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TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

**September 24, 2012
Meeting Minutes**

Voting Members Present (16): Sharon Anderson, Fay Benson, Ed Bugliosi, Bill George, Barry Goodrich, Roxy Johnston, Dan Karig, Darby Kiley, Lynn Leopold, Rick Manning, Jim McGarry, Frank Proto, Elaine Quaroni, Marjory Rinaldo-Lee, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley

Voting Members Excused (3): Liz Cameron, Joan Jurkowich, Gregg McConnell

Non-Voting Members Present (5): John Andersson, Scott Carpenter, Dooley Kiefer, Todd Miller, Linda Wagenet

Guests Present (1): Tom Evans (STERPDB)

Staff Present: Kathy Wilsea

Chairman Frank Proto called the meeting to order at 4:17 PM

Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes – An update from the Hydrilla Task Force and a draft letter from the Streams Committee re Salmon Creek gaging station were added to the agenda. Also, the Nominating/Membership Committee needs a chairman for their fall tasks. Draft minutes were moved by Craig Schutt, seconded by Barry Goodrich and accepted without change. Final minutes are available on the WRC website: <http://www.tompkins-co.org/planning/committees/WRC/WRCagendaminutes.htm>

Draft Water Quality Strategy – Bill George, chairman of the review committee, led discussion on proposed changes. Most changes were in Section V, Goals, which Bill acknowledged are extensive. Several members volunteered to find the data to finalize text. The committee recommended addition of two committees, perhaps as subcommittees, for invasive species and road salt. Appendix B provides cross-references of the proposed work sorted by committee assignments. Further comments should be directed to Bill, and vote to adopt the Strategy will occur at the October meeting.

Proposal to Establish Recreation Committee – Rick Manning's proposal was distributed with the agenda. A grant-funded plan is being developed for a blue way trail, and the Waterfront Trail has received a Tourism grant for interpretive panels. While Rick would like the whole Council to provide comments during the development phases of these two projects, a committee could review the sites, policies, and draft plans. Dan Karig and Lynn Leopold are willing to work on this as an ad-hoc committee with Rick. Members who are excused today will be asked by email if they are willing to participate.

Streams Committee Letter to Town of Lansing – Following discussion on how the Sixmile Creek gaging station is funded by a consortium of municipalities and agencies, there was agreement the letter should suggest a similar alliance for the gaging station on Salmon Creek. Some of the Town of Lansing council candidates might be more receptive to this proposal than current members, but getting the letter out soon might mean the Town would set aside some funding in their 2013 budget for the gaging station. Dan Karig will edit the draft to reflect discussion, then finalization by the Executive Committee is anticipated. Ed Bugliosi said the 30% partial funding mentioned in the letter is available from USGS on a first-come-first-served basis.

Nominating/Membership Committee – Frank announced this committee needs a chair for their fall tasks. Barry will serve as chair. Skill set ideas will be solicited again by email (no response to first inquiry by Kathy Wilsea). Marjory Rinaldo-Lee suggested seeking a botanist with invasive species experience.

Frank Proto left for a County Legislature budget meeting, and Marjory Rinaldo-Lee assumed the chair at 5:19.

Committee Reports – Aquifer: Todd Miller reported their work on arsenic levels continues. They are building a database, and obtained some data from the Health Department. Although they expected to find links to black shale, they are finding more links to oxygenation keeping arsenic in solution. They are looking for mitigation methods, too. Elaine Quaroni said there have been recent reports on arsenic levels in rice, and asked if farm practices have any bearing. Todd said no, if it were coming from farm practices it would also be found in unconfined aquifers, which it is not. Todd pointed out the Village of Dryden is grappling with arsenic in their water supply.

Education: Elaine reported the committee is working this year with the Hydrilla Task Force. Sharon Anderson reported the Education/Outreach committee of the Hydrilla Task Force is planning a November meeting for updating the community. DEC is working on response to the Hydrilla found in the Erie Canal near Towanda.

Hydrilla Task Force: Craig Schutt reported the Aquathol treatment was in June, and was followed by three treatments of Flurodone. Bob Johnson found a healthy Hydrilla plant by the lighthouse. The low flows this summer prevented liquid Flurodone from going out of the Inlet. Decision will be made next week if another pellet treatment will be scheduled, and the existing permit would allow that. No Hydrilla has been found in Cayuga Lake sampling. Sharon said a diver looked for more by the lighthouse, but didn't find any. Craig passed around laminated plant samples.

Grants: Craig said the application was submitted for WQIP funds for administration and annual reports, which will go to the Planning Department. FLOWPA and other grants are the same as previously reported.

Streams: Dan Karig reported streams data can be posted on e-Commons. There are not many datasets, but they hope to get them formatted and entered. Steve Penningroth is looking at phosphorus and chloride data.

Wetlands: Darby Kiley reported she has arranged for Jean Foley, of DEC, to attend our November meeting and talk about re-mapping wetlands.

Chair & Staff Reports -- Kathy Wilsea announced the Environmental Management Council will host a public meeting 10/16 to share information on proposed changes and additions to the Unique Natural Areas Inventory. Members will receive information on a 10/11 public meeting on the Cleaner Greener Regional Sustainability Plan.

Announcements – Tom Evans, from Southern Tier East Regional Planning and Development Board, (1) invited members to a regional meeting of water quality groups that will be held in October or November. This will be a way to interact with other counties and water resources groups in our region. (2) Tom announced the Upper Susquehanna Coalition will be organizing training by their Stream Team, and they hope for participants from each county. This will be education on stream processes, flooding, and dredging. (3) There are some changes coming for the Flood Insurance Program. Tom is learning about what they are and what they mean in our region. There may be a need to change flood laws in the municipalities. He will share information as he receives it.

Linda Wagenet announced a pharmaceuticals collection event will take place on Saturday, 9/29. Elaine added permanent collection boxes are being installed at some area public safety agencies.

Craig Schutt announced he and Roxy Johnston attended a national conference on Hydrilla. This plant is a much bigger problem in the South. Conference participants affirmed that the actions in Tompkins County are best practices. We need to keep treating three years after the last sample is found. He noted the tuber count is reduced this year, and Bob Johnson is not finding a lot of them.

IX Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Department.

Adopted by the Council on October 15, 2012.