



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION  
100 CAMBRIDGE STREET, BOSTON MA 02114

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**Meeting Minutes for April 14, 2022**

Meeting conducted remotely via Zoom meeting platform, 1:00 p.m.

*Minutes approved July 14, 2022*

**Members in Attendance:**

Vandana Rao	Designee, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Linda Balzotti	Designee, Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)
Kathleen Baskin	Designee, Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP)
Anne Carroll	Designee, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
Todd Richards	Designee, Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
Hotze Wijnja	Designee, Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR)
Thomas Cambareri	Public Member
Vincent Ragucci	Public Member
Kenneth Weismantel	Public Member
Samantha Woods	Public Member

**Members Absent**

Todd Callaghan	Designee, Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM)
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**Others in Attendance:**

Andreae Downs	WSCAC
Becca George	DHCD
David Roman	CEI
Duane LeVangie	MassDEP
Gerald Clarke	Dover Board of Health
Greg Woods	Auburn Water District
Jen D'Urso	MassDEP
Jennifer Pederson	Massachusetts Water Works Association
John Scannell	DCR, Division of Water Supply Protection
Jonathan Gervais	City of Worcester
Kara Sliwoski	DCR/OWR
Kate Bentsen	DFG/DER
Katie Ronan	MWRA
Lexi Dewey	WSCAC
Marilyn McCrory	DCR/OWR
Michelle Craddock	MassDEP
Read Porter	EEA
Rebecca Weidman	MWRA
Sara Cohen	DCR/OWR
Sarah Bower	Mass Rivers Alliance
Thomas Trainor	Sherborn Groundwater Protection Committee
Tim Stagnitta	Rhode Island Water Resources Board
Vanessa Curran	DCR/OWR
Viki Zoltay	DCR/OWR

Rao called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

**Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Introductions**

Rao introduced herself and welcomed attendees. A roll call of members in attendance was taken by McCrory. Rao announced that the meeting was being recorded and all votes would be taken by roll call. She invited those who wish to speak during the meeting to indicate this in the chat.

**Agenda Item #2: Executive Director's Report**

Rao announced that March 22 was World Water Day; similar to Fix-A-Leak Week, EEA posted World Water Day content on Twitter to highlight the work done across the state to conserve water resources. The posts also directed viewers to the online Water Conservation Toolkit - <https://www.mass.gov/guides/water-conservation-toolkit-site-map>. Rao encouraged all to engage with the Twitter posts as the message is relevant though the day has passed. Through the year, EEA will continue to use resources on WRC website to share with the public via social media.

Rao announced that another USGS grant was received from the National Groundwater Monitoring Network. In 2016, a USGS grant was received to replace approximately 31 old groundwater wells. A few years ago, another USGS grant was received to upgrade 32 groundwater monitoring wells. They recently received a grant, approximately \$75,000, to replace aging groundwater monitoring equipment. WRC staff has been successful in getting funding from these grants over the last five years – approximately \$350,000 from the federal government, plus the state match brings the total to over \$550,000 to modernize the monitoring network. Rao thanked Zoltay for being the lead on developing the proposals and managing the groundwater monitoring projects with USGS and the state geologist, Steve Mabee; Rao also thanked Sliwoski for assisting Zoltay with the recent grant application.

Rao noted that a letter from Foxborough was included in the meeting packet; Foxborough has withdrawn their request for changes to their monitoring plan and indicated they want to continue monitoring for 3 years for the new well they're installing. Foxborough also provided further comments and supporting documentation to help clarify what they think are misunderstandings. All documents received are currently being reviewed by WRC staff. Rao mentioned there are different aspects to their original request and review of ongoing conditions on the ground; WRC staff are carefully thinking through where Foxborough stand on existing, old, and new conditions (from previous draft staff recommendations) and monitoring. Rao mentioned staff will be back with updates at a future meeting and opened the meeting for commissioners to comment or make announcements.

Weismantel commented that he hoped Foxborough decided not to ask for the modification because they thought WRC was asking too much in return for the change. He said that he worried a simple request turned to something that was asking a lot in return. He recalled six months ago, Foxborough was not meeting their conservation goals in their Interbasin Transfer permit; maybe we should be doing something to help them so their trend, particularly unaccounted-for water (UAW), doesn't continue to worsen. He also commented that he expects to see a lot more interbasin transfers in the near future, Hopkinton has one on their town meeting warrant because of PFAS; he has heard that based on preliminary budget numbers, the affordable way is to request an interbasin transfer.

Rao thanked Weismantel and noted that conversations with Foxborough will continue and if they cannot meet the conditions from the last two decisions the Commission has made, those will need to be addressed. Rao inquired with LeVangie to confirm that Foxborough received a grant from DEP to conduct an M36 audit. LeVangie deferred the question to Jen D'Urso and added that he heard from Foxborough recently that they found a leak of over 700,000 gallons per day, which will shortly be reflected in and decrease their UAW. D'Urso commented that Foxborough applied for and received an M36 audit grant in 2020 and 2022, so they're in process of the second one which will show changes over time. Rao noted that applying for an audit grant was part of WRC recommendations to Foxborough.

Rao also noted that PFAS being a reason for more interbasin transfers is something the staff has been thinking about as well, as it could be a pathway for a community if the cost of treating PFAS is too high or the situation is too complicated. She mentioned that DEP has been providing assistance to municipal water suppliers to address PFAS, for treatment technology, etc. Both ARPA 1 and 2 infrastructure bills have money dedicated to PFAS. Rao let Baskin comment further on DEP's assistance to communities with PFAS. Baskin said that what DEP has previously provided funding in 2019 and 2020 when they allocated \$8.4 million for monitoring of public water systems and some private wells, as well as for design, grants, and remediation of PFAS in drinking water. Over \$250 million in funding has come from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) for PFAS projects, mostly in construction loans, which qualify for 0% interest. There was also \$2 million for temporary water supply grants, for those communities that exceeded the PFAS MCL without a readily available alternative. The funds were used to give rebates for providing bottled water or provide a vending unit at the treatment facility and allow for public access of it; this allowed communities to provide safe water while dealing with a crisis. Looking forward, there are the ARPA funds (legislature has allocated \$100 million for water and sewer, \$13 million was earmarked, 87 million was put into the SRF). The funds are being put into two priority areas as identified by the governor: PFAS treatment in water supplies and remediation of combined sewer overflows. The money will be distributed through 2021 and 2022 Intended Use Plan of the SRF. Baskin added that there is funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (or Bipartisan Infrastructure Law), which they are expecting over a trillion dollars over a five-year period. The first amount has come into the SRF at \$190 million, which is for general projects, emerging contaminants, and removal of lead from drinking water; these funds are also being used in the Intended Use Plan. Rao thanked Baskin and suggested that DEP present a summary to WRC in the future. Baskin agreed and suggested having Maria Pinaud, State Revolving Fund Director, present as well. Rao asked if anyone had questions.

Cambareri inquired about the PFAS Interagency Task Force and their year-end report, he noted that it was in internal review for their members earlier this year but was looking to see it once released. Baskin replied that they anticipate the report to be out soon and added it would be a great presentation for WRC also. Rao thanked them both. Pederson added that the PFAS Interagency Task Force has a meeting for next Wednesday (4/20) which will be broadcast on the legislature's website, where the public can hear what the recommendations are, and the report will be finalized.

Pederson added that of the ARPA money Baskin mentioned, \$67 million went to projects that were on the 2021 Intended Use Plan, so that money is not available, but the remaining \$20 million is designated for combined sewer overflow projects. Overall, not a lot of money available as it went to projects approved on the SRF. She noted that the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is heavily

targeted towards disadvantaged communities, and many communities with PFAS issues are not considered disadvantaged; regardless, this is still a loan that needs to be paid back. Ultimately, there isn't free money out there for the water systems; there are hundreds of millions of dollars of need out there without enough funding to cover it. Pederson agreed with Weismantel's comment about seeing an increase in IBT requests and noted that MWRA's advisory board had an agenda item about waiving/reducing connection fee for those looking to tie in. Baskin noted Pederson's points were great, and added other challenges will be coming (i.e., labor, supply chain, etc.) which have are being discussed at DEP. Rao thanked them both and added there is never enough money for work on existing infrastructure, let alone emerging challenges. Rao added that efforts are ongoing to secure more funding for communities.

Rao inquired if anyone had any Earth week/month events anyone wanted to share, to which there were none.

**Agenda Item #3: Update: Hydrologic Conditions**

Rao introduced Zoltay of DCR to provide an update on hydrologic conditions for March 2022. Zoltay reported that March temperatures were above normal, with the southeast and northwest areas of the state having significantly higher temperatures than normal. Precipitation was varied through the month, with normal ranges across the western and central portions of the state and some below normal stations on the eastern third of the state. Zoltay noted that though there are some departures from normal, they do not all translate into an index severity level. Streamflow conditions were wetter further west, the values are the median value of the month. Looking at the time series, the first half of March is good but then more dry times appear through the beginning of April, which is something to watch moving forward. Groundwater values were varied, but in the above-normal to normal range, with a few below normal groundwater wells in the eastern portion of the state.

Cambareri noted that the groundwater well in Wellfleet has been underperforming compared to others, and knew it was a replacement well. Zoltay replied that it has been looked at, as replacement wells should respond the same as those they have replaced. Zoltay looked at precipitation map in relation to this, but there was no nearby precipitation station reporting. Cambareri suggesting have the Cape Cod Commission going to the Wellfleet location to manually measure the well, as it is a real-time location.

The Islands region did trip an Index Severity Level 1 for groundwater because of Nantucket wells. Lakes and impoundments were mostly normal to above normal in all regions; Quabbin began spilling on February 12 and continues to do so over the lower spillway. KBDI and crop moisture will start being reported next month. There was no snow on the ground at the end of the month, but the departure for the month had a wide range of values across the state. Precipitation and temperatures are forecasted to both be above normal for April, which could balance each other out. April through June shows an above normal chance of higher temperatures, but equal chance of normal precipitation. The monthly and seasonal drought outlook shows no signal for drought development.

Rao thanked Zoltay, commented it would be great to avoid a drought this year and asked if there were any questions. Cambareri commented that water levels near him were recovering and there was plenty of water for the beginning herring runs.

**Agenda Item #4: Vote: Staff Recommendation on the Auburn Water District's Interbasin Transfer Act Application to Purchase Water from the City of Worcester**

Rao stated Commissioners have seen previous presentations about this project and today a final vote is sought. Rao introduced Curran to review the project specifics and updates since the last presentation. Curran stated this was a review of the Auburn Water District's proposal under the Interbasin Transfer Act (ITA) to purchase water from the City of Worcester and would be seeking a vote on the final staff recommendation. She said the Auburn Water District's system is mainly in the Blackstone River basin, which consists of 12 groundwater wells and there are some concerns of contamination (i.e., deicing materials, any fuel spills, etc.) as the wells are located near major roadways. The District has found they need a supplemental source of water during high demand periods or if any of their sources are offline. The District is proposing to purchase water from the City of Worcester, which has its sources in the Nashua and Blackstone River basins, at a maximum of 0.54 million gallons per day. However, as some of Worcester's sources are in the Blackstone River basin and the Auburn Water District is also, only the sources of water from the Nashua River basin are subject to the ITA, which is 0.36 million gallons per day. The draft staff recommendation was presented to the WRC at the February 10, 2022 meeting; a public hearing was held via Zoom on March 2, 2022. Comments were received after the public hearing from the Massachusetts Water Works Association and Phil Guerin, Director of Water and Sewer Operations for the City of Worcester. The written comments and the staff responses were sent out with this month's meeting email. Based on all comments received from the meeting, hearing and during the comment period, wording has been clarified pertaining to the rate structure which was under criterion 3 (water conservation); information regarding the public hearings and when they were held has been provided in the final staff recommendation; and a few minor changes made for consistency. Curran reviewed the project timeline and reminded that a vote would be taken today on the final staff recommendation, which has a deadline of May 1.

**Discussion:**

Rao opened the floor for Commissioner questions or discussion, of which there was none. Rao noted that she was surprised and disappointed by the tone of Guerin's comment letter. Staff has not asked Worcester or Auburn to include or make any changes that are unreasonable or outside the authority of the WRC under the ITA. She noted that staff always reach out to the communities before a MEPA filing takes place and assist as needed so the applicant understands the requirements well to provide the information needed in their application.

Weismantel asked about quarterly billing on page 10 of the staff recommendation, he thought he remembered they had pushed monthly billing during Burlington's recommendation process. He thinks quarterly billing is better but wants to know if there was a change in thought or if he's incorrectly remembering. Cohen answered she could look back to confirm, but she recalls Burlington being on a 2x/year schedule and staff working with them to go to quarterly. Rao added that quarterly is in the Water Conservation Standards, though more often would be better but understands that it can be challenging. Cohen added that monthly billing is not a Performance Standard.

