

Otsego County Water Quality Coordinating Committee Minutes
967 County Highway 33, Cooperstown, NY 13326
(607) 547-8337, ext. 4

Wednesday, January 27, 2016

Present:

Matt Albright, Biological Field Station
Holly Waterfield, Biological Field Station
Erica Cruden, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Darla Youngs, Otsego County Conservation Association
Karen Sullivan, Otsego County Planning Department
Mike Coryat, Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District
Marcie Foster, Otsego Land Trust
Erik Miller, Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. by Vice-facilitator Holly Waterfield.

1. TREASURER'S REPORT

- M. Coryat passed around the report provided by Treasurer Blanche Hurlbutt.
- E. Miller asked if an invoice had been sent to STERPDB; D. Youngs said she would check.
- In response to an inquiry, it was confirmed that membership dollars go to undesignated funds unless otherwise requested.
- It was agreed that a report of member giving for the past several years would be helpful (names and amounts). Waterfield and/or Youngs will contact Hurlbutt to request a breakdown of membership dues received.
- Waterfield noted that, according to the Treasurer's Report, there are funds remaining for mini-grants and we can potentially offer the mini-grant program again this year.

2. REVIEW MINUTES

- The minutes from the June 3, 2015 and September 2, 2015 meetings were distributed and reviewed.
- Motion to approve the minutes: E. Miller. Second: M. Albright. Minutes approved.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Officer Duties

- The duties of all officers as per the bylaws were reviewed.
- The need to keep specific track of WQCC's financial decisions and to provide more in-depth reports on fund allocations was discussed.
- It was agreed that someone should touch base with Treasurer Hurlbutt more often in order to better understand WQCC income and expenditures.
- Discussion followed regarding the possible inclusion of accounting oversight into the Vice-facilitator's responsibilities.
- A motion to fold accounting oversight into the Vice-Facilitator's responsibilities in order to decrease any burden on Treasurer Hurlbutt and to place the onus on the committee to better track income and allocations was made by M. Foster. Second: M. Albright. Motion passed.

B. Nomination of Officers

- Facilitator: Holly Waterfield; Vice-facilitator: Marcie Foster; Secretary: Darla Youngs.

C. Election of Officers

- As there were no additional nominations, the slate of officers was voted on and approved.

D. Potential New Member Organization and Other Interested Parties

- D. Youngs reported on the interest of the Crumhorn Lake Association and its president, Jim May, in WQCC activities.
- Kevin Grady has also expressed an interest in participating in WQCC when he is in town.
- M. Foster remarked that it is incumbent upon all active WQCC member group representatives to reach out to member organizations that are not participating on a regular basis.
- E. Miller asked if alternate meeting sites had been discussed. The Richfield Springs library and community center were offered as possible meeting locations.
- It was agreed that WQCC had dropped the ball in 2015, having failed to meet and/or schedule presentations on a regular basis.
- The possibility of changing locations for topic meetings was also discussed.

E. Otsego Lakes Festival 2016

- H. Waterfield reminded the group that this is a festival year.
- As such, a decision needs to be made as to whether or not to hold the event this year and, if so, to form an organizing committee.
- The OLF is typically held on the second Saturday in July in Lakefront Park.
- The past two or three festivals have been organized almost exclusively by Waterfield and D. Youngs. New hands are needed to plan the event this year.
- Parking issues were discussed. K. Sullivan said the County now coordinates the running of the Cooperstown trolley system and could perhaps help on that end.
- M. Foster suggested tying the OLF in with other events, e.g. the Race the Lake marathon. Though this event is planned for a different weekend, she said, it may be an opportunity to bring in more partners and more attendees.
- D. Youngs said she would reach out to contacts at the Clark Sports Center to discuss possible collaboration between Race the Lake and the OLF.
- M. Albright asked if there was a way to piggyback with the blueway to incorporate both Canadarago and Otsego lakes.
- A description of duties to organize the OLF and discussion followed.
- There was a strong desire among those present to hold the event in 2016.
- Discussion included: music, kids' activities, canoe/kayak/paddle boat rentals and demos, food vendors, bike rentals, presentations on alternative septic systems and by Hickling fish farm, possible launching and/or parking at Brookwood Point, Ronny Raindrop©, fliers on the trolley the day of the event, etc.
- The decision was made to hold the event. M. Coryat, M. Foster, and K. Sullivan volunteered to join H. Waterfield and D. Youngs on the planning committee.
- H. Waterfield will contact Eric Murdock re: alternative septic systems.
- Other possible additions/attractions were: something to educate kids, balloon sculpture (K. Sullivan knows someone), SUNY Delhi ice sculpture, preference for two musical acts, partnering with the Otsego Lake Association and/or local historical societies for an historical component, lake history photo display (D. Youngs will talk to Tom Heitz), a fishing derby and/or tournament, vendor demonstrations, pie-eating contest, *Chief Uncas* boat tours, coordination with the *Glimmerglass Queen*, collaboration with Trout Unlimited, etc.

F. 2016 Topic Meeting Schedule

- It was agreed to stick with the last Wednesday of each month for topic meetings and business meetings.
- For now, we will retain the format of two topic meetings and one business meeting quarterly.
- H. Waterfield said help is needed in identifying and recruiting presenters.
- Kiyoko Yakota is scheduled to present on microplastics on February 24.

- E. Miller asked if it would be possible/feasible to piggyback some of the topic meetings with other events and/or workshops.
- Partnering with the Planning Department at a different time slot was suggested. March 22 is this year's first Planning Department workshop.
- Some topics and/or partnerships that "all tie back to water" were discussed: ditching and salting trainings, salt storage, NYSERDA energy program, berm removal, vernal pools, SWCD and NRCS programs, private pond management, field trip to Pine Lake, etc.
- If no presentation can be arranged, topic meetings to be replaced by business meetings.

4. Sub-Committee Reports

- Update of "A Plan for the Management of the Otsego Lake Watershed" is currently on hold, pending the State of the Lake Report.

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Biological Field Station

- M. Albright said they are working on reports during the off-season.
- There were nearly 500 people at the recent NALMS conference in Cooperstown.
- The BFS is working with the Village of Cooperstown on water usage to try to XXX a zebra mussel-free system, so far not with a lot of luck, and on chemical alternatives to potassium permanganate.
- BFS cleaned lines with vinegar – none was released into the lake.
- The level of doses of potassium permanganate used by the Village is not nearly effective enough.
- BFS is working with the Village treatment plant to strip phosphorous out.
- Two new master's theses on lake management (Cazenovia Lake and Grass Lake) are available on the BFS website.
- Dan Stich is the new fisheries ecologist working at the BFS two days a week.

B. Department of Environmental Conservation

- E. Cruden reported that there was a Water Quality Improvement Program deadline coming up.
- DEC is working with the Town of Butternuts on salt storage.
- Canadarago Lake Improvement Association is considering whether to resubmit an engineering planning grant application re: sewerage of the lake.
- Cruden said she could possibly give a presentation on the new regulations affecting wine and brewery operations. The new permit is intended to help them, she said. The general permit has been fine-tuned in order to ensure septic systems can handle waste and high BOD.

C. Otsego County Conservation Association

- D. Youngs said she and Jeff O'Handley are working with the Otsego Lake Association and Canadarago Lake Association on grant submissions to the New York Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention Grant program.
- The AIS grants will seek funding for boat decontamination stations and steward programs for Otsego and Canadarago lakes.
- Youngs said OCCA is also hoping to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding with the Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District to take the lead role in the Otsego County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan update process.

D. Otsego County Planning Department

- K. Sullivan said the County had recently hosted a DEC Flood Map meeting on flood insurance.
- FEMA is broke and flood insurance is going to rise, she said. People will see the impact over the next five years.

- Re: the AFPP update, Sullivan said she is confident SWCD and the County will move forward with OCCA.
 - The Planning Department, OCCA, SWCD, Casella and Cornell are partnering on this year's first ag plastics recycling collection on March XX.
 - A SUNY Oneonta intern is working on Ag District 2 updates.
 - The County is waiting on 911 mapping updates.
 - Sullivan announced that there is a County planning position open as Kelly Byrnes has left the Planning Department to go back to school.
- E. Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District
- M. Coryat said SWCD has certified at least one person from four Otsego County highway departments in Emergency Stream Intervention training. They are hoping to host trainings again this summer.
 - SWCD assisted on four stream projects this past year and three Water Quality Improvement Programs stream projects.
 - There is currently a big push for riparian buffer plantings by the Upper Susquehanna Coalition, Coryat said. He asked that people interested in buffers be forwarded to SWCD.
 - FSA's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program has been opened up to non-farmers.
 - Coryat said there are 14 CREP contracts lined up between FSA and NRCS for buffers.
 - SWCD is working on a proposal to the USC to include the Upper Butternut Watershed in an upcoming study of seven watersheds. It is hoped that the discovery of hellbenders in the watershed will be impetus to include the Upper Butternut.
 - Coryat said he planned to coordinate with municipalities for a letter of support for trainings as part of the watershed study.
 - If the Upper Butternut Watershed is selected by USC as part of the study, SWCD hopes to use interns for field work.
 - M. Albright said this might be an opportunity to use the BFS drone and to demonstrate its value as a tool for such projects.
 - SWCD is currently also prepping for ag non-point source grants.
- F. Otsego Land Trust
- M. Foster had to leave at 2:15 for a prior engagement.
- G. Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board
- E. Miller said STERPDB is working with 10 municipalities.
 - They are assisting Broome County with MS4 Communities reporting.
 - Miller said he would love to see more environmental emphasis in planning at the city level.
 - Of other area WQCC groups, Miller said STERPDB attends the Chenango County WQCC meeting twice a year, participates in the Delaware County WQCC department head meeting. Broome and Tioga counties hold joint WQCC meetings.
 - Miller described the Otsego County WQCC as "probably the most active – the best bang for the buck."
 - Miller said STERPDB is in the process of hiring a new planner and two energy specialists in conjunction with a NYSERDA community partnership program.
 - STERPDB now has a satellite office in downtown Oneonta.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

NOT PRESENT: Arnold Lake Association; Canadarago Lake Improvement Association; Cooperstown Village Water Committee; Cornell Cooperative Extension; Dave Brandt Chapter of Trout Unlimited; Goodyear Lake Association; Natural Resources Conservation Service; NYCAMH; NYSDOH; Otsego Lake Association; Otsego Lake Watershed Supervisory Committee; Otsego 2000; Richfield Springs Water Treatment Plant.