

**Representative Policy Board  
Land Use Committee  
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District**

**Minutes of December 13, 2023 Meeting**

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee (“Committee”) of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”) took place on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

**Committee Members Present:** P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, C. Havrda, M. Horbal, M. Levine, G. Malloy, J. Oslander and J. Mowat Young

**Committee Members Absent:** B. Eitzer

**Representative Policy Board:** R. Harvey

**RWA:** C. LaMarr and K. Curseaden

**Management:** L. Bingaman, R. Kowalski, S. Lakshminarayanan, and J. Triana

In Chair Betkoski’s absence, Mr. Levine called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Horbal, and seconded by Mr. Havrda, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its November 8, 2023 regular meeting, with Mr. Malloy abstaining.

At 5:32 p.m., Mr. Oslander entered the meeting.

Mr. Levine stated that it would be appropriate to move the discussion regarding the proposed changes to the RWA’s Enabling Legislation after the Land Updates. It was the consensus of the Committee to move the discussion to Item #4 on the agenda.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
November 30	86%	75%	66%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
November 2023	3.52	3.39	3.93
Fiscal YTD (6/1/23 – 11/30/23)	28.38	19.31	23.06

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 50+/- acres.
- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 20+/- acres.
- North Haven – Corresponded with property owner of 15+/- acres.
- Branford – Corresponded with property owner of 3+/- acres.

- Bethany – Corresponded with property owner of 60+/- acres.
- Hamden – Corresponded with property owner of 10+/- acres.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Reviewed draft of the P&SA.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Corresponded with Town Attorney. Said Asst. Town Attorney was having email problems. She forwarded his email stating he was checking with the court that week. I replied to him and he never responded.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 75% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – The harvest was halted in early June, and the logger pulled his equipment off the property on June 13th. It is uncertain at this point whether the buyer will continue with the salvage operation even if a market is found - 15% complete.
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – 100% complete. Equipment removed, but some firewood logs still at the landing.
- Guilford - Menunketuc High-Grade Rehabilitation Cut and Conifer Release (GU12/12A) – **Sales agreement signed with vendor. Harvest is expected to start in January 2024.**
  - Cut autumn olive in the Christmas trees plantation.
  - Reviewed the terms of a conservation easement and discussed said information to a procurement forester planning an operation on the Lally property in Killingworth (CE – 2-KI).
  - After conducting initial inquiries and introductions, worked with Bromage and the Junivers on future use of sugar bushes at the Saltonstall and Gaillard properties.
  - Coordinated Christmas tree donation at the Gaillard tree farm for the Pardee Seawall Park in New Haven.
  - Met with adjoining landowner and CAES researcher to select a white ash study area at Lake Gaillard field site.

Recreation

- Held tree identification walk at Genesee with 9 attendees.
- Cleared more trails at Sugarloaf, Genesee, Maltby Lakes, and Big Gulph.
- Met with Bethany Horsemen representative about adding a water bar to a trail.
- Authorized dock manufacturer to provide 3 sections of new dock.
- The one Water Wagon reservation was cancelled due to illness of RWA staff.

	November		October	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
Permit Holders	4,780	4,913	4,823	4,968

Special Activity Permits

- North Branford Land Conservation Trust (Mike Ferrucci and designess)—review of land to be purchased by North Branford Land Conservation Trust, (11/22/23).
- McLaren Engineering Group (Craig Plate) – Perform a routine and underwater inspection at Waite Street Bridge over Lake Whitney; contracted by CTDOT to perform the inspection; (11/30/2023).

- McLaren Engineering Group (Craig Plate) – perform a routine and underwater inspection at Davis Street Bridge over Lake Whitney, contracted by CTDOT to perform the inspection, (12/1/2023).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
  - West Haven, Shingle Hill tanks (WH 7) – Signed off on our conflict waiver. Received new draft agreement from WH. Indicated that we were not interested in changing the timing to suit Yale’s desires.
  - Hamden, New Haven Country Club parking lot (HA 5) – Received updated appraisal and informed NHCC staff what the fee will be for the next 5 years.
  - North Branford, Great Hill Rd. field (NB 4) – Sent updated agreement to the Page’s to use this field. Also talked to them about what is and is not allowed to happen at the former Panko property that we have an easement on.
  - Hamden, High Rock tank (HA 22) – Received letter from Town to exercise their next 5-year extension for radio equipment.
  - Trespassing – Recorded instances of trespassing including people without permits, people with dogs, and ATV’s.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford, West Haven, Orange, and East Haven.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	140 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	8.3 acres

At 5:40 p.m., Mr. Betkoski entered the meeting.

- Hamden, water main easement at Hamden Plaza – Hamden, water main easement at Hamden Plaza – Sent letter to owners of the Hamden Plaza and Wood-n-Tap.
- North Branford, former trolley line – Discussed idea with UI real estate department. They will be researching their deeds.
- Cheshire, proposed easement off of I-691 – DEEP staff rejected the concept of this easement. Notified Distribution staff.
- North Haven, Wharton Brook Industrial Park water main – Completed the forms and emailed to Amtrak staff.
- Hamden, Cumley Rd. ROW – Other RWA staff said the plan would be to cut and cap the main through this property and create a loop on the line to the north.
- New Haven, Rt. 80 PRV – Commented on proposed plans for new PRV on the Ross Woodward School grounds.
- Deer hunt – The hunt concluded on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>. Final harvest tally for 2023 - 54, 21 does and 33 bucks. By property: Gaillard - 15 does, 24 bucks; Bethany - 1 doe, 7 bucks; Prospect - 5 does, 2 bucks; Seymour - 0 deer harvested.
- Hamden, Lake Whitney dam access – Received draft license agreement and reviewed.
- Branford, WPCA pump station (BR 11) – Sent email to Branford Town Engineer about the sewage pump station.

- New Haven, Yale Golf Course Reviewed plans for drainage changes related to the golf course work.
- Hamden, Olin Powder Farms property – Met with Six Lakes Coalition members to discuss our property interests in the area.
- Drone flights – Performed drone flight at the Derby tank.

Chair Betkoski acknowledged Mr. Curseaden, Authority Vice Chair and liaison to the RPB Joint Committee on Enabling Legislation, who provided background and reasoning for the proposed changes, including additional amendments. He stated that the Authority and management are discussing the proposed changes with RPB members to gather feedback before the next meeting of the RPB Joint Committee on Enabling Legislation (“Joint Committee”) and a possible recommendation to the RPB in December.

Mr. Curseaden summarized the list of proposed changes, as follows:

1. Section 2, page 3, allowing RWA to conduct its non-core business outside of Connecticut.
2. Section 4, page 5, setting the Authority shall meet at least quarterly with the RPB.
3. Section 4, Page 6 correction of typo (the word timber)
4. Section 5, page 7, increasing the Authority board to seven members, providing exclusions to appointment (see below), no less than 5 members shall be residents of the district.
5. Section 9, page 8, allowing the Authority to meet at least quarterly. Also, setting that four members of Authority are a quorum.
6. Section 14, page 17, setting that interest rate can be applied to past due bills after the 28<sup>th</sup> day.
7. Section 18, page 21, combining (c) with (b) moving paragraph (c). Section 18, page 25, first paragraph, adding a period after the word records.
8. Section 19, page 25, raising the question if the \$2 million threshold for RPB approval of capital projects should be increased according to inflation as well as the non-core \$1 million threshold. Also comports section 19 to section 18 to exclude vacancies when calculating the total weighted votes of the RPB membership need to approve various items.
9. Section 21, page 26, raising the question if the word “improvements” should be defined to eliminate questions about the applicability of certain provisions.
10. Section 22, page 31, correcting the spelling of the word “all”.
11. Section 30, page 35, question if the threshold for RPB approval of a project should be increased.
12. Special Act 03-12, page 40, correcting the word “affect” to “effect”.
13. Section 2, page 3, add “sustainable manufacturing support” to allowed non-core business activity
14. Section 22 (b), page 27 remove “not exceeding forty years from their respective dates”
15. Section 22 (h), page 30 remove “any bonds issued by it at a price of not more than the principal amount thereof and accrued interest”
16. Section 4, page 4 and 5, RPB compensation – update to base compensation amount, change to every third vs. fifth year, and update referenced dates
17. Section 5, page 7, Authority board term limits (e.g., limit of 3 or 4 terms)
18. Section 5, page 7, consider including a CPI factor for Authority board member compensation, applicable every three years, subject to RPB approval.

Committee members discussed modifications to the language related to increasing the Authority requirement for members from five to seven, flexibility with monthly Authority meetings, increasing the number of members required for a quorum, increasing the threshold for RPB approval for: 1)

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capital projects from \$2 million to \$4 million, and 2) commercial business acquisitions from \$1 million to \$1.5 million and related inflation adjustments, and adding term limits for Authority members.

Mr. Levine also stated that Atty. Donofrio, Office of Consumer Affairs, would be meeting with members of the Executive Committee and management in January to discuss commercial business in more depth.

Mr. Bingaman, the RWA's President & Chief Executive Officer, stated that the proposed changes would need to be finalized by December 21, 2023 due to an early legislative session set to begin mid-January and end in February. The RWA is also working with Gaffney Bennett consultants and lobbying firm, as well as an in-house lobbyist. He noted that feedback should be forwarded to the board office prior to the next Joint Committee meeting on Wednesday, December 20, 2023.

The Committee discussed the date of the special joint meeting with the RPB Consumer Affairs Committee to review the RWA's FY 2025 Budget. After discussion, it was the consensus of the committee to hold the special joint meeting on Monday, April 15, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

There were no other land items to report.

Chair Betkoski reviewed committee member attendance for the following Authority meetings:

- December 21, 2023 – Mr. Levine
- January 25, 2024 – Mr. Malloy

The next regular meeting is on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

At 6:45 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, and seconded by Mr. Levine, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

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Peter Betkoski, Chairman