Richards commented that he had not previously seen the letter from Worcester but has since found it.

Woods asked if downstream release is a condition of the recommendation, as Guerin's letter commented about it. Rao replied that it is not. Woods asked what his concern was then. Rao

replied that the recommendation doesn't even include releases as a possibility and that the draft staff recommendation didn't have any language on that either. Rao added that he mentioned it at the hearing as well and that it is not part of the conditions of this application. Woods asked why streamflow releases are not included and if that is because ITA doesn't allow you to require streamflow releases. Rao replied that ITA deals with how conditions have changed and if this transfer is making cumulative conditions worse in any way. Only one past decision has included streamflow release, which the applicant offered. In this case, there is currently no infrastructure for downstream releases. Woods asked if there was a way to make that happen and Rao replied not in this case. Curran noted that it would need a regulation change. Downstream releases are often sought through various other agencies. Carroll noted that it may require a change of the Act, but that when regulations were revised, they tried to put language in Insignificance to emphasize that it would be looked upon favorably if an applicant was able to do a downstream release. Carroll added though restoration is a mission of the agencies, it is not part of the Act as much as everyone would like it to be. Rao added that we can certainly include it in discussions during the next regulation revision. Downstream release is something staff can encourage communities to do during the application process, but it is not required like other criteria. Woods asked when the next regulation review is. Rao replied they were updated last in 2019, which was the first update since their passing in 1986 and hopefully it won't be that long again, but staff keep ongoing notes on items for potential revision next time. Downstream release will be placed on the list. Woods noted that its disappointing that we aren't thinking ahead to make things better for the environment in a changing climate.

Richards reminded that when defining "release," all facilities have the ability to release water via a spill way, and the difference is between an active pumped release or spilling over a spillway, which depends on infrastructure. He thanked David Roman for helping to understand the system better; specific to this request there was no large difference in streamflow because of the 0.54 million gallons per day.

Cohen confirmed the discussion with Burlington was to move them to quarterly billing, though there were some bills that, because of a very low Residential Gallons Per Capita Days (RGPCD), billed semi-annually. The rate and billing performance standards proposal was brought to WRC after that discussion. For Auburn, monthly billing was discussed to add value to finding leaks, however they are already receiving monthly reports to do so and due to staffing and structure, monthly billing is not feasible for Auburn.

Rao invited a motion to approve the Auburn Water District's request under the Interbasin Transfer Act to purchase water from the City of Worcester, as read by McCrory. Woods asked if it is possible to abstain on voting if you disagree. Rao confirmed and said she could also vote no.

V O T E	<p>A motion was made by Weismantel with a second by Balzotti to approve the Auburn Water District's request under the Interbasin Transfer Act to purchase water from the City of Worcester.</p> <p>The roll-call vote to approve was nine in favor and one opposed (Woods). Motion carried.</p>
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**Agenda Item #5: Presentation: Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration**

Rao introduced Michelle Craddock, Natural Resource Damages Program Coordinator at DEP and invited her to present. Craddock stated that the Natural Resource Damage (NRD) Assessment and Restoration program is the process to determine whether public natural resources have been

injured, destroyed or lost from the release of hazardous substances into the environment and then identify actions to restore the resources to replace the services that were lost from damage. Presentation slides can be accessed at: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/natural-resource-damage-assessment-and-restoration/download>

Highlights include:

- Federal, state and tribal agencies are authorized to act on behalf of the public as NRD Trustees
- For Massachusetts, the EEA Secretary is the state's trustee, though the program was delegated to DEP years ago, who work closely with the Secretary's staff
- It is important to remember that federal trustees can also be responsible parties of releases of hazardous material
- Various trustees can have jurisdiction over a claim; councils are formed with appropriate membership when this happens
- The Commonwealth is the only trustee over groundwater
- Various state and federal laws authorize the NRD Trustees to recover damages to compensate the public; the ones Craddock mentioned are shown on her slides
- NRD program can also cover Natural Resource Services, which are the physical and biological functions performed by the resource
- Multiple resources can be impacted at once, i.e., a surface water spill impacts the wildlife, the surface water, and the sediment
- The cleanup of a spill and the NRD assessment and restoration portions of a project are different, though they can happen simultaneously. The cleanup determines the contamination extent and the risks to public health and the environment, while the assessment and restoration determines the injury to the natural resources, collects damages from the liable parties and takes action to restore the natural resources to compensate the public for injuries. Sometimes the cleanup can cause additional damages to a resource.
- NRD Assessment and Restoration process: Pre-assessment determines whether there may be a successful NRD claim. If yes, it moves on to assessment, which determines injury and quantifies it, and determines damages value. Habitat equivalency analysis is used to determine the cost of replacing the habitat that has been lost. Resource equivalency analysis is used for specific impacts to a species, or groundwater and replacing that lost resource. Settlement meeting presents the injuries and damages costs to the liable parties, which has negotiations between parties before agreed upon. Funds are collected and restoration planning and implementation can occur. The restoration planning process is in the regulations and includes public participation, especially for solicitation of restoration ideas. A draft restoration plan is also provided for public comment before the restoration plan is finalized.
- Grant opportunities that allow NRD funds to be used for match are also often sought to complete restorations, when possible.
- Since 1992, the Commonwealth has settled over 20 claims for over \$70 million. The amount varies based on injury and extent. Many are located at Superfund sites.
- Restoration highlights: Bouchard B-120 oil spill in 2003 (98,000 gallons of oil into coastal waters of MA and RI) had funds specifically designated for each type of impact (i.e., shellfish, loons, etc.), and Blackburn & Union site to restore the Traphole Brook watershed.

- NRD is actively working on regulations to standardize methods for small to medium surface water oil spills.
- NRD damages are not collected on all spills, typically the larger ones are pursued but the program would like to collect damages for more spills, which is why they have developed a standardized method for small/medium spills.

Discussion:

Carroll asked if the number of small to medium surface water spills shown on Craddock's map was accurately reported, which Craddock thinks it is. Rao asked about where one reports, who collects the data, and how someone knows they need to do this for a small spill. Craddock said its reported to DEP Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup and most entities working with fuel/oil are aware of they need to report any spills.

Rao thanked Craddock and asked who manages the NRD projects, does NRD mostly give the money to other agencies or do they also actively manage them? Craddock replied that NRD tries to partner with organizations that are technically capable to oversee the projects, though the Trustee Council is also very involved and often reaches out to local agency experts.

Wijnja asked if the NRD program covers other damages cases, such as those from development, infrastructure, and similar. Craddock explained that no, NRD's efforts are tied to the regulations, which only cover impacts from hazardous material and/or fuel release but acknowledged that there are certainly impacts from other sources.

Woods asked about if the Tronox NRD assessment was available for review, as it is within her watershed. Craddock noted she is not sure it is publicly available as the assessments are done for legal negotiation purposes, so they are not released in detail.

Rao thanked Craddock again for the presentation.

**Agenda Item #6: Presentation: 2015-2020 Massachusetts Public Water Supply Use Trends**

Rao noted that public water supply use data has been asked for at prior meetings, and DEP has presented for years on what the water use trends are across the state. Rao invited Baskin to comment. Baskin introduced Duane LeVangie, DEP Water Management Program Chief, who worked with Worcester Polytechnical Institute students to assess drinking water demand during the COVID-19 period and continues to review data annually.

Baskin departed at 3:00 pm.

LeVangie noted that he presented last year on the 2020 water use impacted by COVID lockdowns, so there may be duplicate information, but this presentation will be about the annual review of the data. He added that Jen D'Urso, also of DEP Water Management Program, was in attendance to answer questions as she is the primary reviewer of the data. Presentation slides can be accessed at: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2015-2020-massachusetts-public-water-supply-use-trends/download>

Highlights include:

- General Annual Statistical Reports (ASR) review process overview



- It is a federal requirement to file an ASR, due date varies each year but are generally in March or April
- D'Urso reviews ASRs and tracks any adjustments/supplemental info that may be needed
- About 50% of public water systems in 2019 received a letter from DEP asking for further information, of which approximately 30% responded
- Line/hydrant flushing and firefighting are not metered water uses but still needs to be documented for Confidently Estimated Municipal Use (CEMU) values
- Water use from 2015-2020 has been trending downwards, with droughts experienced in 2016 and 2020
- 2017 public water use is the highest year during the 2015-2020 period. The drought from 2016 continued into the early part of the year but not the warmer months, LeVangie noted so he isn't sure why 2017 was the peak year
- Sectoral water use change shows the water uses that are metered. CEMU and UAW are not metered
- Residential water use is the largest use for nearly every municipality in Massachusetts, which increased slightly above normal during COVID as more people were home
- Large distribution of average RGPCDs by public water system, with most in the 51-65 RGPCD range
- Notable decreases in 2020 water use could be related to one business closing in a small water system
- COVID study illustrated that overall water use went down but residential water use went up, and that people went to the Cape and Islands to stay and work remotely from there as water use on the Cape increased during 2020
- Unable to draw any conclusions about why some areas may stay high in water use versus others, other than potentially Cape Cod
- Data for RGPCD and UAW is publicly available on DEP's website
- Not all ASRs reviewed are permitted systems, i.e., some are MWRA systems
- M36 Audit is required of WMA permitted public water supplies that are exceeding 10% for 2 out of 3 years. This audit is based on the methodology developed by American Water Works Association

Discussion:

Rao noted it was surprising to have a public water system as low as 24-25 RGPCD, which LeVangie agreed with and said it is usually the same city or two.

Downs asked if the 10-million-gallon decrease year-over-year or per day. LeVangie replied that it was 10-million-gallons per day that public water use was down in 2020.

Rao asked LeVangie to confirm that the red municipalities on the 'Change of Residential Gallons per Capita Day (RGPCD)' map were the ones that saw a decrease in water use during 2020, which he did confirm. The south shore red municipality is Brockton, and the north shore red municipality is Peabody. Curran asked if Nahant was also in red, which LeVangie confirmed.

Rao thanked LeVangie and read through comments left in the chat. Weismantel had a comment on RGPCD data vs economic data of towns; Rao believes it was a comment on one of the slides shown. Clarke commented that presumably there is no way to determine water usage in communities with private wells as a predominant source; Rao confirmed that there is no way for

private well owners to report, as many may not even have a meter and LeVangie confirmed. Carroll commented kudos to Hopkinton; Rao noted it was a town utilizing funding to conduct an M36. Carroll asked Weismantel to comment on his thoughts about RGPCD data. Weismantel inquired if RGPCD data had be correlated to specific economic data (i.e., income, property value) as it would be interesting, and a potential research opportunity for a college student.

Weismantel is interested to know if water use is less in disadvantaged communities versus expensive suburbs. LeVangie noted they tried to look into that, but not at length; COVID related water use appeared to impact disadvantaged and wealthy communities similarly. LeVangie added that the high RGPCD in his slides was Weston, which is normal, and noted the economic correlation would be interesting to learn, though it wouldn't be perfect given some wealthy communities don't have lawns, etc. Weismantel added that it may illustrate using economic incentives to promote conservation and lower water use is limited because residents in communities like Weston will likely pay whatever the rate is regardless. LeVangie noted they have some water systems in which people continue to water their lawns while they pay their fines and high water use bills. Weismantel asked how the five most improved water systems achieved their improvements. LeVangie replied that meters are the primary driver for the issues and asked D'Urso to comment; she said the age of system infrastructure can play a role. Weismantel asked if meters are such a large part of reducing UAW, should WRC design programs to make it easier for water suppliers to replace meters, perhaps through a grant program. He added that they should target systems to improve 5-10% where that is a significant impact, but he's glad suppliers are using the M36 audit, specifically from Acton's past WRC presentation. LeVangie noted they are a community doing well on these things.

McCrary inquired about the cause of the 2020 water use decrease in the three communities highlighted on LeVangie's slides. LeVangie replied that he does not know as there isn't consistency between each one to have a possible explanation, and likewise he isn't sure why the increased communities (other than Sandwich) happened, though he suspects the suburb communities is from those people not commuting to their nearby places of work.

Clarke commented he hoped that in municipal vulnerability and conservation the state would consider working in cooperation with communities that are predominantly or all private wells to conduct a sampling project to understand the vulnerability compared to those with public water supplies. Rao noted she assumes this is in terms of RGPCD.

Richards departed at 3:36 pm.

Woods asked if the websites listed have submitted ASRs by towns, if someone wanted the data or do they need to reach out to DEP. LeVangie replied that ASRs are not available online, but are available upon request. Woods noted she remembers a time when it was available online. LeVangie said he does not recall and apologized.

Clarke commented in regard to the expensive homes and potential economic incentive in Weston, he has experienced in Dover that economic motivation fails.

Pederson commented that wealthy property owners can likely afford a private well instead of irrigating from the public water supply, which may skew the use. She noted they'd welcome grant programs to fund meter or pipe replacement; in looking at the Intended Use Plan, it is a

competitive loan program so the projects with the highest public health benefit score higher, yet some water main and meter replacement projects simply don't score high enough to get a loan. She noted when the legislature passed ARPA, Massachusetts Water Works Association hoped it would be an open solicitation for people to jump in with projects and have a chance, which is not how it happened. Weismantel commented maybe the scoring on the loan program needs to be changed. Rao added that these are conversations to continue with DEP, and possibly target the systems with the highest percentage of UAW, and of those systems, how many can conduct or be incentivized to conduct an M36. LeVangie reiterated that age of infrastructure is often the driver for the UAW and replacing it in a city can be difficult. He added he can share who the high UAW or high RGPCD systems are and noted those values are published on DEP's website, as well as if they have done an M36 or are in process. Rao commented that they should strategize on how to engage with these higher communities to prioritize or find funding for at the state level. LeVangie added that as many are cities, they are not permitted, and their use has gone down. Rao said it must still cost the cities a lot when it doesn't get to their end user. LeVangie agreed and said their customer meters may also not be reading properly so the water isn't lost but the revenue is not recovered; and if this is a disadvantaged area, the customer may end up having to pay more.

D'Urso added that the first 3-4 years of the M36 program targeted public systems with high UAW amounts; to date, no one has been turned away and DEP has capacity to do more audits each year. She noted that many high UAW systems are MWRA communities or registered-only customers, so it's less of an issue for them. Rao noted that there is less of an incentive for a system who is not required to do an audit, though the question is how to provide the right atmosphere, structure, incentives, technical assistance, and funding to help them. Rao understands the application process can even be challenging, time and/or labor wise.

Balzotti departed at 3:45 pm.

Woods inquired about looking at the systems with high RGPCD and encouraging further water conservation. Rao confirmed, and said the new plumbing code (from the new climate bill to increase efficiency on fixtures and appliances, presented a few months ago) will automatically help to reduce RGPCD over time.

Pederson said it is increasingly difficult to run a water supply these days, with less staff and less people attracted to join; the customer's behavior determines the challenges and staff alone cannot control that. She noted if the state wants to have a greater public outreach campaign, that is great, but the water systems don't have the resources to be the water police on top of protecting public health, changing out lead service lines, and their normal duties. Rao agreed that there are real constraints, which need assistance so communities can move forward.

Cambareri thanked LeVangie and D'Urso for the presentation and COVID comparisons for feedback on metrics and added that some of the points could perhaps be added to the annual report or similar. He said seeing an annual report of these results would be great. LeVangie said he's happy to do so, as he's interested to see the 2021 results with the summer rainfall for comparison to 2020. LeVangie added the ASR review process takes time as they want to give suppliers time to respond to information requests.

Rao reminded all that a copy of LeVangie's presentation will be provided on the WRC website after the meeting and thanked LeVangie and D'Urso again for their work.

Rao asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

V O T E	A motion was made by Weismantel with a second by LeVangie to adjourn the meeting. Rao asked members to raise their hands to vote, which was unanimous.
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Meeting adjourned, 3:52 pm.

**Documents or Exhibits Used at Meeting:**

1. Auburn Water Department ITA Staff Recommendation
  - a. Redline copy
  - b. Clean copy
  - c. Public comments received
  - d. Response to public comments
2. Correspondence from Foxborough regarding the 2019 request to reduce long-term monitoring under the Witch Pond Wells ITA Decision
  - a. Request withdrawal letter
  - b. Additional information
3. Interbasin Transfer Act project status report, April 6, 2022
4. Hydrologic Conditions in Massachusetts, April 2022 (available at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/monthly-hydrologic-conditions>)

*Compiled by: kms*

*Agendas, minutes, and other documents are available on the web site of the Water Resources Commission at <https://www.mass.gov/water-resources-commission-meetings>. All other meeting documents are available by request to WRC staff at 251 Causeway Street, 8<sup>th</sup> floor, Boston, MA 02114.*