

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

Minutes of January 11, 2023 Meeting

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”) of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”) took place on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, via remote access. Chair Betkoski presided.

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

RPB: C. Havrda

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

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. Horbal, seconded by Mr. Harvey, the Committee approved the minutes of its December 14, 2022 meeting.

Ms. DiFrancesco, the RWA’s Multimedia Communications & Community Outreach Coordinator, Provided a presentation on the RWA’s Environmental Education program, which included:

- Program Overview
- Outside and Onsite Programs
- Participation Background
- Pre and Post-COVID Participation
- COVID Impacts & Trends
- Digital Improvements

At 5:47 p.m., Ms. Young entered the meeting.

Committee members discussed effects of pandemic, communications and outreach, and succession planning.

At 5:51 p.m., Ms. DiFrancesco withdrew from the meeting.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
December 31, 2022	80%	85%	72%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
December 2022	4.55	1.55	4.09
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 –	23.86	31.13	27.11

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

- Prospect – Corresponded with property owner of 40+/- acres.
- Hamden – Corresponded with property owner of 2+/- acres.
- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 50+/- acres.
- Cheshire, former Ricci property – Corresponded with Town staff about the status of the OSWLA grant.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Murtha confirmed with Assessor that the “island parcel” could be split administratively, but needed to follow-up about the other parcels.
- New Haven, Munson St. – Filed water main easement and map on the city land records.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Many tires dumped at the property. Some taken to disposal facility. Additional calls and emails placed to asst. town attorney to address the condemnation matter. Asst. town attorney replied to VP. Spoke to appraiser about the matter and he expected to work on the appraisal in January.
- Hamden, 95 Ives St. - Corresponded with owner about work at the property. Work began by the end of the month. Activity at the house prompted various reactions through email and online, many of which had erroneous information.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Corresponded with owner about work at the property.
- Guilford, 1155 Great Hill Rd. - Corresponded with owner about work at the property.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – **40% complete.**
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet. **May be pushed to summer due to ground conditions.**
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – **20% complete.**
 - Marked timber for GU12/12A silvicultural treatments near the Menunketuc reservoir, laid out more harvest boundary, and worked with Operations to improve drainage along an access road.
 - Worked with professional deer hunter to remove deer from within the Nathan’s Pond slash wall. Cut up tops and debris, and dragged and positioned brush and logs to plug a hole in the wall that deer were using to gain access.
 - Worked with a suspended woodcutter involved with a property dispute to resolve the permit suspension issue. Inspected the partially completed access road, which he voluntarily initiated across his property, and outlined additional steps necessary before reinstatement could be considered.
 - Worked with Killingworth Tree Warden to obtain permission to remove a town-owned tree obstructing truck access to a log landing.
 - Contractor removed overgrown evergreens from the Gaillard Christmas tree farm.
 - Reached out to three woodcutters requesting removal of apparently abandoned equipment from their respective woodlots.
 - Found and removed coin collection at Dudley Pond. Turned into Police.

Recreation

- Owl walk at Lake Bethany had about 30 participants.
- Invasive species identification walk at Lake Saltonstall had 9 people.
- Started the process for hiring new recreation staff for the 2024 fishing season.
- Website link for getting permits was broken. Addressed by online vendor.
- Cleared downed trees and limbs from trails at Lake Chamberlain, Big Gulph and Saltonstall.

- Gave tour of recreation areas to two new Customer Service Reps.
- Submitted DPH recreation activity use application for the alternate route of the New England Trail in Guilford.

	December		November	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Permit Holders	4,851	5,655	4,913	5,578

Special Activity Permits

- New Haven Bird Club (Chris Loscalzo) - Annual Christmas Bird Count survey - Saltonstall, Whitney, Wepawaug, Maltby, Dawson, Glen, Chamberlain, Watrous – (12/17/2022).
- Dr. Chris Loscalzo (at request of CTDEEP) - Annual Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey - Lakes Saltonstall and Gaillard – (1/7/2023).
- McLaren Engineering Group (Craig Plate) – Perform a routine and underwater inspection at SR707 over Lake Whitney; contracted by CTDOT to perform the inspection; (12/13/2022).
- CT Agricultural Experiment Station (Dr. Jeff Ward, et al) - General forestry and wildlife research, tick/Lyme Disease studies - Lake Gaillard, North Madison, Prospect, Seymour, Branford, Bethany (12/7/2022 – 12/7/2023).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – The Matthew St. field in Prospect was cleared of invasives, as well as large trees and rocks, for the tenant.
 - North Branford, Forest Rd. (NB 17) – Sent letters to many abutters about encroachments after remarking the boundary.
 - Trespassing – Recorded instances of trespassing including hunters, ATV’s, hikers with dogs, and hikers in unpermitted areas.
 - Milford, Low Pressure Agreement – Low pressure agreement at 543 Plains Rd. was released.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford, Bethany, East Haven, Branford and Prospect.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	44 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	10 acres

- Deer hunt – About half of the post-hunt surveys have been returned.
- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Town Council approved a resolution to convey an easement across town property between Morgan Ave. and Beach Ave. for the new watermain.
- Hamden, 364 Putnam Ave. (HA 8) – Corresponded with manager of abutting property since retaining wall was failing and needs to be replaced. Sent draft of license agreement to them to review allowing the access to our property to do the work.
- Hamden, Walden St. request (HA 5) – Rejected request from an abutter to put a sign on our fence regarding their business.
- Durham, Higganum Rd. (DU 6) – Fielded complaint from property owner downstream that the town was releasing water from a beaver-clogged crate and causing erosion.
- Boundaries – Checked and remarked boundaries in Guilford.
- Assisted with the 90 Sargent Dr. pollinator garden.

- ISMT performed drone flights at the Derby Tank sight and the DAF project at West River.

Committee members discussed security applicants, interest, and screening.

Ms. Young thanked Mr. Triana for providing information for the Killingworth Board of Selectman regarding cutting taking place on N. Chestnut Hill Road.

Mr. Lakshminarayanan, the RWA's Vice President of Engineering and Environmental Services, provided an update on the collaboration between the RWA's Police Captain and the New Haven City Police athletic leagues to provide information on a program for inner city children this summer.

Mr. Horbal commented on three water main breaks in the Town of Seymour in the past month. He noted that the breaks were Aquarian water mains. Mr. Horbal and members of RWA will be meeting with Town officials next month to discuss this matter and other issues.

Chair Betkoski reviewed committee member attendance at the next Authority meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

At 6:22 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mr. Oslander, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman