

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

Minutes of May 12, 2021 Meeting

The 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, May 12, 2021 at 257 Fenn Road, Cheshire, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

Present: Committee Members: P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Horbal, M. Levine, G. Malloy, J. Oslander and J. Mowat Young
RPB: T. Slocum
Authority: D. Borowy
Management: T. Norris, J. Triana, N. Smith
Cheshire Land Trust: D. Schrumm and S. Simone
Town Manager: S. Kimball
RPB Staff: J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Horbal, and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the minutes of its April 14, 2021 meeting.

On motion made by Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Young, and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the minutes of its April 19, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, introduced members of the Cheshire Land Trust (CLT) and Mr. Kimball, Cheshire Town Manager, who provided information about 257 Fenn Road in Cheshire, formerly known as the Ricci property, which included:

- Historical/settlement information
- RWA and CLT owned property and easement
- Preservation
- Grant assistance
- Acreage

Mr. Triana stated that the RWA and the CLT both hold easements on the property for the sole purposes of land preservation and protection of the public water supply. He reported that the property will be open for hiking and recreation to the residents of Cheshire.

At 4:45 p.m., Mr. Levine entered the meeting.

Discussion took place regarding property name, ownership, easements, and watershed preservation.

At the end of the discussion Mr. Triana introduced Ms. Smith, the RWA’s Natural Resources Analyst, whose effective date of employment at the RWA was April 19, 2021.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – J. Triana reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
April 30, 2021	98	99	94	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
April 2021	3.59	5.70	4.27
Fiscal YTD (6/1/20 – 4/30/21)	37.18	46.01	42.63

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

- Durham - Corresponded with property owner of 16+/- acres.
- Killingworth – Corresponded with a property owner of 4+/- acres.

Hamden, Olin property option – FMA approved the transfer of the option. Sent draft of the transfer to HLCT and their attorney for review.

Hamden, Skiff St. ACES condemnation – Murtha contacted the AG’s office. Noted we were notified since we had an interest in the ACES property.

North Branford, Beech St. and Pumps La. parcels (NB 4A and p/o NB 4) – Continued to discuss these parcels with the interested party.

Guilford and Madison (GU 21 and MA 2A) – Discussed Class III land with member of the Guilford Sportsman Association.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 95 Ives St. (HA 13) – LUC found application to be complete. RPB scheduled public hearing for June 17th. Sent letters to required parties.
- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Corresponded with Town Attorney about condemnation of areas they worked on beyond the plans.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Discussed status of the house with Amity-Woodbridge Historical Society. Corresponded with owner about plans.
- Woodbridge, 2040 Litchfield Tpk. – Met with the owners about the deed restrictions, access easement, and historical conservation easement. Issued letter indicating all the items that need to be addressed including the un-approved solar panels and the missing faux chimney. Gave them until Sept. 1st to install the chimney. Solar panels could stay, but may need to be adjusted to allow room for the faux chimney.

Forestry Update

- Guilford – West of Sugar Loaf ash salvage (GU 4) – 40% complete
- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) - Contract not yet awarded.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet.
- Madison - Nathan’s Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) – **5% complete.**
- Seymour - Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) – Awarded contract. Not started yet.
 - Met with CAES and NRCS to use a sprinkle infiltrometer to measure soil permeability and runoff in timber harvests.
 - Planted a new riparian buffer at Farm River-EH diversion.
 - Planted hundreds of Pitch Pine at the Lake Gaillard tunnel project for long-term erosion control.
 - Completed forest inventory for East of North Chestnut Hill Road.

Recreation

- Hired Melanie Hennessey for the recreation staff.
- Trout stocking occurred at Maltby Lakes – 1800 fish with 12 being tagged. Three tagged fish were caught in April.
- Boating program opened for the season at Lake Saltonstall (April 10th).
- Acquired 5 kayaks for use at Lake Saltonstall. Added them to our inventory of vessels for anglers to rent.
- History walk at Maltby Lakes had 20 participants.
- Bird walk at Lake Saltonstall had 6 participants.
- Met CFPA and Rockland Preserve staff to look over Mattabeset Trail relocation in Madison.
- Met with Customer Service staff to discuss recreation updates and programs.
- Met with mountain bike planner at Genesee area to look at proposed route for one trail.
- Completed draft of Lake Chamberlain fishing trails and sent to others for review.

