

TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

**January 24, 2011
Meeting Minutes**

Voting Members Present (13): Liz Cameron, Bill Garthwaite, Barry Goodrich, Roxy Johnston, Joan Jurkovich, Dan Karig, Darby Kiley, Lynn Leopold, Gregg McConnell, Jim McGarry, Frank Proto, Elaine Quaroni, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Damon Rodnac, Cindy Schulte, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley

Voting Members Excused (5): Sharon Anderson, Carol Chock, Rick Manning

Voting Members Absent (1): Ed Bugliosi

Non-Voting Members Present (3): John Andersson (Associate), Dooley Kiefer (Associate), Todd Miller (Ex Officio), Lisa Wright-Mathews (Associate)

Staff Present (1): Kathy Wilsea (T C Planning Dept.)

Chairman Frank Proto called the meeting to order at 4:18 PM.

Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes – There were no changes to the agenda. The draft minutes of December 20, 2010 were moved by Craig Schutt and seconded by Lynn Leopold. Amendments were made for clarification. Amended minutes passed by voice vote.

Update on the Groton Wastewater Treatment Plant – Chuck Rankin, Village Clerk, was present. He reported that the Village's original wastewater treatment plant was built in 1963 and updated in 1976 with the addition of a secondary treatment facility. Then there were no significant changes until 2006, when they received a consent order from DEC to implement certain improvements. The main issues of the consent order were intermittent discharges that exceeded the quantity allowed to be discharged into the Owasco Inlet and the need to remove phosphorus from discharge. Prior to 2006 the Village was not required to remove phosphorus from their discharge. DEC issued a fine, which was reduced on appeal to \$1,000.00. At the time of the consent order, Finger Lakes Aquaculture was operating a fish farm within the district.

As first steps, the Village tried changing their water treatment, which was not effective enough. So the Village conducted engineering studies and submitted a plant design to implement a process that would achieve the goals. Chuck distributed a handout that listed the improvements. The Village sought a process that reduced phosphorus without adding chemicals. Test result numbers are now good. The new system went on line 11/17/2010, but they are not sure yet what DEC will establish as a completion date. The plant design allows for the ability to add chemical injection treatment methods in the future if they become needed. The fish farm is now closed, and that is contributing to their phosphorus improvement. There were no major delays in the construction, and the Village was fortunate to be awarded a grant for \$26 million. They are amending their local laws concerning large industries so the system does not become overwhelmed. Public tours were conducted before the system went on line.

Oath of Office for New and Reappointed Members – Frank Proto administered the oath of office to Bill Garthwaite, Roxy Johnston, Dan Karig, Darby Kiley, Damon Rodnac and Craig Schutt.

Election of Officers – Cindy Schulte, chair of the Nominating/Membership Committee, presented the slate of officers. She moved the slate of Frank Proto, Chairman and Barry Goodrich and Marjory Rinaldo-Lee as Vice Chairs. Slate was seconded by Craig Schutt. There were no nominations from the floor. The slate passed by voice vote. Former First Chair, Roxy Johnston, was thanked for her years of service as a WRC officer. Barry agreed to serve as First Vice Chair and Marjory agreed to serve as Second Vice Chair.

2011 Committee Signups – Committees remain the same as 2010, plus the Gas Drilling ad hoc committee. Signup sheets were sent around the room. Members who were not present today will be contacted by email to signup.

Committee Reports – Cayuga Lake Recreation: Dan Karig reported the idea of a paddlers dock is effectively dead, as the project supporters were not reappointed to the City’s Board of Public Works by the Mayor. **Streams:** Dan Karig reported they met to start 2011. Cindy Schulte had contacted them about two stream projects in Newfield and that led to examination of long term plans for the committee. DEC is not capable of providing adequate supervision for all the projects underway. Cindy said in this instance there were two projects, one for reconstruction and one for stabilization, within 500 feet of each other. The Town of Newfield has no one with expertise, so she approached the committee for comments. She wanted to make sure the two projects were compatible. She thanked the group for their input. **Monitoring Plan:** Roxy Johnston reported the committee met. They are preparing for a DEC guest at their March meeting for discussion on TMDLs. The committee will provide their questions to him in advance. She might arrange for him to visit WRC at a later date. Some of their questions concern whether or not climate change impacts are built in to TMDLs, and what are expectations of gas drilling impacts. Meeting dates are changing from the first Wednesday of the month to the First Tuesday. **Wetlands:** Darby Kiley said they did not meet. **Aquifer:** Todd Miller reported they did not meet. There was brief discussion about providing links from the WRC website to the USGS aquifer study reports, and that will be arranged by the Education Committee. **Dredging:** Dan Karig said there is no new information on the Cayuga Inlet dredging project. Roxy said she will check with City staff. **Education:** Elaine Quaroni reported they met to plan and consider new ideas for 2011. **Executive Committee:** Frank Proto issued congratulations and welcome to new members. Kathy Wilsea pointed out the WRC Exec allows for three officers and two other voting members, so members can include that when they do their committee signups. **Grants:** Craig Schutt expects Great Lakes grant info soon. Roxy said she received a phone call encouraging her to reapply for the grant for the gaging station on Salmon Creek.

In related discussion, Darby Kiley said Tompkins County Council of Governments has a water work group, but they haven’t met yet. She is not informed enough at this point, but is interested in having them work with WRC Gas Drilling or Streams committees. Elaine Quaroni reminded members that an email went out inviting all to the CSI annual meeting, where the main topic will be working with volunteers on baseline monitoring. Darby’s work with TCCOG may be a future agenda topic.

Chair Report – Frank Proto reminded committee chairs to submit articles for the WRC Annual Report. Members should refer to the Water Quality Strategy to form work plans for the committees. The WQS was last updated in 2009, so this is the third year and it will be due for update at the end of this year. Joan Jurkowich pointed out there were major changes in 2009, so probably the next series of updates will have fewer changes. At this point, the WQS does not mention gas drilling or its anticipated impacts.

Staff Report – Kathy Wilsea said extra copies of membership lists and 2011 meeting dates are in the mail folder.

Other Business – Bruce Natale, of Cayuga County, passed around some photos and information on three invasive species: Bloody Red Shrimp, which has been found in Seneca Lake; Chinese Mystery Snail, which has been found in Owasco Lake; and Asian Clam, which has been found in both Seneca and Owasco lakes. Bruce said we need public education materials ready before visitors begin arriving for spring fishing derbies. He is providing information to the Post Standard in Syracuse. There was discussion about sharing information through Dave Henderson’s weekly column in the Ithaca Journal and local tourism programs. Cindy Schulte announced another pharmaceuticals collection day will be held April 9th, with two satellite locations in Trumansburg and Newfield. Volunteers are welcome. Frank Proto shared an article from the Ithaca Journal on 1/14 about gas companies seeking to extend gas leases. Roxy Johnston said a local group known as Fleeced passed around a legal opinion on their website. Their opinion is that the vertical type of hydrofracturins has not been delayed, so the lawsuit is without merit. Also, this is not a force majeure, so not effective due to the company’s late claim. New member Damon Rodnac was introduced.

Adjournment -- The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Planning Department Secretary
Adopted by the Council on February 28, 2011.