

SOUTH CENTRAL CONNECTICUT REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

MAY 25, 2023

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

[ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING BEGINS AT 12:47 P.M.]

Kevin:

Thank you. May I have a motion for our minutes, approval of the minutes?

Catherine:

I move.

Suzanne:

I'll second it.

Kevin:

Moved and seconded. Any discussion changes all in favor of approving the minutes?

Committee:

Aye.

Kevin:

Okay. We have, I think three, memos today. The second memo, the legislative update. We have a question that we'd like to discuss. Give some a little bit of time for discussion in addition to any other questions or comments that either Sunny or his team might want to add any context to these memos. So, Larry or Sunny, I don't know if you wanted to just field questions at first regarding the... Go ahead. Yeah.

Larry:

Sunny or one of his members that wrote the memo can give a high level overview if that would be helpful to the board and we can get into the question. But the purpose of this is to not have another presentation.

Kevin:

Yeah. Right. Yeah. We're trying to strike that balance and walk the line between a full presentation, and also, giving people enough information to make an informed decision.

Sunny:

Okay, thanks. I would say go through each memo. So, first we'll pick up the water supply plan. And I think Tiffany's here, so I'll have Tiffany kind of, I would say chime in on the condensed summary of what

we did on the water supply plan. It's normally like a 10-year update that we have to do with the deep. Tiffany, if you're there...

Tiffany:

I am.

Sunny:

Okay, great. Thanks. Go ahead. Yeah.

Tiffany:

Hello, everybody. Good afternoon. To give you a high level summary on the information that's presented here in this memo. The water supply plan is a regulatory document that is required for us to provide. It is submitted to DPH. And the formal process is that DPH will then approve that plan. Approve it in that it meets the regulatory requirements that are part of what make up that document. So, the regulations actually say very specifically what information needs to be included.

As you can see from this memo, this is an effort that we have been chipping away at for quite a period of time. There is a lot of background information that goes into this update, and we're quite overdue for an update. The last plan was written in 2009, but it was not approved by DPH until 2014. That is something that they have recognized and is a process that they're working on improving the submission to review time.

Typically, DPH would require or would submit a request for you to update the plan. But given how long it has been since we had last updated it, this is an initiative that the RWA took on to update at this point in time because this document is also a very valuable resource for internal staff to use as well. And some of the forward-looking long-term plans that are part of the update are also needed for other business processes.

So, we did perform a complete update of the plan from about 2021. I think we kicked it off, and it was submitted in February. You can see in the memo a more detailed list of some of those background and supporting documents and other information that were performed in order to support the plan. But the overall story is that this plan is a more updated and streamlined version than our previous plans. It does still look at that forward-leaning window. In some cases, reports looking forward out 50 years like the land use plan, as well as our population and demand forecast which is also a 50-year plan. And then, some of the environmental reports that I'm sure Steve would be happy to answer questions on also updated with this.

And in this particular one, we're using some new technologies that were not available at the last update. So, the safe yield analysis actually used a pretty advanced hydrologic model to calculate that, as well as we did a full update of our hydraulic model with the newest technology and with the updated population and demand forecasts. All of that comes together to bring report that make sure that the RWA is going to be able to serve the demands in our region for that period of time in the foreseeable future and gives some information to the state on how we are managing and making sure that we're meeting those regulatory obligations.

And then this year, we actually also produced two versions. So, one is a confidential version which has all the information, and there is also a redacted version, so if there are freedom of Information Act requests related to this document, it is already prepared and ready to be shared to meet those.

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Sunny:

Great. Hey, thanks Tiffany. I mean, I will-

Kevin:

Thank you.

Sunny:

... you as well. I mean, just to give away would say the high level, I think it captures all the operation side of it, the water supply side of it, the engineering side of it. So, there's many different studies that go into it. So, I'm just going to have little chime in because Steve isn't here who wrote the memo, but Will will step in for him and give from the planning site on the water supply and the planning site and how it is. So, Will, if you want to chime in, you can actually add more to what Tiffany said.

Will:

Sunny, I'm sorry. I was a couple of minutes late so there was a little bit of traffic, and I have no idea where we are. I'm sorry about that.

Sunny:

That's okay. Just a supply plan. Tiffany gave the highlight 30,000 feet of what we did in the last 2009 update as well as what we have been doing in the 2023 one which you have submitted. So, if you want to just touch base on the water supply aspects, so you may want to shed light on that.

Will:

Sure. I'm not exactly sure what Tiffany already covered, but we retained the Hazen and Sawyer to produce an updated demand forecast that incorporated the new... Was this already covered? Please stop me if it was. To incorporate the 2026 DEP stream flow regulations, that's going to have an impact on the amount of supply that we have coming up in 2026. We made some capital improvements to accommodate those stream flow regulations. I'm not sure exactly what Tiffany covered. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I'm late. That's my best.

