

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

Minutes of August 10, 2022 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”) took place on Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at 194 Barberry Road, East Haven, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

Committee Members: P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Horbal, M. Levine, G. Malloy, J. Oslander, and J. Mowat Young

Authority: C. LaMarr

Maple Tree Farm: A. Page

Management: J. Hill, S. Lakshminarayanan, and J. Triana

Staff: J. Slubowski

Mr. Harvey called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Horbal, seconded by Mr. Eitzer, and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the minutes of its July 13, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Page, owner of Maple Tree Dairy Farm, provided an update on activities on RWA owned properties. He stated that the Maple Tree Farm is the last commercial dairy farm in New Haven County that produces milk and hay. The farm consists of 350 acres, of which 100 acres are currently used to grow corn and 250 acres are used to produce hay to provide feed for the cows. Mr. Page discussed hay harvesting methods, fertilization, and storage. He reported on recent issues that have had a negative effect on harvesting including the recent drought and damage to the fields caused by trespassers on ATV’s and dirt bikes.

At 4:48 p.m., Chair Betkoski entered the meeting.

Committee members discussed RWA assistance and harsh penalties to deter trespassers, increased security on RWA owned properties, and status of third party assessment and action plan of the RWA to increase security.

At 5:13 p.m., Mr. Levine entered the meeting.

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
July 31, 2022	82%	97%	81%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
July 2022	1.11	9.02	3.71
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 – 6/30/22)	4.18	10.36	7.43

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

- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 50+/- acres.
- Cheshire, adjacent to Bis property – Continued to discuss process to perfect our claim with Murtha.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Discussed MOA with Murtha. They were going to amend the document so that we could share with the NBLCA.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – April Capone reached out to the Asst. Town Attorney. Will move toward demolition if there is no progress after a month.
- Hamden, 95 Ives St. – Contacted property own to ask about progress. He said work will start in October.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 25% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet. **Awaiting start of harvest in the summer.**
- Madison - Nathan’s Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) – 95% complete.
- Seymour - Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) – 100% complete.
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – Not started yet. **Winter start expected.**
 - Discovered rocks blocking our access to Poole Rd., Madison. Contacted town staff about removing them.
 - Monitored stump sprouting and regenerations at the slash wall harvests in Seymour and Madison.
 - Weekly inspected on-going leaf screen thinning harvest in KI 4.
 - Documented a tree cutting encroachment behind 22 Genesee Lane, Madison.

Recreation

- Botany walk at Hopp Brook in Bethany had 10 attendees.
- LED light was installed at the boat launch at Lake Saltonstall to help the rec staff see better in the early morning hours when getting boats ready.
- Discussed crossings of spillway channel with NBLCT for the trail coming from the Harrison Preserve.
- Brought two new Customer Service Reps to recreation areas as part of their orientation.
- One recreation staff member submitted his resignation effective in September. We will not be able to rent boats on Tuesday’s again and perhaps Friday’s too.
- Received email complaints about coyotes at various areas and a bear at the Maltby Lakes.

	July		June	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Permit Holders	5,218	5,873	5,334	5,991

Special Activity Permits

- Branford Community Television (BCTV) (Ted Ebberts) Rest stop for annual fundraiser “Tour de Branford” - Sugarloaf Parking Lot (10/2/2022)
- Yale University School of the Environment (James Loving Lichtenstein, Donnelley Postdoctoral Fellow) - collecting jumping spiders for behavioral experiment to be performed at a Yale facility. Spiders will be returned afterwards. Behavioral experiments will be aimed to explain results from previous project aimed at understanding the effects of invasive

plants on native plant and insect species and vice versa, Lake Gaillard Christmas Tree Field, (7/13/2022)

- Branford Inland Wetland Commission/Town Staff - To allow town staff and Inland Wetland Commission members inspect maintenance work on the Lake Saltonstall Storm Water Treatment System (7/11/22 – 9/1/22)
- UCONN and URI (Gail Reynolds, and designees) – Release biological agent, moth *Hypena opulenta* to help control the population of invasive plants black and pale swallowwort (*Vincetoxicum nigrum* and *V. rossicum*, Lake Gaillard, Lake Saltonstall (7/18/22-7/18/23)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – Executed amendment to license agreement for farmer to hay fields at Parish Farm Rd. fields in Branford.
 - East Haven, 9 Pardee Place (EH 6) – Contacted East Haven Memorial Funeral Home and they executed the license agreement for the encroachment, but have yet to send it in.
 - North Branford, North St. Christmas trees (NB 4) – Cave’s have put their farm and house up for sale so that the agreement for Christmas trees at North St. would be available as well.
 - West Haven/Orange/Bethany, Eversource access to ROW’s – Submitted draft license agreements to Eversource for using gates and woods roads in West Haven, Orange, and Bethany to access their ROW’s. Eversource executed the agreements and updated the maps per our request.
 - Trespassing – Forwarded many instances of trespassing to LT members including boats in Lake Chamberlain, broken locks at Maltby Lakes (2x), dog walkers at Hammonasset, fishing at Lake Whitney, tampering with forestry equipment in Seymour, swimming and trash at Hammonasset, swimming in the Sargent River, dumping at Saltonstall, fishermen at Hammonasset, ATV and dirt bike at Gaillard along with trash placed in bags with racial slurs.
- Invasive plants – Documented and/or treated invasive populations in Seymour, Branford, East Haven, Bethany, and North Branford. Helped coordinate the water chestnut harvest at Furnace Pond. This was delayed since the water was too low to accommodate deployment and use of the large harvester. Performed drone flights over Furnace pond and Page’s Mill Pond to map invasive water chestnut.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	75.3 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	2.5 acres

- Deer hunt – Proficiency tests held at Lake Gaillard. Twenty-three hunters passed and have entered the hunt.
- Boundaries – Checked boundaries in Hamden.
- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Murtha staff have been in regular contact with the last two private property owners who have not submitted the documents for easements over their properties.
- Cell phone towers – North Haven, Rabbit Rock Tank (NO 1) – Continued discussion with T-Mobile about sharing a generator at this site. East Haven, Saltonstall Ridge (EH 2) - Received notice from Sprint/T-Mobile that they were not going to renew the license for the site on Saltonstall ridge. Discussed what needs to be done with Murtha. Contacted EH

assessor to determine how to delete the card for the cell site and asked him who I should speak to about the maintenance of the tower.

- North Branford, LGWTP campus (NB 1) – Submitted work request to mow western edge of property after request of abutter.
- North Branford, Ric Ct. – Passed along inquiry asking about getting water service in this neighborhood.
- Well abandonments – Continued filing these agreements on the land records with Contracts staff so they are part of title searches for property buyers.
- Hamden, main break Paradise Ave. – Supplied additional information to other RWA staff regarding the properties lines in this area.
- Drone flights - Performed drone flight with John Hudak at West River to document the DAF project for engineering.

Committee members discussed the use of RWA's interconnections for surrounding towns to assist during the drought. Members requested that Mr. Triana provide notifications when assistance is provided.

Members discussed a recent fire that took place on an RWA owned property in Bethany.

Mr. Lakshminarayanan, the RWA's Vice President of Engineering and Environmental Services, stated that the RWA is addressing concerns regarding the security on RWA owned properties and will relay the committee's questions and concerns to leadership.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

At 5:50 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Eitzer, seconded by Mr. Levine, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman