

# TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

**September 21, 2009  
Meeting Minutes**

**Voting Members Present (15):** Will Burbank, Donna Eschenbrenner, Barry Goodrich, Roxy Johnston, Joan Jurkowich, Dan Karig, Darby Kiley, Rick Manning, Gregg McConnell, Frank Proto, Elaine Quaroni, Cindy Schulte, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley, Linda Wagenet

**Voting Members Excused (3):** Sharon Anderson, Ed Bugliosi, Liz Cameron

**Voting Members Absent (2):** Bud Shattuck, Roger Yonkin

**Non-Voting Members Present (4):** Jose Lozano (Associate), John Mawdsley (Associate), Todd Miller (Ex-Officio), Marjory Rinaldo-Lee (Associate)

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

**Guests Present (5):** Edward Kokkelenberg, Lynn Leopold, James McGarry, Jon Negley, Lisa Wright-Mathews

Chair Frank Proto called the meeting to order at 4:23 PM.

**Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes** – There were no changes to the agenda. The draft minutes of July 20, 2009 were moved by Craig Schutt, seconded by Cindy Schulte and accepted without change. Guests introduced themselves and spoke of their interests in WRC.

**The Tompkins County LIDAR Study** – Jon Negley was present from Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District. He explained that LIDAR stands for Light Detection and Ranging, and is a type of survey that uses reflected laser pulses to measure distance of an object from the sensor. Some of its applications are law enforcement, forestry, astronomy, meteorology, and adaptive cruise control. A LIDAR study was conducted in Tompkins County by sensors on airplanes with GPS. The plane flew in overlapping bands to cover the entire County, which produced hundreds of millions of points of data. Data is currently under review. LIDAR can be used to create contour lines of two feet, so is very useful to the County Highway Division. Contour data can also be useful for water resource study, as it picks up ditches and streams. Wet spots are visible in the aerial photos. Goals of the study are to generate dataset for use by planners, scientists, engineers, and the public; create better building outline maps, watershed/stream maps; and update flood hazard maps. The study partners still need ideas for potential uses and funds for processing of data.

In the comment period, Jon said the cost was covered by FLOWPA grants with some contributions from municipalities. Tompkins County is paying for data review. This data is not available to the public yet, but Todd Miller said five-foot contour info is available from USGS. The list of possible uses of the data is long, but production of specific datasets is expensive. Jon provided a half-page handout, "Tompkins County LIDAR Needs List." Accuracy is within 6". While the plane flew over Cayuga Lake, the pulses only go 4 to 5 feet into the water. Follow up studies can show erosion over a period of years, but none are planned or funded now. Comments and questions can be sent to Jon through Craig Schutt at SWCD.

**2009 Membership Applications Available for Review** – Craig Schutt reported for the Nominating Committee that they received quite a few applications from new people. A slate of recommended appointments will be presented for October review and November vote, then go to the Legislature committee and the Legislature. Frank Proto explained to visitors who are interested in membership that there are

attendance requirements for members. Kathy Wilsea distributed updated membership lists and told visitors they can reach her by using the information on the list.

**Committee Reports – Executive:** Frank Proto reported they met last week. Draft minutes were distributed and proposals discussed. Cindy Schulte, who recorded the committee minutes, reviewed the points. The Executive Committee prioritized administration functions from the Planning Department as production of the annual report, recording action-only minutes, and production and distribution of agendas. (Joan says no baking!) Committees and speakers could provide reports that would be attached to the minutes. Members may provide input through 10/7 by contacting Cindy, who will compile the comments. **Gas Drilling:** Marjory Rinaldo-Lee reported the DEC draft SGEIS is not out yet. The committee met and reviewed the water quality testing parameters. She mentioned the changes that were suggested by members. The committee continues to discuss how the information will be made available to the public. These parameters are designed as a response for citizens who are concerned about the impacts of gas drilling. A final draft will be distributed to members and further comments may be submitted prior to the committee's upcoming meeting on 10/5. Darby Kiley pointed out an article in the Ithaca Journal in which she was quoted about critical environmental areas. Establishment of CEAs is one approach to controlling locations of gas drilling in municipalities. Darby said ideas for CEAs should be discussed with elected officials. The Town of Ithaca is organizing maps for prioritizing and responding to the DEC draft SGEIS. **Monitoring Plan:** Roxy Johnston said they met and talked about Jose Lozano's letter. Jose and Dan Ramer were present from the Ithaca Area Wastewater Treatment Facility. They reaffirmed IAWWTF support and participation in data gathering. All acknowledged the limitations of historical data, and will reexamine existing data to see if the baseline can be expanded. The group is still pursuing independent statistical review. Roxy's intern at the City suggested the group clearly state their goals and objectives, so they will work with the intern on that. Jose gave a presentation at the committee meeting on monitoring by the fish ladder in the Inlet. Cornell has responded to DEC on the BACI, and Roxy can provide copies. Roxy participated in the Floating Classroom event yesterday. Roxy announced several upcoming public events: 10/13, FLOWPA-USGS conference on monitoring in the watershed (info on Finger Lakes Institute website); 10/13, lake levels talk by Bill Kappel at Americana Vineyard & Winery; and 10/24, phosphorus inputs to Cayuga Lake at Town of Ithaca hall. The second and third items are co-sponsored by the Network and IO. Details at cayugalake.org. **Aquifer:** Todd Miller said the second Caroline study should wrap up in about two weeks, and Dryden is almost done, too. **Cayuga Lake Recreation:** Dan Karig reported the speed limit sign is up at the lighthouse. Progress is occurring on the proposed launch site for people-powered vessels at the Farmers Market. The City has to do the permit applications. This would be the only access on the east side of the Inlet, and the target date for opening is spring 2010. There was discussion about the docks at Cass Park, and Dan said he will suggest the two dragon boats be moored on the same side of the dock. Roxy said the Board of Public Works members are sympathetic to public use at the Cass Park site. **Dredging:** Dan Karig reported that Lisa Nicholas of City Planning says something *will* happen, and a revised plan is being produced. The need for a dredge spoils disposal site continues to be a barrier. Rick Manning reported he heard at a meeting today from JoAnn Cornish of City Planning that the City has contracted with an attorney to check the history of cost sharing. **Education:** Elaine Quaroni said that because she didn't understand all the acronyms and agencies involved with WRC, she produced updates of the lists that were distributed. She earned a round of applause for taking the initiative. Elaine said she enjoyed a presentation by Doug Haith on 9/10 on bio-interaction in Cayuga Lake. John Mawdsley said Doug Haith will speak at the 10/24 meeting mentioned by Roxy.

**Chair Report** – Frank announced that he has accepted the resignation of Roger Yonkin from the EMC Liaison seat, and another liaison will be sought.

**Adjournment** -- The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Wilsea, Planning Department Secretary  
Adopted by the Council on October 19, 2009.