Tiffany:

That's all right. Well, perhaps we'll just take any questions that you have, and we can dive into those-

Kevin:

Sure.

Tiffany:

... specific details-

Will:

That would probably be the best way to go about it.

Kevin:

Hi, this is Kevin. Any questions for Tiffany? I have a question just to start off, Tiffany. In working through this plan... And it sounds like there was a lot of value to it, not only for the requirement but a value to you and the organization. Were there any surprises? Did either of you come across anything that surprised you as part of this plan?

Tiffany:

I will say that one of the major changes that you see in this forecast versus the 2009 forecast is a lot more conservative look at the future demands. So, in the original 2009 plan, the demand forecasting at that time had continued to show demands increasing over the near 20 year and the longer 50 year. In 2013, we had done an internal memo updating those population and demand projections outside of the water supply plan process which showed more in line with what you've been hearing from Larry and other members of the leadership team in that hour. Customer demands have actually been on a decline for quite a period of time. And we looked at the amount of fixtures in our residential base that had already been updated with the new plumbing codes, which is one of the reasons we're seeing that increase in residential efficiency and the decrease in demand.

And at that time, it had been revised to show the demand actually continuing on that declining path until about 2025, I think, and then turning. And the updated population and demand projection actually shows that decline likely to continue through 2040 at the similar pace to what we're seeing today, and then, turning and making a slower recovery to the end of the review period, which is 2070. And the expectation is that in 2070, demands will be similar to actually what we're seeing today.

So, a very continued slow decline, the period of which has been extended from those prior forecasts, and then, a slow recovery around 2070 to where we are today.

Kevin:

That's interesting. Any other questions?

Suzanne:

I have a question, Kevin. So-

Kevin:

Yes. Go ahead, Suzanne.

Rochelle:

[inaudible 00:29:12] with this report and specifically on a governance perspective, do you sign off on the report? What happens after the report's done?

Sunny:

We actually have to file with the DPH, so-

Rochelle:

That's it.

Sunny:

... that's pretty much it. After that, they come back with, I would say review comments and once, as Tiffany mentioned, it took them last time, five years to go through that entire process and then say, it's okay. So, there are, I would say, engagements that happen at DPH once we submit it. And finally, at that point they accept our water supply plan.

Rochelle:

Okay. And I-

Will:

So, I think I could comment on that.

Sunny:

Go ahead, [inaudible 00:29:51]-

Will:

It's already been submitted to the DPH, correct? And they're going to sync up the review of the water supply plan with the sanitary survey, which I think is coming up for us next year. Tiffany, is that correct? So, at that time they will review this plan at which case they can approve or deny it or ask for revisions.

Rochelle:

So, there's nothing in here we don't already know. We're just giving. We're collecting it for the DPH and it's a reporting thing.

Will:

Yes. I would say during the process of writing it, we may have elucidated some new facts that maybe weren't so obvious to us but nothing earth shatteringly new. It's all internal stuff that we are aware of.

Tiffany:

Yeah. So, some of those background reports that are discussed here that were updated throughout the process, those are new or updated information that is then used to update the plan, but all very applicable to the authority's everyday jobs.

Sunny:

I mean, just going back, if you just scroll up, Jennifer, just on the studies that we do. So, I would say what we do is internally, it's a useful tool for us because it kind of looks at the projections demand and all that. I mean, as you said, it's a crystal ball gazing into 50 years. So based on that, we can see how much of water capacity is the safe field and things of that sort. And also, it say Hazen also did a study on the climate change issues. So, it's a useful tool for us, even though we do it for DPH purposes. It is still, I would say encompasses a lot more, I would say areas that we can look at and add to it. So, for internal teams, it serves in a great capacities.

Rochelle:

Okay.

Larry:

For a couple things too. This plan takes into account the impact of the stream flow regulations which is going to require us to release more water in the streams and the like. So, this is taken into account that phenomena. We still are going to have 14 million gallons of water per day in excess of our demand. So, it's beneficial from that standpoint, but it also helps us with a capital planning standpoint. For instance, we were going to build a 2 million water storage tank in Derby, and we decided only doing 1 million because it just demand is continuing on this downward decline. So, anyway, it helps us with our capital planning and growth operations as well.

Will:

And kind of piggybacking on what Larry and Sunny both said in terms of some of the land cover analysis that we did, those are new data sets that weren't available during the last water supply plan. And that'll give us a jumping off point for future comparison. These data sets that are available now or of higher resolution than what was previously available, so that'll give us something that we can look back on and see how land cover has changed and whether that's had an impact on our system as well. So, it's definitely some great tools for us in our planning for future projects.

Kevin:

Thank you very much. Again, this is Kevin. Maybe there's a question well really for anybody on the team. So, I understand what happens with it based on what we've been told today. It goes to DPH and eventually they-

Kevin Curseaden:

We've been told today it goes to DPH and eventually they approve it or ask for revisions or don't approve it. But what's the purpose... What's the reason for DPH requiring it in the first place?

Larry:

Well, they're responsible for the regulation of the water quality of water utilities, and to ensure that we're providing the service that we are mandated to provide within our district. So they've created this water supply plan, which looks out 50 years and it's supposed to [inaudible 00:33:39] five years. That gives them a way to understand if a water utility in a particular area is going to be able to meet projected demand. And if they do, fine, if they don't, then they start working with that utility on developing other sources of supply. So it forces the utility to look at either interconnections or drilling new wells or doing something with a reservoir, for instance, that they might not be able to use now. So it really forces the water utility to take to be proactive in concert with the Department of Public Health on determining if they can supply their particular area.

Kevin Curseaden:

Okay. Thank you, Larry, but do they take it not just going from one utility to one utility, but do they take it and then match this up? Or is there somebody that's taking these for each utility and looking at an overall master plan for the state of Connecticut? Or did they do anything like that with it? Do you know?

Larry:

We actually do that through the WUCC process, the Water Utility Coordinating Committee, which is three of them now within the state. The state's kind of divided in thirds, and they look at not only who is entitled to serve a particular area, but they also look at if the supply in that particular area is adequate to cover all the different towns. So they look at it from that standpoint as well. Right. And the state water supply plan, which was headed by PURA. They had a convening of all four agencies that are involved in water supply, and they met with all the water utilities and they developed literally a state water supply plan, which also looked at the ability of the state to meet the projected demands based on individual water supply plans.

Sunny:

Great. Just to add to that too, Kevin, right, so this is pretty much, I worked on water supply plans for Rhode Island. All the states pretty much required this mass requires it. They take it one step further because EPA talks to them about funds and the future, I would say allocations in terms of the drinking water, sanitary sewer funding needs.

So I've done on surveys where I would say these data, which they collect, goes back into, I would say a much more, I would say nationwide data. And based on that, budgets are developed for the next, I would say, 10, 15, 20 years. And DWS sort of funds are kind of, I would say allocated to each state based on how the impacts to each segmented. I would say states are New England, Northeast, mid-Atlantic, things of that sort. So there is certainly, I would say a lot more data that goes on in the background, both at the deep level DPH levels and the various DUPs across, I would say the 50 states. So these data do form, I would say the backbone of how funding could be allocated in the next 5, 10, 15 years actually.

Kevin Curseaden:

Okay. I was curious as well as, I mean obviously we would have access to the other utilities plans and see where they're deficient or may be able to, I mean, obviously it would have to be someone within the region, I'm assuming, but where we might be able to interact with a different utility or are we not able to use the plan that way or use somebody else's plan that way?

William:

So the redacted plans are obviously available to the public. So those are available to us. I don't know in terms of whether the full version would be available to us, I would think not.

Larry:

Through the water utility coordinating committee, you would have access to the unredacted plans.

Kevin Curseaden:

Okay.

Larry:

Meeting standpoint.

Kevin Curseaden:

All right. Thank you.

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David:

Kevin. I had a couple of comments.

Kevin Curseaden:

Sure. Yeah, absolutely.

David:

Having met through several of these, to me, this is right at the heart of a mission of what we're supposed to be doing as a company. It's significantly important, and I greatly appreciate that you took the initiative duty before we're asked to do it. So that's important. Three comments. You talked about the 14 million in safe yield. Is that more than we had with the last plan, or are we had about the same because it's significantly more than we need, which is great.

Larry:

Yeah, it is about the same because there's a statutory requirement that we have to meet, which is another 15% I believe, of your highest daily demand. So that 14 million gallons is even above that.

David:

Above that right.

Larry:

So it's about what it has been.

David:

So it's what we can offer to other towns or other systems that may need it. Great, if we can get it to the southeast, you need a lot of pipes there. Yeah.

Larry:

Unfortunately we know what pipe costs. We need a lot of pipe.

David:

Yeah. My second comment is you obviously took into account the stream full of regulations, which have been promulgated since the last one, but we know what's coming up. And that's the aquifer protection.

Larry:

Correct.

David:

This will help for that, and we will be up at the state looking at other systems near us that maybe we can help them out if they're systems that are going to have problems with with aquifer protection, we're already here.

Sunny:

Let's just take the future into consideration.

David:

That's right. We have some interconnection there already, which is great. Maybe not quite the capacity we need, but we have a relationship and that's the important thing. All right. And then my last comment, I get nervous when we talk about drought, and even just recently when there's drought in the state, we still have plenty of water because the state may declare that they're in a drought. And it's tough that we get at a point of having to tell our residents, "well stop using water." In other words, "stop selling product, stop taking in money," even though we have plenty of product and plenty of water. And I know there's a balance that we have to be nice to the DPH because there are the privacy body there, and yet we want to sell and bring in the money. So Michelle has an easier sleep at night.

I just want us to be cautious. I see we're tightening up on some of the drought restrictions. Are those, if we feel there's a drought in our district, the tightening up? Or is that if this governor declares that there's a state drought?

William:

I think those are based on the drought triggers that we have within our water supply plan, not the statewide.

And I would say that we have to be careful with that because the state has different drought conditions and different system requirements. We do have a part of our system, which is relying on well fields, which is a little bit more sensitive than the remainder of the system, obviously. Obviously we could sell tons and tons of water out of the North Branford system, but it's a balance between the other parts of the more delicate pieces of the system that do not have the same amount of storage. And so that's kind of one of the pitfalls of the way that we lump the system together because we're not, we're looking at the whole thing and not at the little pieces. We can't dictate that the people in Cheshire use less water and say the people in North Preffer can use as much as they want. So I think it's a real balancing act for us in that regard as well.

Larry:

Water running, that's the lowest part of the district.

David:

Thank you very much. Thanks, Phil.

Kevin Curseaden:

All right. Thanks Dave. Sunny, anything else or we want to move on to the next one? Great. Thank you. Thank you.

Sunny:

One more question, Kevin. Yeah, [inaudible 00:40:57].

Kevin Curseaden:

I don't know. I mean, that's the honest answer.

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Larry:

Under what? Under duress.

Suzanne:

In terms of the water, the water supply, anything. Because my perspective is one, water system is under duress. The perception is water systems are under duress.

Larry:

Well, southeastern Connecticut has had an ongoing supply problem in that part of the state. So that's one area that is continually fighting droughts and asking their customers to cut back almost at the beginning of summer. I've noticed that aquarium has recently implemented some mandatory, a reduction in sprinkler use on the outside. Their system to the west, kind of west of Westport is they have a tougher time keeping up with demand there than they do the system. So they're having a hard time with it in terms of just the large water utilities. So that does create that impression about other systems being under duress as well. Phil you're right there.

Suzanne:

That begs the question are other systems under duress?

Larry:

Yeah, they are, depending on where they are located in the state, whether they're well, or whether they are reservoirs kept.

Tiffany:

I will say that the updated version of the drought response plan does include a significantly expanded section for media and communication outreach. So we would hope that some of those practices help in spreading the appropriate message coming from us at the time when it would need to be implemented.

Catherine:

Just actually one quick, just want to clarify that, and that five year period was kind of, you know, you laugh. I was kind of what, when I looked at it, there is dialogue between the DPH and RWA during that period of time. So it's not silent. Yeah. Okay.

Larry:

Yeah, we have a very good working relationship with the Department of Public Health. Overall regulatory standpoint is just well as collaboration.

Catherine:

Okay.

Sunny:

Yeah, many things actually. Right. So financial images are up plus, I think Laurie Matthew has an excellent relationship, so-

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Catherine:

It just takes them a long time to get through all of their-

Sunny:

Staffing is a significant issue is what we understand. So it could be an issue.

Tiffany:

We did have a comment here that this plan is a little bit more streamlined than the previous plan, but just to put it in perspective, the 2009 plan is like this long and this plan is this long. So hopefully that will also assist in their review.

Sunny:

I have it sitting on my desk. It's two six inch binders.

Larry:

You got to see the Player version. It's like this. Yeah, it's a pamphlet.

Catherine:

It's a trifold.

Larry:

Yeah. Right.

Kevin Curseaden:

All right. Thank you very much Mr. Henley. Ms. Lufkin. Appreciate it.

William:

Thank you guys for having me. Sorry about my tardiness again.

Kevin Curseaden:

No worries.

David:

Thanks Tiffany.

Larry:

Thanks Tiffany.

Sunny:

Kevin, which one? Do you want to go? The legislative one or do you want to kind of, I would say go to, what's the next one? Environmental?

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Larry:

Legislative is next.

Sunny:

Amy's not here yet. We can go for the legislative issues, I would say Kevin Watsey is joining us. I'm not sure whether you're-

Kevin Curseaden:

Can we do the legislative? Did you have a preference? Either one is fine with me.

Sunny:

Right? I believe Amy's supposed to join us momentarily, so we can take the legislative. Kevin is with us. Kevin Watsey is with us, so,

Kevin Curseaden:

Absolutely. Yes. Okay.

Sunny:

Kevin, if you want [inaudible 00:44:40] away, he's there. Kevin, you're actually on mute.

Kevin Watsey:

There I am. Sorry about that. So my name's Kevin Watsey. I'm the new director of government affairs or public affairs with government affairs in my purview. I now just passed four months with the company and I'm happy to be here. So our memo really, we broke it up into two sections. The first section is legislation that we are tracking that we actually provide a testimony either written or verbal testimony on.

The second section is bills that were of interest to us, but were more being followed by our associations, the Connecticut Water Works Association, because they were of interest as much to the industry as to us. So we thought it better for the industry to speak in one voice on these bills. The session comes to an end on June 7th. You'll see a lot of the bills we testified on are dead because they didn't make it out of committee. Some of them we will watch for next year, the ones we've supported, and we'll hope that the ones that we didn't support just die and don't come back. So with that, and there's a couple of updates actually that have happened since this memo went out on a couple of these bills. But at this point I'll just entertain any questions you have about the memo.

Kevin Curseaden:

Thanks, Kevin. Any questions from the committee? I mean, we have a question at the bottom for discussion, but anything else prior to that or in addition to?

Catherine:

Well, I had just, I don't know if it's a question, if it's just inaccurate there. On Senate Bill 966, there's a reference here that in the testimony you informed the committee that the RWA Special Act provides for representative policy board, which serves as a board of directors. Isn't that what we do?

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Larry:

No, that's an error.

Catherine:

Okay.

Kevin Watsey:

So this bill was trying to rope us into be a pure regulated, it kind of had language in it that inadvertently said all water companies would fall under the purview of purists. So we got that amended and the bill never advanced, so we're okay.

Catherine:

Oh, that so it didn't really matter?

Kevin Watsey:

Yes.

Catherine:

Okay.

Kevin Curseaden:

Yes, great question.

Catherine:

And the other thing, this is just, I want to make sure I understand the concern on House Bill 6733, which is one of the ones that was just sort of tracked. There seemed to be a concern that regulations have to be approved by the general assembly, but I don't think that's quite the way that it works. And it is usually the general assembly will pass a law and then authorize the issuance of regulations by an agency. So is that the intent that you wanted the general assembly to approve the re-

Kevin Watsey:

So that was the intent of the bill and that was one of the reasons that as an industry, we were opposing this one. And this one, I didn't put an update, but this one, the problem language that we had, so we cited two issues we had. Both of those were agreed to be removed from the provision. And this bill right now is just hanging out there. It hasn't been called for a full vote yet. So this is another one that will most likely die with less than two weeks left in the session.

But our lobbyists are very attentive to all of these bills. And if one of them does get called, we will know immediately and we can act accordingly.

David:

Watch out for the rats. Yeah, we're at the end of the session [inaudible 00:49:17] They show up. Exactly.

Larry:

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I don't think somebody's going to stick.

Kevin Curseaden:

Thank you. Any other thoughts or comments? Do we have that? Go ahead, Catherine. Sorry.

Catherine:

And in answer to the question that you had at the end, I'm actually going to place a question. Do we have all the flexibility that we need in our legislation for us to do the commercial enterprise activity that we want?

David:

Well, we asked Martha that question essentially, and they came back and said essentially we have the ability to do what we want to do in those four areas, either within the state of Connecticut or outside.

Catherine:

Okay.

David:

But there wasn't a limit? Didn't we think we might be bumping up against the-

Larry:

Well, there's financial, but we can only invest 25 million dollars. Well, it's 5% of the net utility planned less whatever [inaudible 00:50:15] in terms of more or less. But the RPB is authorized under the current version of the enabling legislation to expand that cap. All we wanted to open 25 say to 30 or 40 or 50. Right. The RPB can do that.

David:

Okay. So it's not a legislative item.

Larry:

Right, right.

David:

That's good. Okay. I mean, Kevin, you and I talked about the other day, the issue that's come up. I'll let you meet with, I guess Catherine asked the question, you know what else we'd be looking at.

Kevin Curseaden:

Yes. That was a great question as well, Catherine. I know we had struggled with that initially when we were getting the enabling legislation changed or revised a few times over the years. But David, are you talking about the question with the number of Authority members?

David:

That would be something you'd have to go to the legislation for. Correct.

Kevin Curseaden:

To either expand the Authority or change, I think if there were term limits on the authority or things along those lines, I think that my understanding is those would have to go to the legislature. Yeah, legislature.

David:

And we've had discussions over the years of do we want to stay at five members? Do we want to go to seven members because of the diversification of what we're getting into now, maybe that was something that we'd want to entertain? We certainly wouldn't want to go to the legislature without being in lockstep with the RPB. They're the politically connected ones. And we would not want to go with something where they're against what we want to do. Because they'll go to all their towns and go to their legislators or their towns and say, well, the guess is that we wouldn't get anywhere. So we'd have to be in concert with the RPB and see whether they would be in favor of something if we are. And we may even want to set up a discussion committee, some kind of a discussion. Weren't we on something like that, you and I?

Catherine:

That's for changing the procedures.

Larry:

So there have been joint committees where authority and RPB members and management have worked on amending the enabling legislation.

David:

And I'm not sure that I would want to go, well, I have two schools of thought. I'm not against this at all. I'm not going to champion it at the moment because I want to have us all discuss it, but I'm not against it. If we were to go to the legislature with just this one item, let's expand. We open up the legislation and once you open something up, there's a concern for that. However, maybe it's minor enough, then they might just say, yeah, okay, yeah, they're moving longer, getting into other things now let them have more board members to bring more experiences. So there's those two schools of thought I'd want to talk to.

Who do we have up there? Sullivan and Gaffnee and Bennett. So I want to get their sense on this as well of what could happen. If it's a year in which there's no other water issues and there haven't been really. Yeah, it'll probably be fairly easy. One of the years that we wanted to amend our enabling legislation.

The MDC was entertaining a large water bottle company and anything in the legislature that pertained to water got stopped because of that particular issue. So that's timing on what's going on up there.

Kevin Curseaden:

Yeah, I recall Dave a few years ago, we talked about this very briefly, I think just with the Authority and was this, I don't know if there was a formal decision or it just didn't gain any traction, but my rationale for I think bringing it up a few years ago was the fact of, you had mentioned the diversification of what we're getting into going forward and the need to have more different types of expertise and talent and experience on the committee than or on the board than only five members allow.

So that was the kind of thought process. And we had talked about nine members or seven members, and it might even been three to five years ago. But like I said, it didn't really gain much traction at that point. But I do think it's important, it's an important discussion to have for a lot of reasons. And I was interested if management has a thought on it, whether that's something that's beneficial from their perspective. Maybe we can get into a list of pros and cons if you form a committee, a joint committee on it. But I don't know if management has any thoughts on it.

Larry:

Yeah, sorry. Yeah, we've talked about it and I think having seven members on the board, while it would definitely change the dynamics, I think you could get more diverse experience. So you could have diversity not only in terms of the experience of the board, but also just the composition of well, which I think is a good thing. And then also by doing that, one authority member would only have one committee, so they wouldn't be overburdened with two or in some cases three. So it would be helpful from that standpoint, from just a workload perspective. So I think there's some validity to it, some cons to it as well definitely change the dynamics of the board to be sure. Which I think is something to be considered because it's a pretty collegial group that you'd have to think about.

Catherine:

Are we talking about it now?

David:

I think so. At least initially. I mean, I've been in favor of this for a long time because I think it is easier to get more experiences here. And we have been into other things. We have expanded our purview quite a bit over the last few years. So I think having seven members would be a good thing. Not so sure my predecessor did. And I think that's kind of why it stopped. That's what Kevin was being nice about, but I'd like to see us have a discussion with the RPD about this, but we have to discuss it first. I mean, if Kevin in the past had thought it was worth looking at, I think it's worth looking at. But if you two don't and our newest member coming on doesn't, then that's the majority. We won't discuss it any further.

Catherine:

I'm not opposed to that. I think it could be beneficial.

David:

I don't see much downside. A little bit of downside. Maybe actually with regard to your seat being one seventh instead of one fifth.

Catherine:

Oh yeah, I'm definitely opposed.

David:

Yeah, it's [inaudible 00:56:45] not you. I mean that's something, yeah, I knew that. But that would be something that we'd have to factor into the consideration because I'm sure it would be.

Suzanne:

I'm always contrarian on the board, but my view is that I don't know what's broken about the board, and so I'm not a big fixer of what's not broken. And if we feel like, no, we're sitting here contemplating decisions and gee whizz five people are sitting here do not have the mental strength and breadth of knowledge and ability. And we feel at risk where we feel that the management team's not getting good advice.

And I would definitely say that maybe we should expand it and very purposefully ask that RPB to get discipline diversification and diversification in general. But unless we felt like five people can't do that, we got about the five people who are in the seats right now, but the five people who couldn't do that, I would say don't change something. Unless you are changing it for a very specific reason that will in fact move us forward in a way that it can't move forward itself.

David:

Well, Larry hit on something and as the organization of it, Dave and I have talked about this before. Yes, we have six committees now. We may have seven or eight later, we may have four later. I don't know. But it does seem like more committees give individual members an area to focus on. And it does seem like we could potentially add either more committees or have these more spread out among those who are here and therefore maybe different focuses.

Suzanne:

I can only speak about my committee cause my committee has a professional who works on it. And so it doesn't demand a lot from me as a board member except for listening to what they're saying, doing and giving the board whatever advice that I can offer. But for whatever it's worth. So I don't find it very taxing.

Catherine:

Nor do I.

Kevin Curseaden:

Okay. Any other? Where do you want to take it from here? Dave, do you want to just?

Larry:

I'd like to cover a couple of suggestions too.

David:

But Kevin, do you mind, Larry's got his hand up.

Kevin Curseaden:

Oh, sure. Yeah.

Larry:

Yeah. In terms of just amending the enabling legislation, if for instance, you decided to vote from the five to seven members, one of the things that the legislation requires now is that we only recruit members from within New Haven, from our district. From the district. And if you're going to expand the

number of people on the board, it might be worthwhile to expand the recruitment area to maybe the state of Connecticut could be possibility, which could give you access to more to maybe other expertise. For instance, if you wanted to get a retired president of electric utility, they live outside the district, for instance, that would be an opportunity. So that's something to think about.

Suzanne:

And that's also in the enabling legislature.

Larry:

That's correct. It's specified we have to be within the district.

Suzanne:

If you were going to go to seven, I would definitely say that absolutely.

David:

Not to complicate it, but I wouldn't want to say then that a certain number have to be from within the district though.

Sunny:

I would want it to be a majority.

Larry:

Sure. Exactly. You could certainly put a collar on that way. Yeah. And the other thing that I think should be considered is to, currently the enabling legislation requires that the authority absolutely meet monthly. There's no exception to that. It's not may or can, it's meet monthly. Well, you may want to think about giving the authority flexibility to meet less than monthly.

So if they wanted to meet every other month, or maybe during the summer, they may maybe only once. So make it meet no less than once a quarter. So that would give the chair and the authority members the ability to either skip a meeting formally and maybe management provides their information. So you have that continuity, but it could reduce the number of times that you absolutely have to meet. So something to think about as well. So that would be three substantive issues that you would bring to the legislature concerning the governance and the composition of the governing board.

Suzanne:

I think just on that last point that you mean the only reaction I have is one, I'm not sure how the RPB would feel about that in terms of just oversight. Just that sense. Forget whether it's perception change, oversight. The other thing too is if, let's say you wanted to do only one meeting in the summer. We got all this remote capability. Let's just make it very brief meeting a single topic. And if there's really not a lot, there's, there's really no reason to create agenda for the board at the end of the day. So I just wouldn't want anybody to think that we're trying to abuse oversight.

And you can the risk of obstruction.

Larry:

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Yeah, you can provide that same flexibility to the RPB. Because they're required to meet monthly and install, as I recall.

Catherine:

I believe they're quarterly.

Larry:

Is it quarterly? Oh, good. Okay. So then you'd be in lockstep. Thank you for that correction. Then you'd be in lockstep.

Suzanne:

Yeah. But I think they're different kinds of options. Yes. Anyway, that's my two cents.

David:

Kevin, do you want to do you want to have us think about it now that we for the first time discussed it as a group. I mean, obviously we got lots of time before the next session. Want to bring it up at your next committee meeting?

Kevin Curseaden:

Yeah, I'd like to bring it up at the next committee meeting. I'm sorry. Suzanne's gesturing.

Suzanne:

Just saying you do have majority that would like to expand it to seven. So I think, listen, we don't have to have-

Larry:

Do you want me to have informal discussions with some of the RPB members, including the new-

Catherine:

I don't think that's... I think that's good idea, but I don't think that we should make a decision or really move forward until our new member.

Suzanne:

Oh, that's a great point.

Larry:

That's good point too. Yeah. Let's bring it up in your next committee meeting if that's all right. That should be two, three.

[inaudible 01:03:09] legislative

Suzanne:

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I would say that's the biggest reason to go to seven is it feels small with four. Except five doesn't seem small. Well, four seems small.

Larry:

It is. So we had times when we had just three of us and yeah, you know that was a concerning issue of all these years. Never having anybody missed. Then other things happened.

Catherine:

Just one more question on legislative matters, Kevin. Yeah. Any federal legislation that's of interest to us?

Larry:

Not directly, we do it through our trade association. We have a couple of the American Water Works in the Association of Metropolitan Water districts and they will advise us when there's legislation that'll impact water utility, like PFAS regulation for instance, or maybe some of the funding mechanisms. And they'll send a message out and we'll respond to that. But we don't have a lobbyist, we don't have somebody formally assigned to it other than Kevin Watsey will watch it just because he's got an interest in it.

Catherine:

Okay. Thank you.

Suzanne:

Did Kevin replace Lori?

Larry:

Kevin replaced April Capone as the director of public affairs who was less than a year. She left to become executive director of a housing association. So Kevin is now the head of the corporate communications spoke team.

David:

But he also took some of Lori's because she left just recently. Correct [crosstalk 01:04:36]. Be replacing this.

Sunny:

We're in the process of hiring further.

Larry:

Yeah.

Suzanne:

Okay. Great. Thank you.

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Kevin Curseaden:

Great. Thank you. And all right, I appreciate the conversation. Sunny we have up next is Amy.

Suzanne:

Yep.

Kevin Curseaden:

Amy. Ms. Velasquez.

Sunny:

I just thinking she's just getting on Kevin, so we'll just give her a ride. Yeah, she's coming. Okay, so I think that'll be the last third memo there.

Kevin Curseaden:

Great. Thank you.

Sunny:

Amy, are you there?

Amy Velasquez:

Sorry, I'm here.

Kevin Curseaden:

Oh, great. Okay. We are just going to discuss, I would say a quick summary of the memo. If you want to give Amy just a 30,000 feet, I would say summary of what the compliance update is, and then if there are any questions, Authority members, then we can actually answer the questions.

Amy Velasquez:

From a high level view. Basically the update is, we've had a long term groundwater discharge issue at West River from the drying beds, but we're working with D.E.E.P on a compliance schedule. And with our consultant, we did an analysis and basically we're looking at line.

Amy Velasquez:

And we did an analysis and basically we're looking at lining the drying beds and that construction will probably begin FY 25, I believe. We're also working to increase our sewer discharge permit at the Lake Gaillard water treatment plant. Basically because they have to clean the clarifiers more often, we increased it up to 110,000 gallons a day with 140,000 gallon a day peak. We're still working through some issues with DEEP like questions they have, but I'm hopeful that they will approve that soon.

Also, as part of the drying bed issue at Lake Gaillard, they had recently problems with standing water. So we requested a modification to our comprehensive general permit to basically allow them to discharge the water off the top of the beds out to Burrs Brook. So that is now covered in our general permit rather than an emergency use.

For spill response. Unfortunately, in June of last year, we have five spills at our various well fields was partially because of new staff and partially because of either equipment failure. So we put a number of things in place, including training for the staff on how to fill the tanks properly and not overfill them. We've got the hazardous waste operations procedure training for spill response. We developed a spill prevention and control plan. So we had gotten two NOVs from the state for delayed reporting. Basically, the information I was getting early in response to the spills wasn't necessarily accurate. So we have modified how we're doing things. We prepared all those documents for DEEP and they've closed out the spill. I don't know if I had anything below that.

Kevin:

The other one is the hazardous [inaudible 01:08:17].

Amy Velasquez:

So this has been kind of ongoing since 2015. Pretty much anytime we have a project, we have to check the building to see if there's PCBs, asbestos, lead paint, and we've worked to get rid of a number of buildings that were in poor repair. You can see the list of them here. It's been quite a few on over the years from the old rental houses to the old Dawson buildings. In addition to that, we regularly do roof replacements, window replacements, the chemical upgrades, and they all involve the hazardous building material inspections.

Kevin:

And that pretty much captures the summary. So any questions?

David:

Just briefly if I could, Kevin?

Kevin:

Yes.

David:

How much of a burden are we by increasing our wastewater discharge to the local municipality? Are they near the capacity on their wastewater treatment plan and therefore of you have this extra 30 or 3000 pounds a day will drive into what they've got left or?

Larry:

No. I think they should be okay. It shouldn't really be that significant because you're talking, I would say 30,000 gallons and that too. It's not every day. It depends on when the discharges go. I think they'll have enough capacity to have that.

Amy Velasquez:

And also in order to get a revision or get the general permit, we have to get the PTOW's approval of what our flow is going to be. So we contacted them and talked to them first before going forward with this.

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David:

Okay. Because some of piling, they're close to their maximum and this pushes them over. I could see us being the bad guys.

Amy Velasquez:

Yeah. In North Branford, I think we're one of the few large users of the sewer, so we're in a good place.

David:

Okay, thank you.

Amy Velasquez:

Yes.

Jim:

Yeah, I would also note that we have a capital improvement project to upgrade the clarifiers, which will significantly reduce the amount of water going into the drying bed. So that problem should be mitigated.

Sunny:

Actually, that's the Lake [inaudible 01:10:25] project, which is currently ongoing. So yeah.

Kevin:

Any other questions? Thank you, Amy.

Amy Velasquez:

All right. Thank you.

Kevin:

Thanks. All right, Sunny if you don't have anything else.

Sunny:

No, I'm good, Kevin. I think [inaudible 01:10:47] then I think we're good.

David:

Motion to adjourn as the Environmental Health and Safety Committee, and then meet as the Compensation Committee.

Kevin:

Is there a second?

Suzanne:

Yes, I'll second that.

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Kevin:

Okay. All in favor signify by saying I. All right. Thank you.

Kevin:

Thank you.

[ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE ADJOURNS AT 1:39 P.M.]