

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

Minutes of July 14, 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, July 14, 2021 at the Eli Whitney Museum, 915 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

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

Authority: S. Sack
 Management: T. Norris and J. Triana
 Eli Whitney Museum: R. Paxton
 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 June 9, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, introduced Mr. Paxton, Director of the Eli Whitney Museum, who provided an update of the educational program at Eli Whitney.

Mr. Paxton stated that currently the summer program is at full enrollment of 114 students of different age ranges. The classes are held on-site outside and include programs such as the Birds of East Rock, teaching and observing native migratory birds; an analogue game builder; and a chair building/woodworking class. Upcoming events will include a robotics camp and a natural art camp for younger students who will be working with leaves and clay.

He reported that the program is also available during the school year, which acts as a supplemental education program, teaching STEM courses and cultural education. Online options and inclement weather alternatives are also available.

Staffing includes members of senior staff, apprentices, teachers and other experts. The program is funded through grants and donations. Scholarships are also available for deserving students.

Mr. Triana provided a historical background of the Eli Whitney Museum, an update of the RWA Environmental Careers summer camp at the museum and funding.

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
June 30, 2021	93%	90%	88%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
June 2021	1.34	2.33	3.74
Fiscal YTD (6/1/21 – 6/30/21)	1.34	2.33	3.74

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.
- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 56+/- acres.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 95 Ives St. (HA 13) – Held public hearing for the disposition application.
- Hamden, 233 Skiff St (HA 9A) – Still no word from the town about a condemnation. Steve Mongillo was attempting to contact the Town Attorney.
- Woodbridge, 2040 Litchfield Tpk. – Solar panels were moved on the roof to accept the faux chimney.

Forestry Update

- Guilford – West of Sugar Loaf ash salvage (GU 4) – 40% complete
- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – **5% complete.**
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet.
- Madison - Nathan’s Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) – **35% complete.**
- Seymour - Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) – Awarded contract. Not started yet.
 - Hosted Cornell University, MDC, Aquarion, DEEP, CAES, Massachusetts DCR, University of Rhode Island, and NRCS at timber harvest 2020-01 to demonstrate experimental slash wall/deer exclosure management techniques.
 - Performed several drone flights including over timber harvest 2020-01 and Lake Hudak to document vegetation management.
 - Helped Environmental Planning with 90 Sargent Dr. pollinator garden.

Recreation

- RPB approved the LUP amendment for fishing trails at Lake Chamberlain.
- Trails day walk at Sugarloaf had 8 participants.
- Installed new gate at Maltby Lakes.
- Prepared material for next newsletter.
- Water wagon attended two events.

	June		May	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
Permit Holders	5,991	5,435	6,337	5,160

Special Activity Permits

- Yale University School of the Environment (Stanley Gosliner) - placing wire mesh cages in the ground for masters and postdoctoral research. Cages will be stocked with native grasshoppers and spiders to understand the effects of invasive plant species on native plant and insect communities; Lake Gaillard; (06/01/21-10/07/21).
- Wright Water Engineers, Inc. (Dr. Andrew Earles, PhD and Scott Schreiber, P.E., CFM) - photo-document and observe streams and wetlands on these parcels including Farm River and unnamed tributaries, including adjacent wetlands. Access the area to record data using non-invasive methods such as pressure transducers, time lapse cameras, working with EPA (Ray Putnam) and US Department of Justice, 1739, 1744 and 1778 Middletown Avenue, and the Big Gulph Recreation Area, North Branford; (6/9/21 – 6/9/22)
- UConn-Waterbury, Dept of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (Trumbo) - Continue on-going research on the behavior and ecology of burying beetles - Off Route 42 (near the Cheshire-Bethany-Prospect line) just east of traffic light at Rt.69-Rt. 42 juncture - (6/10/2021-9/20/2021)

- Eversource-Real Estate Department (Hadden) – Eversource transmission line maintenance – replace lightning arrestors; Dogburn Rd., Orange – (8/1/2021 - 12/31/2021)
- Mill River Watershed Association (Walters) – hike proposed Mill River Trail along GNHWPCHA row from Dixwell Avenue to South New Rd., (6/24/21 and 6/26/21)
- New Haven Bird Club (Mr. Patrick T. Leahy)-Spring bird walk to observe species that nest in the bluebird/tree swallow boxes that are being maintained by self on RWA lands, Lake Chamberlain hiking trails, Sperry Road farm field, Lake Dawson bluebird trail below the dam, Watrous access road at north end, Bethany and Woodbridge, (05/18/2022)
- United Illuminating (Mr. Jonathan Clark)-United Illuminating electric transmission right-of-way– inspect wire splice between two towers that may have a poor wiring connection; cleared right-of-way approx. 600 ft. north of Vaiuso Farms between tower #8897 and #8898; (6/30/21 – 7/31/21)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - East Haven, 167 Saltonstall Parkway (Route 1) (EH 7) – RWA crews stabilized and restored the site. Survey showed that part of the driveway was over the property line. Discussed letter to be given to Lucido with Murtha staff.
 - Woodbridge, 60 Wepawaug Rd. – Inspected site of license agreement since Bixler wanted to terminate it since he wasn't using it anymore. Asked Murtha to create termination document that could be filed on the land records.
 - Killingworth, Rt. 148 – Sent letter to Venuti and met him to go over placement of signs along the boundary.
 - Killingworth, Emmanuel Church Rd. – Corresponded with Church staff about blocking the path that led onto our property.
 - Bethany, 146 Wooding Hill Rd. – Met with Prentice about hazardous trees and encroachments.
- Invasive plants – Removed invasive plants around green milkweed and narrow-leaved vervain populations. Documented and/or treated invasive populations in North Branford, Madison, Guilford, Killingworth, Bethany, East Haven, and Hamden. Sustainability Team removed Japanese knotweed at Davis St., Hamden. Met again with researcher looking for velvet longhorn beetle, oak ambrosia beetle and the oak processionary moth.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	35.5 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	2.4 acres

- New Haven, East Rock Park access to Lake Whitney dam – Met with New Haven park staff to go over the plan at the site.
- Hamden, Lake Whitney access (HA 4) – Met with UI real estate staff to discuss our access to the dam.
- Deer hunt – 220 applications were received. Lottery will be held in July.
- Hamden, York Hill 2 Tank gate (HA 30) – Contacted DEEP about issues with the gate leading to the tank.
- North Branford, Foxon Rd. (NB 1C) – Met with North Branford DPW director about vegetation management adjacent to our property.
- Environmental Career Camp – RES staff presented macroinvertebrate sampling at the Mill River, forestry operations, and invasive species management.

Mr. Norris thanked members of the committee for their support with the disposition of 95 Ives Street in Hamden.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Horbal, and unanimously carried, the committee voted to reappoint Mr. Betkoski as Committee Chairman for 2021-2022.

The next regular meeting of the committee is Wednesday, August 11, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

At 6:16 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Oslander, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman