

SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

**ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

NOVEMBER 17, 2022

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

[ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING BEGINS AT 12:31 P.M.]

Kevin:

Okay, thank you. The minutes from the August 25th meeting. Is there a motion to approve those?

Catherine:

I moved the approval of the minutes from the August 25th meeting of the Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

Kevin:

Thank you. Any discussion? All in favor?

Group:

Aye.

Kevin:

Aye. Thank you. So today we have... There's been memos posted on the consent agenda versus PowerPoint presentations. The intent would be, if everyone's had an opportunity to at least briefly review those memos, is there's a couple discussion points on the first two memos. One is the stream flow regulations and one is the safe yield model. We're not looking for necessarily a decision of any type or finalization, but more of a discussion. And Sunny, did you want to add, or Larry, did you want to add anything to that?

Larry:

Yeah, this is really an attempt to get some initial thoughts and input on two very important topics, which is our dealing with the upcoming stream flow regulations, which will have an impact on our safe yield and then also what our reservoir safe yield model looks like. And so the questions that are posed there is really to begin a discussion to get your input on things that management might want to think about moving forward as we consider the impacts of these two issues on the operations.

Kevin:

Thank you, Larry. Sunny, any further comments?

Sunny:

Yeah, just to add on, Larry, I would just add that we can, go into the board discussion questions. As Larry pointed out, it's to kind of explore ideas, thoughts, and if we can come, some of these questions, maybe we can come to some kind of a conclusion. But before we get into the discussions, I would probably

request, Steve, to give us a little bit of an overview just to capture the gist summary of what's in the memo. It is an upcoming regulations. It was done in 2011. It's going to go into effect in September, 2026. Regional has been working on getting [inaudible 00:05:22] prepared for this. So Steve will dive a little bit into the details and where we are right now, and then that sets up a platform for the board discussions.

Kevin:

Great.

Sunny:

So with that, I'll turn it over to Steve.

Kevin:

Thank you, Sunny.

Steve:

Absolutely. Thanks Sunny, and thanks Larry. And really with this whole memo that we have presented here, this is a proactive method that we're trying to achieve here. The stream flow regulations, as we mentioned, we're initiated in 2011. From there, regional water authority classified all of its impoundments to see what we need to be achieved for the stream flow regulations. From that point, we then discussed where we would need capital improvements. We're actually pretty much completed with those capital improvements for the nine effect, the nine impacted dams that are going to require the stream flow release coming in 2026. We're planning on also proactively utilizing a sort guidance document in house to release the flows required from the new regulations about a year or two prior to the regulations with Deep's consent. This is a way that we could iron out any sort of kinks that we may find cause this is a whole new process to us and a whole new process to Deep.

So we're hoping that Deep will sign onto us doing it a bit early so that we can get a good idea of what we'll be dealing with once the requirements actually taken to place. So a little more about the stream flow regulations. Like I said, the capital improvements have been pretty much completed at this point where, and now in the process of putting together a plan, this is going to be an internal guidance document that's also required by Deep to be submitted in 2025. So we have some time to finish that up. So once the plan's complete, then we'll start doing a proactive implementation of the stream flow regulations in hopes to, like I said, get an idea for us and Deep of where we're going to be at once the regulations do begin in 2026. So part of this approach, we needed to figure out how the extra water being released under the dams was going to impact our safe yield.

So what we did was we partnered with Tighe & Bond and Hydrologics, which are our two consultants, to come up with new and current safe yield calculations to see how the stream flow regulations would impact our current storage supplies at all of our system wide reservoirs. And to note, this is just for surface water supplies. This doesn't have anything to do with our groundwater sources. So we did finish the study and pretty much to sum it up, we are very healthy with our supply. The DPH does have a calculation, if you will, of a margin of safety, which is 1.15. Water companies are to be at that or above that. And with the future stream filler flow regulations, we're actually at 1.61, I believe it is. So it's a healthy amount over that recommended amount by the Department of Public Health. Along with that, we're looking pretty healthy, even with the stream flow regulations in terms of a water supply level, then we would be at right now at the current stream flow regulations.

So there was one other thing that I wanted to mention that, with the new regulations, there are some drought off ramps. These off ramps are basically the Deep allowing you to limit your downstream releases depending on drought requirements. So these are important for us because we'll outline this in the plan that we'll submit in 2025, and this will basically allow us to reduce the amounts that we're putting downstream of our water and be able to conserve the water for potential droughts, which would obviously allow us to increase and maintain our safe yield better than if we were to release the same amount all year round. So I did put together some questions for the board. If you did get a chance to look at them, if you had any questions regarding the discussion points that I put together, I'd be happy to answer. Or if you need to know anything about stream flow regulations, safe yield, available water, any of that, I'd be happy to answer anything.

Sunny:

Just to add to Steve, I think both the memos kind of tie in together. It just happens that the Deep stream flow regulations as well as the reservoir safe field has implications in a sort of base. It kind of ties into each other. So if you look at the both questions that we had, kind of talks about the drought triggers and what response actions we need to take based on the drought triggers. Because if you look at the first memo, it'll talk about the reductions that was affected by the new stream flow regulations. The reductions are going to be 25, 50, 75, and 100, but we already have a water master plan, so to speak, which we do as part of a 10 year update, which we just finished updating it. And in that, we do have the percentages for each of the reservoirs.

And we have a normal advisory watch, warning and emergency, which is captured based on the level of reservoir storage we currently have. So this is similar. The Deep doesn't change too much into it. If you see, it's pretty much advisory watch, warning and emergency. The only thing it does is there is a 15% release of cutback for spring drought avoidance from March to pay based on the downstream flow regulations. Couple of points which we wanted to kind of thought partner with the authority as well as get your thoughts so we can actually see how to move forward. As Steve said, it's more of a proactive measure. We want to be ready for 2025 and we want to get ourselves so that we implement these things both for an internal basis and start educating the towns, municipalities, and the customers of what's coming.

And in case, I mean along with this, just wanted to kind of... It's not captured in here, but along with this, we also have another study for climate change and resiliency. Hazen and Sawyer has been doing it. We are in the final stages. We had a draft presented from Hazen and we had some questions on their assumption, so they're going back to the drawing board a little bit and finalizing the assumptions and running new scenarios. Steve, if you want to kind of touch upon that a little bit, maybe that touched a little bit more idea because the climate change effects will come into play where we see into the future how those will come into play and how that's going to impact our reservoir level storage and the drought warnings and all that. So in that way, there is a little bit more color to it. So in that way, the discussions and maybe decisions coming out, if it can be taken the climate change effects into that as well.

Steve:

Right.

Kevin:

Just excuse me just for a second, Sunny. So that last study you referenced to, is that completed yet or do we have that yet?

Steve:

That's not completed yet. So we're in the final stages right now. Hazen and Sawyer is putting that together for us. We actually had a meeting, but I have enough information where I can present on pretty much the outcome of it. We just wanted to tweak it a little bit for population demands and all that. So essentially, we partnered with Hazen and Sawyer to come up with a climate change and water demand study that would really zone into what's going to happen in the future when it comes to demand and when it comes to climate change in terms of precipitation amounts. So what we generally found, and again, it hasn't been fully completed, but what we generally found was that in the future, demand's going to likely slightly drop. And this is due to multiple factors, whether it be low flow technology, whether it be less industry coming into our service area and multiple other factors.

Population change is one of them. It also looked at the climate change. So what we found was that there's a chance that as we progress into the future, there's actually going to be more precipitation, but it's going to be in more extreme events. So it's going to be drier longer periods. However, when the rain does come, as we've obviously experienced in the last couple years, it comes in very heavy amounts. So when we're taking into storage, this is actually a good and a bad thing because we're going to have adequate storage going into the future with less demand and more precipitation. However, with heightened amounts of precipitation coming all at once, we are likely going to experience more water quality issues.

So that's where the safe yield that I was talking about prior may not be as reliable to a degree, because safe yield doesn't look at climate change. Safe yield doesn't look at potential water quality issues. So we may be looking at more algal blooms as we've experienced in the last couple of years going forward, and we're going to need to manage the system probably in a little bit of a different way. So we're probably going to be very good on the storage aspect of it, but we're going to need to continue to look at the water quality aspects.

Kevin:

Okay. All right, thank you. So what does the committee think? Do you think that this is right for discussion without that report so we can have a cohesive discussion? Or do you think we should give some feedback at this point in time? Any thoughts?

David:

I have a couple of general questions related to the topic. Would that be right?

Kevin:

Sure, sure.

David:

All right. Well, one of them, and having done this for almost 20 years, being on the RPB or the authority, we've had many times where we've had drought declarations by the governor and by the state, yet we've had plenty of water. And we're blessed with an area where there's quite a bit of water, yet we've

wanted to seem like we're playing nice and go along with it and ask our people to limit their water. But it's kind of hurt us business wise, because this is the only way we get income. And I don't want to have any fighting with our leaders up in Hartford.

But at the same time, I wonder if there's some way where we can just make sure that we don't end up getting more aggressive. And some of these questions, some of these potentials look like they may be wanting us to get a little bit more aggressive, voluntary drought restrictions earlier than we do now and whatnot, and some of your discussion topics. My concern is that I almost think we're a little bit too aggressive in declaring droughts and we still have plenty of water. And it's not that we're encouraging people to waste water, we're not. We're just asking them... Or I'm wondering if we're asking them more often or in maybe more aggressively than we need to save and stop using it.

Kevin:

No, I agree, David. That's a good point and that's exactly what these discussion points are for. I do know that in the past, even though the state has declared a drought watch or a drought advisory, we may not be in the same situation as other water companies. So we walk a fine line of needing to convey the same point as others and the state. But at the same time, we don't necessarily have the same limitations as those other water companies.

And really, this was discussed recently too, at some committee wide meetings. The state declares it not on a water company basis. Obviously, it's a statewide basis and state stream flows and all that. So we are lucky to have the water supply that we have. Certainly. This, I think these would be more honed into, if we get past the the drought watch status and get... I'm sorry, not the drought watch, but the exceptionally dry period watch we'll say, into the potential advisory stages. So this wouldn't be as proactive as it's getting a little bit dry, let's start mandating these things. It would definitely be further into the process than that.

David:

Right.

Sunny:

Hey David, just to add a little bit more color. I think it also ties up into the questions that we had created, what should be the elements of a drought communications and enforcement plan, right? So it kind of ties into say whether we are aggressive, we should be mild, as well as should we work with the legislators? Right now we have these advisories, but we don't really have that kind of an enforcement that towns or cities would have if the water department comes under themselves. So we, being an authority, we are spread across many towns and municipalities. So it does kind of tie our hands a little bit in terms of how we enforce this. I mean, our police does have enforcement authority, but we don't really have the bandwidth to enforce the regulations, if at all. Climate change brings issues related to it, right? So I think it kind of ties into those, right?

Kevin:

Hi Sunny, this is Kevin. The-

Sunny:

Go ahead, Kevin, yeah.

Kevin:

Yeah, so I agree. This is what I'm just going to paraphrase from what I heard from Steve. A couple of the highlights is that this is proactive discussion. One of the reasons it's proactive is because we're looking towards a future where it's... And I'm not going to use the correct phrasing, but it's beyond the initial stages of drought. It's the extreme dry period or extended dry periods, which may be exacerbated by climate change in the future. And right now, we do not have the authority if we ever needed it, to make municipalities comply with the drought warnings or their drought restrictions. That's one of the reasons why it's proactive. But I guess... Is that correct so far?

Steve:

There's one correction I'd like to make to that.

Kevin:

Okay.

Steve:

In our drought plan, at a certain stage, I believe when we get to the watch rewarding stage, we can mandate reductions, meaning we can release fines for let's say, irrigating on a day when you're not supposed to irrigate. So there are restrictions that could be in place. We've just never hit that level as a water company before.

Kevin:

Okay.

Tony:

The other thing too, Kevin, to that point is, enforcement is almost impossible because typically the municipal police departments have not been willing to do that, and we just simply don't have the staff to do it. They would have to literally drive around and patrol streets the whole time. So it is an issue, quite frankly, that the industry has been talking about for quite some time on how you enforce mandatory water reduction standards like outdoor watering, when the utilities really don't have the enforcement authority or the resources to do it, if they do have authority.

Kevin:

Okay. So just one other comment. It would be good, I think when the climate change report was finalized, this is just my suggestion hearing what we're talking about now, and I'd like to hear from the rest of the members of the committee in a minute. But it would be good to try to tie, I guess... Sunny had mentioned a water master plan. Try to tie the, I guess, objectives or the goals for the water master plan down from the overall water company strategy, and then to the objectives we'd be trying to accomplish with going forward with any of these changes if we felt necessary. And then we could tie it back to whether it's being proactive or not, which I appreciate the proactive approach and I understand where we're going with it.

But I just think maybe if it was tied together in that way, and then we could see what objectives we're really trying to meet and whether we want to, because my initial reading of these memos was that, regardless of what regulations come down, it seems like we're still going to be able to comply or meet,

either save yield. Now, Steve brought up something new in that equation, which was the climate change and the additional algae blooms and stuff. So I'm wondering if we should have another set this up for another discussion in the future? Committee members, what are your thoughts?

Catherine:

Well, Larry answered my most serious question, which is how are we going to enforce this? And if the municipalities won't help us, then I think we may need a legislative mandate. And that I think, would be difficult to get. What I mean, legislative mandate that requires the municipalities to develop an enforcement mechanism. But I think that would be extremely difficult. I don't know how you enforce outdoor watering or other drought restrictions. And David, you asked my other question, which was... There was a drought declared last summer and our water supplies were fine. And I was listening to people at work saying, oh, well we're in a drought. And I'm like, well, really?

Because I'm looking at the reservoir levels at every meeting that I went to with the Land Use Committee, so these are kind of inconsistent and yes, we're very lucky to have the supplies that we have, but it is sort of inconsistent and also not great for revenue, which we need to encourage the conservation that to the detriment of people's gardens. I think I need more information, I guess is a good point. But I do think that if we're going to go down any of these routes, we absolutely need buy-in from the municipalities and assistance with respect to enforcement.

Kevin:

That's a good point, Catherine. And that, when you consider the proactiveness, that will take some time. So we should probably start that now when we don't need it or in the near future, when we don't necessarily need it to try to get it to when we do need it. So Dave or Suzanne? Or Tony?

Tony:

Nope.

Prem:

Can I add a very quick comment?

Kevin:

Sure.

Prem:

Just by hearing again, one of the things that we do have Kevin and the team, is we have AMI. So I know one of the business case that we talked about was consumption patterns, et cetera. So if in the future, as the discussion warrants as we have conversation, we could see how we could the lens of reinforcement as we are talking, there is some data that we could use and we could say, what's the consumption patterns of how the customers are using? And this is a real business case in California and Colorado. I think they already have these things in place. So we will be ready when we need to have that conversation. So we can use technology, that's my point, and be able to say how we could monitor and enforce to some degree as well.

Kevin:

Yeah, that's a great point, Prem. Yeah, Catherine? Sorry.

Catherine:

Does that technology, or the current technology, tell the difference between whether someone's watering their lawn or doing laundry?

Prem:

No, it doesn't yet but we are getting there. So there are devices that are being put in play, especially California state is leading that. Figuring out specific devices for washers and specific water heaters, et cetera. So they already have zigbee and other devices they use. So what there is, it's not that mature yet in the east coast, but they are getting there. So we have a very good start, yeah.

Catherine:

Okay.

Kevin:

And Catherine, to that point, this doesn't apply to us because we're not a co-utility with a power company, but if you had the usage compared to simultaneous power usage, you would be able to tell the difference what was being used. Yep.

Catherine:

Okay.

Sunny:

Kevin, just to elaborate on the point, just that the climate change studies, I think Steve kind of touched upon it, but even still. I think looking at the earlier recommendations that came out, one would be the water quality issue itself, not the quantity. I think with regard to the quantity, I think we would be more than sufficient as far as we can see. And we would have excess capacities, at least the risk buffer in the system based on earlier, production capacities. I think if you look back 10 years ago, we had about say 56 MGD on average. And now, we are producing about 42 MGD. So even with the 15% with DPH requires, we would still have excess capacities, but there is certainly a water quality issue with the algae blooms and all that.

So now, I mean one of the discussion points we had actually earlier brought up was, we have in the budgets, we had actually projected for northern area service expansions when we presented last February march to be done during '24, '25, '26. Two reasons, one was to build resiliency and redundancy to the well fields so we can actually push water from the south to more areas in the north. The other issue was to kind of grow those areas, right? So any thoughts that you think on for the authority to committee you to examine both the northern area service expansion as well as the interconnections. Because right now we have about close to seven interconnections, which is about, say totals about 13 MGD. I mean, they don't use all the 13 MGD. It is just on theory, we have 13 MGD. There are some hydraulic restrictions that come along with it, as well as depends on what the demand is from each of these towns. But I think any thoughts or solutions from the committee on how we look into it going forward, on the northern area service expansion as well as the interconnections.



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Kevin:

Thank you, Sunny. Any thoughts from the committee as far as the increasing interservice connections or service interconnections?

Catherine:

My one note on when I was reading this was, cost. We have a lot of projects right now, and this would be yet another, I think, a significant cost that is... Do we have an estimate on what-

Sunny:

Yeah. Catherine, I can actually answer that. We had originally put in capital to be done in '24, '25, and '26. We get \$3 million in '24, \$3 million in '25 and \$5 million in '26. Rochelle might be able to shed some more light on it, I think. 50% of it came from growth fund and 50% from construction in both '24 and '25. And I think the \$5 million comes out of the construction fund in '26. So that's the way we have actually envisioned it.

And this is the same thing that came from the budgetary discussions we had in February and March of 2022. So the question is given the way that we are looking at the drought, looking at the Deep stream flow, and it only impacts the surface water sources, not to a great extent on the groundwater, as well as we have the resiliency and redundancy issues, which we normally look at. So one question is, the cost is actually kind of baked into the equation a little bit. The only thing is, do we expedite it to... We had it at three fiscal years, '24, '25, and '26. Do we actually move this forward and complete this earlier?

Tony:

Right-

Kevin:

Yeah, Tony, just one... When we had discussed those expansions, there were other reasons in addition to what we're talking about now, which I think it's important that we should have a full contextual conversation. And I know you're talking about whether it should be expedited or not, and whether these topics would require some type of expediting of that, but... I see a hand up as well. So there were other reasons beyond-

Kevin:

There were other reasons beyond this for that expansion that we had talked to and that's why it's in that capital plan. Tony, go ahead.

Tony:

I wanted to know whether the project fits into the capital matrix or not. Is it separate?

Sunny:

No, it's not. It is... Go ahead, Rochelle. I think you were going to...

Tony:

We would still be looking at it in the matrix, wouldn't we?

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David:

Yes.

Larry:

Yes.

Tony:

Okay, Rochelle, you're muted.

Rochelle:

Yes, it is included.

Tony:

Okay, thank you. And the other thing was, what are we saving water for? Is there someone downstream that needs it?

Sunny:

Oh, for the regulation certificate building?

Tony:

The whole thing, yeah. I struggle with it sometimes because, and I know it's very PC to have water being saved, but I'm not sure what we're saving it for.

Steve:

Are you referring to the 2026 stream flow regulations?

Tony:

I'm talking about conservation of water by us for any purpose.

Larry:

Well, we're required by state regulation, Tony, to promote conservation as part of DPH regulations. So we are required to do that. And I think there's a half a dozen regulations of various forms that require water utilities educate their customers and promote conservation as part of their duty of being a water utility.

Tony:

So there's a certain form that the promotion takes?

Larry:

Yeah, they specify it's educational materials on your website. It can be bill inserts. They have a number of communication outreach tools that they suggest be used.

Tony:  
Okay.

Larry:

The other thing I wanted to point out, we had talked about one of the reasons for doing the northern expansion was to not only provide a more secure water supply to the northern area, but also to interconnect with communities that will be severely impacted by the stream flow regulations that will impact their wells, the groundwater supply. And we thought that that could be a way to sell more water through interconnecting with those communities immediately adjacent to our service area or those that are one or two towns beyond by wheeling water through an adjacent water utility system to an adjoining town. So there was some strategy there to sell more water on a longer term basis.

Kevin:

Right. Yeah. Thank you, Larry, for clarifying what I was talking about. I knew there was some other reasons and I'm sorry, Suzanne, go ahead.

Suzanne:

I'm just trying to catch up for a second. So in the memo, what I understood is that there are new regulations, we did capital improvements to meet those regulations and that the regulations will have us taking off more water than we have been. First off, is that correct?

Steve:

I'm pretty sure I got what you're saying, it was lagging a little bit, but yes, we are going to be required to release a bit more water downstream than the current regulations. And the reason being for that, I'll just go in quickly to the reason being, it's essentially so that we can mimic the streams coming into the reservoirs DEEP is requiring us to mimic that going downstream. So most of, I'd say about half of the dams that we're required to release below have a seasonal release. So it'll fluctuate throughout the year to mimic the different periods. So spring will be more and fall will be more, but summer will be less. Other areas that we made the capital improvements to are just a one stream flow release all year round. So it's limited.

Suzanne:

And so is the connection to all this discussion about drought, about the fact that it will be releasing more therefore during drought situations, we're concerned about water supply and conservation and therefore should we put new regulations and how can we reinforce those regulations? Is that what this conversation flow is about?

Steve:

So a bit. DEEP stream flow regulations with safe yield and drought are all kind of connected topics. When one changes all the rest of them change for the most part. So because of the fact that the upcoming stream flow regulations are coming in 2026, we then had to revise our safe yield study to determine the new safe yields for our system wide and reservoir wide status.

So we couldn't start releasing more water and not know what the safe yield was because then we wouldn't have a good idea of what we're working with at a storage capacity going forward into the

future. So the new DEEP stream flow regulations, which were out of our control for the most part, those came about, that we need to abide by those either way, we then had to update the new safe yield study to determine what our safe yield was going to be after we do need to start releasing these regulated amounts.

But then when that tied into drought, we were saying that there is going to be, I think an 8.5% decrease in safe yield. So we certainly have enough capacity going forward into the future. But with changing climate, with new safe yield from the DEEP stream flow regulations, we thought it would be proactive to look into drought management strategies in case the studies prove true that droughts do become more frequent and more intense going forward.

Suzanne:

And could we not just proportionately follow our current guidelines if we're [inaudible 00:37:32] percent as result of the new requirements, can we then just proportionately adjust what we currently do? Is there some reason why it's either bigger or smaller than that?

Steve:

Are you talking in terms of our current sense drought plan?

Suzanne:

Yes.

Steve:

Yeah, we did update the drought plan earlier this year. So there is a new version out that will be submitted with our next water supply plan, which we're wrapping up and it does have some new introductions to it. But really the main question would going forward is do we want to revise our drought stages any bit? So we'll take into consideration the advisory stage, if we bump the advisory stage up a bit, we would then have the ability to start limiting use prior to what we do right now. So it's just a proactive approach in case we come into the drought stages where the droughts are longer and more intense in the future that we could prepare for that to make sure we do have adequate supplies and adequate water quality as well going forward.

Suzanne:

So the issue at... I'm just trying to frame what the question is we're trying to answer. So the question is, if not these regulations change things, we've already revised our drought plan according to that, but if the climate change starts to make more significant and serious impacts, should we make changes? Is that the question we're trying to answer?

Steve:

A bit of both. Yeah. A lot of it is to do with the future climate change. That's certainly what's spawning a lot of this conversation because we really don't know what's going to happen in the future. And yes, we're fortunate to have good water supply, however, with potential climate change in the future, we may not have that quality of supply as much as we do right now.

Suzanne:

Okay. So I've been quiet not really understanding what we're trying to solve for. And so thank you very much for that information. And so I guess my point of view, Kevin, since you asked all members to weigh in, is that I feel like if we proportionately deal with this issue in a way that it takes into account the requirements that we have now, the climate change piece is something that I feel like we just have to monitor and see what happens going forward. And unless there is an issue of speed in which we can't change as quickly enough to respond to the situation because of regulatory issues or other, I don't know. So thanks for letting me get that additional information.

Kevin:

Thank you. Any other comments, Dave?

David:

Just if I could, the first part of what I was going to say, you let me start and that was great and I talked about not wanting to conserve water as much and not wanting to be as aggressive with the drought warnings, but it coupled with my second point I wanted to make, which is in this topic and the next topic. And that is the expansion because the only way we're going to expand anywhere, we can't expand south with the ocean so we are going to have to expand into other areas that will have a need when the next set of aquifer protection regulations come up it's very likely that the towns around there plus the fact that they may be small enough.

So I would like to make sure that we don't squander our water that we're very careful with, and I know we don't, and that was probably a poor choice of words. I want to make sure that we are diligent with our requested use of water among our people because we want to someday use the fact that we're blessed with an excess of safe yield water to expand and be able to make sure that we can help. Because expansion is certainly going to help us, make us a more efficient operation since we've already got the water and we're already producing it.

Kevin:

Okay, thank you. Good point.

Suzanne:

Yeah. And Kevin, I would just also echo, I think we should always be looking at expansion as long as it's possible to continue to serve our base.

Kevin:

Okay, great. Thank you. Catherine, Tony, any final comments?

Tony:

Nope, that's fine for me.

Kevin:

Okay. Okay. So Sunny and Steve, does this give you some adequate feedback right now? Maybe we could set it up for a future discussion. Maybe if the climate change study has some information that

might change our discussion or make things appear more urgent, we can talk about that in the future. But any other questions for the committee?

Sunny:

Just I would say following up, I think Catherine basically touched upon it a little bit on, I would say the legislative impacts that we can do. I think it's going to tie in with what I would say Lori is going to do with regard to the 2023 legislative session outlook, which is the third memo as part of the EHNS. Right now, I would say currently there is a thought process that we want to kind of work with the state legislators to have some kind of, I would say drought advisory being implemented by the municipalities, towns, and cities that regional serves. Any thoughts? I know Catherine touched upon a little bit to say that it'll be a tad difficult to kind of approach it. Any thoughts on that? That'll be something that ties into our, I would say, the upcoming 2023 legislative outlook anyway.

Kevin:

And I'll obviously let the rest of the committee answer as well. I think we should continue to try to work with the legislature obviously about anything that might benefit us or assist us in dealing with drought or advisory, whether it's mandatory implementation. I think Catherine's point, I don't want to speak for her, the ultimate enforcement of it. But I would urge or recommend, it would be my preference that we continue to try to work with whatever I guess legislation the authority and Lori would think would be helpful to achieve our objectives. Catherine, did you have anything further on that?

Catherine:

Nope, I think you said it perfectly well.

Tony:

I agree with that too.

Kevin:

Okay. All right. Thanks Sunny.

Sunny:

Yeah, Kevin, just-

Kevin:

Steve, I appreciate your comments and your thorough knowledge and feedback to us. Thank you.

Steve:

Of course. My pleasure.

Sunny:

Kevin, just one other, I would say, request for Lori if she wants to add anything to the discussion, I would say have Lori, I would say chime in on the legislative session outlook.

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Kevin:

Sure, thanks.

Sunny:

Thank you. Lori, if you want to give a summary and see what would be our major points of focus for the upcoming year as well as any other questions for the authority members if there's anything that you would like to post or get some feedback or guidance, whichever it is. So you want to kind of take the floor.

Lori:

Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. Taking copious notes here on the last discussion regarding drought and how we can potentially make some changes in our area. First and foremost, I know you have the 2023 legislative session update. If you haven't had a chance to review it, just high level, session will begin in January, it's a long session. Overall, I'll follow 27 committees on behalf of the company, work closely with our contract lobbyist as well as the Connecticut Waterworks Association. The majority of the bills that we will see generally come out of the environment committee, planning and development, public health and appropriations to name a few.

Throughout the coming weeks I'll begin developing and working with key staff and leadership to identify issues. Most of the issues we've talked about over time, but there're other issues in addition to what you just discussed related to drought and how we can address that. Other key points that will be followed closely and acted upon. Of course those topics includes supporting all types of funding and bonding legislation for water company infrastructure projects. Also illegal ATV riding on water company land, look at legislation to deter that. Always paying attention to legionella, PFAS, solar siding petitions, and also creating a stewardship program for tires. Last year we had legislation passed that created a stewardship program for propane cylinders and tanks and each and every year always monitoring issues related to a political subdivision as our regulating body and as it pertains to not having a regulating body and as a political subdivision and our structure.

So I'm always prepared to monitor, obviously, I hate to say the one offs, but it's always nice if it's planned and we know what to expect. Unfortunately, topics arise, catch our surprise and we respond as quickly as we can and making sure the authorities position is advocated for.

So with that, going right into the drought, because that was super interesting and I'm thinking about the comments and the enforcement of drought and the enforcement of over time, what you described over the summer where the governor called drought across the state, unfortunately or fortunately, whichever way you'd like to look at it for us. Fortunately, we had the supply and that was a confusing message in the region. So how can we work with legislators on that double edged sword and in the sense of complying with the messaging that's coming out of the governor's office, but at the same time being mindful that the supply is there.

So when we're talking about working with legislators, I'll need to talk with Steve a little more also with the Waterworks Association. We actually have a legislative planning session tomorrow to get feedback from others in the state, other water companies, how we can address this. I've heard a lot of themes in the last 45 minutes regarding enforcement, municipal enforcement, does that require a municipal ordinance before those municipalities can actually enforce if they even had the wherewithal to support that effort. So I have lots of questions, which is good. It's great to hear the topic. I'm glad Steve was

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presenting prior to me and we'll continue to work together on that particular drought advisory issue and how we can best work with legislators in the best interest of the RWA.

Kevin:

Thank you.

Larry:

Lori, this is Larry. I just wanted to chime in that in the past the Waterworks Association had worked on a draft ordinance that could be passed by any town to enable them to help enforce drought restrictions by their utilities. So Betsy Guerra, the Executive Director there may recall it when we worked on that to provide that model ordinance through legislation authorizing the towns and encouraging them to implement that.

Lori:

Thank you, Larry. Just not looking at the camera because I'm feverishly writing again.

Kevin:

Thanks Larry. Any questions for Lori? No? All right, thank you very much.

Lori:

Thank you.

Kevin:

Glad the conversation was helpful for you.

Lori:

Have a good afternoon everyone. Bye now.

Kevin:

You too.

Steve:

Thank you everyone. Have a good day.

Larry:

Thanks, Lori. Thank you, Steve.

Kevin:

All right, I'll entertain a motion to come out of committee. We want to convene as the Strategic Planning committee.

Suzanne:

So moved.



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Catherine:

I'll second Suzanne's motion.

Kevin:

Motion made and seconded. All on favor?

Group:

Aye.

Kevin:

Okay. Thank you very much.

[ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING ADJOURNS AT 1:19 P.M.]