening.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much Margaret.

7 Martin and Graham, do you have any comments?

8 **GRAHAM STEVENS:** No. I appreciate your feedback,
9 Margaret, and I especially liked your comments
10 from the last meeting -- as from an exhaustive, an
11 exhausted planner. Right? So I know we've worked
12 together on many state plans.

13 I hope you're not too exhausted, because we
14 definitely appreciate your continued involvement
15 and feedback.

16 And I think that, although I am new to the
17 Council, I do feel like I have begun to see, you
18 know, the outcome of the efforts that have been
19 underway from before my involvement, but I
20 definitely do feel that outcomes are vitally
21 important and I know that we have discussed in the
22 past looking at engaging in - I know, Margaret,
23 close your ears on this one, but a planning effort
24 to come up with an implementation strategy.

25 Because I think it needs to be coordinated.

1 I know that you have your perspective on a few
2 different items that you would like to see quick
3 wins on, and think that we need to think about how
4 that all fits into the bigger pieces of the puzzle
5 and what's an easy win, and what's achievable, and
6 what some of the sequencing needs are behind those
7 easy wins and how they relate to some of the more
8 challenging items that we've laid out in front of
9 us for implementation.

10 So I am definitely open to continuing to have
11 this, this dialogue and I'm open to -- if there's
12 an easy win that makes sense, certainly engaging
13 the right folks would be what I would do to try to
14 achieve that. I really do appreciate the
15 enthusiasm, as always, Margaret.

16 MARGARET MINER: So I wanted to mention that upgrading
17 the stormwater standards, I first heard Jim
18 MacBroom talking about it about 2020 up at the
19 UConn -- the Institute of -- is it the Institute
20 of Water Resources?

21 And he was talking about the need back then
22 of upgrading the standard and saying that it's
23 very difficult for engineers to tell clients, you
24 should build to a higher standard, a more extreme
25 storm standard -- if the State doesn't support

1 that.

2 So it's been a long-standing, I think,
3 recognition that the State could be more
4 forward-looking in the design standards that it
5 supports, and it doesn't seem to me, like, too
6 complicated, but I luckily, Graham, am not in your
7 position, so I don't have to fit everything in.

8 Thank you. Thank you for responding. I
9 appreciate it.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Margaret.

11 And Martin, do you have anything to add?

12 **MARTIN HEFT:** No. I think Graham covered it in his
13 response, so.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Margaret, we thank you.

15 One of the things -- and even when you look
16 at the, when we talk about really with water
17 conservation and fixtures legislation is that we
18 represent four major agencies in the State of
19 Connecticut, and it's very difficult for us
20 legally -- like for example, with this diversion
21 permit, that would be ex parte for us to get
22 involved in this particular point.

23 So I think at some point we need to have our
24 appropriate -- or our legal counsel for our
25 respective agencies --

1 MARGARET MINER: Yes. I don't understand. I don't
2 understand, yeah.

3 THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry, Margaret?

4 MARGARET MINER: Yes, I do understand that once it's
5 underway it gets difficult.

6 I was thinking that conflict resolution as a
7 mission for the Water Planning Council was
8 discussed, you know, many times -- so to get in
9 ahead of it before it gets into a formal
10 litigation process.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Exactly. Got it. Okay. I hear you.

12 GRAHAM STEVENS: Can I just respond to that, Jack, and
13 not to the specifics of the diversion permit
14 that's underway.

15 But, you know I think they're doing a lot of
16 different things that will help inform some of
17 these diversion requests that lead to some
18 concerns within various sectors. And that goes to
19 work with respect to getting the reporting in for
20 registered diversions, that the Water Planning
21 Council is instrumental in making that story
22 change.

23 We're receiving that information now. Then
24 we're thinking about next steps. We're thinking
25 about modeling on a basin-wide level and

1 continuing the work that started through the state
2 water plan and looking at distressed basins and
3 impacted basins, and again looking forward to the
4 next tool that we can utilize to actually put a
5 regulatory lever in place whereby we could try to
6 further throttle back existing and future
7 diversions.

8 But you know I think it needs to be done in a
9 stepwise -- and to my earlier comments of this
10 meeting, a very transparent manner.

11 You know we don't always have every tool we
12 need in the toolbox, and I think when these
13 agencies come together under the auspices of the
14 Water Planning Council, and we have concurrence,
15 we're a lot stronger than one agency seeking a
16 change to its individual statutes.

17 So again, I do feel like changes are
18 happening, but certainly understand the need for
19 urgency as well.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Graham.

21 Is there any other new business?

22
23 (No response.)

24
25 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Is there any public comment today? Any

1 public comment?

2 GANNON LONG: Hi, Mr. Betkoski. This is Gannon Long
3 from Operation Fuel. How are you?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Good. How are you.

5 GANNON LONG: I'm good.

6 I just wanted to -- I read an article last
7 week in the CT Examiner about Lebanon's water
8 system. It has a lot of great information about
9 the water -- just water regulation in Connecticut
10 in general. I put the link in chat.

11 This kind of just goes to some of the
12 concerns that we would have about the water, you
13 know, regulation in Connecticut; a very
14 complicated landscape.

15 But you're dealing with, you know, an
16 opportunity to buy a water company for \$20,000 to
17 be run by volunteers. It's just a very fragile
18 system.

19 The article I think does a really good job of
20 outlining some of the overall issues, but I'd just
21 encourage members of the Council to take a look.
22 And hopefully I know these are -- some of these
23 are issues that the Council already addresses and
24 considers, but just to really read into that and
25 see if there's a bit more of a coordinated

1 approach.

2 The number that they cite is 497 different
3 water management systems, including up to 12 in
4 one municipality -- which isn't the case in a few
5 different municipalities. It's just really a lot
6 to wrap your arms around, and I don't know that
7 the current system is the most cost-effective way
8 to manage it.

9 So I just wanted to raise that to the
10 Council's attention, and hopefully, you know,
11 we'll see further discussion about these issues in
12 the coming months.

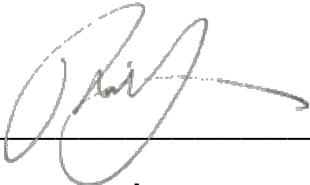
13 **THE CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much for that. And
14 believe me, I wish Lori was still on the call,
15 because this is something we constantly grapple
16 with between our agency, PURA, and DPH in terms of
17 these small systems that basically the owners come
18 to us and they turn over the keys and say, figure
19 something out.

20 And it's very easy to say, okay. Let ABC
21 Water Corporation take it over, but it's going to
22 be an astronomical amount of money for the
23 ratepayers.

24 So it's something we're constantly working on
25 in trying to make better. So I'm going to

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 60 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Regular Meeting of the WATER PLANNING COUNCIL, which was held before JOHN W. BETKOSKI, III, CHAIRMAN, and PURA VICE-CHAIRMAN, via teleconference, on July 6, 2021.



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