	April		March	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
Permit Holders	6,502	4,479	6,336	4,049

Special Activity Permits

- Quinnipiac University (Professor Scott Davies)-Study bird nest boxes and record bird nesting activity and success, band the adults and chicks, and collect tissue samples for analysis during breeding season, Lake Chamberlain Recreation Area, the small mown field with lots of small cedars on the east side of Sperry Road just south of Lake Chamberlain where Patrick Leahy already has some boxes, Lake Watrous, and Lake Dawson, (04/07/21-12/31/21)
- Nicholas G. McDonald (Curatorial Affiliate Yale Peabody Museum, Author, Lecturer) – Geology research - Lake Saltonstall and Lake Gaillard (04/08/21-04/08/22)
- Quinnipiac University Department of Biological Sciences (Lisa Connelly, Senior Instructor) – Education/field trips for students; measure the health of the aquatic ecosystems that surround QU campus, Clark’s Pond and Mill River, (04/09/2021-04/30/2021).
- University of Connecticut (Ms. Nancy Marek, Ph.D. Student) – drone flights to map locations of invasive understory shrub species; Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, Northeast quadrant of forested region near Lake Gaillard, (04/14/21 – 05/05/21)
- New Haven Bird Club, (Mr. Patrick T. Leahy)-Fall bird walk to observe species that are wintering on Lakes along the West River, Lake Bethany, Lake Watrous, and Lake Dawson, Bethany and Woodbridge, (10/16/21)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural fields – Signed license agreements with Potter for the 4 fields in north Guilford. Signed agreement with the Cave’s to use the fields at Lake Gaillard around North St. for Christmas trees. Signed license agreement with Stewart to use field on Wiese Albert Rd., Haddam. Visited all western fields with Tanev to discuss expectations.
 - Killingworth, Bunker Hill Rd. (KI 9A) – Signed license agreement with Lally to use part of the field.
 - Killingworth, Emmanuel Church Rd. (KI 14 and KI 14A) – Discussed encroachment with staff from the Church.

- Killingworth, Rt. 148 (KI 14) – Discussed the encroachment with Jurewicz. Probably came from previous owners since they recently bought their property.
 - Woodbridge, Sperry Rd. field (WO 5) – Urbano said she would continue with the Christmas tree license agreement
 - Branford, Hilltop Dr. (BR 6) – Signed license agreement with the town for them to install a gate along the property line.
 - Bethany, Bethany Horsemen – Signed new license agreement for use of the trails around Lake Chamberlain.
 - Seymour, Seymour emergency radio (SE 1) – Received letter from town exercising option to renew the agreement for another 5 years.
 - Seymour, ginseng request (SE 3) – Discussed possibility of allowing neighbor to grow and harvest ginseng on our property.
 - Madison, Dead Hill Rd. (MA 4) – Spoke to abutter about trees taken down over the property line. Done in concert with a woodcutter who will pay for the wood.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in East Haven, Hamden, Bethany, North Branford, Orange, and West Haven. Met with Nancy Marek to GPS ground control points and perform a drone mission related to identifying invasive species using drones. Discussed invasives management with Wallingford Water Dept. staff.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	243 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	26.5 acres

- Personnel – Nicole Smith started as the Natural Resources Analyst on April 19th.
- Eli Whitney Museum – Continued to discuss license agreement that affords access to the site with EWM staff.
- East Haven, Virginia Rd. (EH 3) – Had Juliano find boundaries and reset pins for us to remark the boundary lines.
- North Branford/Guilford, Reeds Gap Rd. – Contacted by surveyor working on nearby property pointing out that a 0.5-acre parcel was attributed to us, but more likely owned by his client. Researched and agreed with his assumption. Contacted Guilford assessor’s office to correct the matter.
- Hamden, LWWTP campus – Corresponded with girl scouts wishing to install bat boxes at the site.
- New Haven, East Rock Park access to Lake Whitney dam – Attended Park Commission meeting to discuss the easements that we would need to work on the dam.
- Pollinator gardens – RE staff assisted other RWA departments with installation of pollinator pathway gardens in multiple locations.
- East Haven, Beach Ave. – Decided to go ahead with acquiring the easements needed to install a depth main. Murtha will initiate a full title search of all the properties.
- Cell phone antennas – Discussed potential site in Cheshire with town staff and they were not in support, therefore we ended discussion with the cell phone company representative. Signed form for Crown Castle to add antennas at the Orange site for DISH network. This will eventually result in greater income from that site.
- Comcast lease, Burwell Tank site – Sent our comments to Comcast staff who were reviewing them.

Mr. Norris, the RWA’s Vice President of Asset Management provided an update on the Prospect Dam. He reported that a leak was detected and the RWA has currently reduced the water level.

Mr. Triana reported that the committee is expected to visit the Eli Whitney Museum at its July or August meeting. More details to follow.

The next regular meeting of the committee is Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

At 5:21 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Harvey, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman