

TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

**November 16, 2009
Meeting Minutes**

Voting Members Present (15): Sharon Anderson, Liz Cameron, Donna Eschenbrenner, Barry Goodrich, Roxy Johnston, Joan Jurkowich, Darby Kiley, Rick Manning, Gregg McConnell, Frank Proto, Elaine Quaroni, Cindy Schulte, Craig Schutt, Mary Shelley, Linda Wagenet

Voting Members Excused (3): Will Burbank, Ed Bugliosi, Dan Karig

Voting Members Absent (1): Bud Shattuck

Non-Voting Members Present (6): John Andersson (Associate), Dooley Kiefer (Associate), John Mawdsley (Associate), Todd Miller (Ex-Officio), Steve Penningroth (Associate), Marjory Rinaldo-Lee (Associate)

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

Guests Present (4): John Confer, Hilary Lambert, Lynn Leopold, Jim McGarry

Chairman Frank Proto called the meeting of the Water Resources Council to order at 4:18 PM.

Agenda Review and Approval of Minutes – There were no changes to the agenda. The draft minutes of October 19, 2009 were moved by Roxy Johnston and seconded by Craig Schutt. Changes were proposed by Dooley Kiefer and accepted by members who moved and seconded. Amended minutes passed by voice vote, with one member opposed to the amendments.

The Scientific Literature, Models of P-eutrophication, and Lake Source Cooling – John Confer, retired Director of Environmental Studies at Ithaca College, was present. He said circulation models exist for lakes, but have not been brought to the public. He provided paper copies of his PowerPoint presentation. The phrase “soluble reactive phosphorus” was coined in 1996 by Dr. Frank Rigler at the University of Toronto. In 1996, R. E. Carleson and J. Simpson published A Coordinator’s Guide to Volunteer Lake Monitoring Methods (North American Lake Management Society), using the term “dissolved inorganic phosphorus”. According to one of Dr. Confer’s slides, “This . . . changed to “soluble reactive phosphorus” (Rigler 1964, Strickland and Parsons 1965) to reflect a more realistic interpretation of what forms of phosphorus were found in this fraction. The term “reactive” is used to indicate that the phosphorus in the SRP fraction is not solely inorganic phosphorus, but any form that reacts with the reagents. “Reactive” refers to chemistry, NOT biology.” Dr. Confer discussed other studies, models and predictions. He explained the late R. A. Vollenweider, who served as Director of the Canadian Center for the Great Lakes, is known as “Dr. God” for the recovery of Lake Erie and received recognition for his research demonstrating that phosphorus was crucial in eutrophication of fresh water. Dr. Confer explained that globally, limnologists use total phosphorus to predict degree of eutrophication and develop remedies, including surface areas, mean depth, and flushing in models.

Dr. Confer’s Conclusions slide states: “TOTAL P Concentration – used in models of eutrophication by almost all of the limnological community, accurate predictions. SOLUBLE REACTIVE PHOSPHORUS (SRP) – refers to P that is chemically reactive and is not used in peer-reviewed literature on models of eutrophication LAKE SOURCE COOLING – adds a lower Total P concentration to a higher Total P concentration on shelf. Slightly dilutes the Total P concentration and will slightly lower algal growth. For southern Cayuga Lake, the most important contributors to nutrient loading are the tributaries, effluents from

WWTPs, LSC, in that order, and probably sediment exchange and waterbird excrement. The frequent exchange of water on the shelf with surface water from the rest of the lake due to seich movements minimizes the effect of all point-source pollutants.” He said, in his best professional estimate, LSC is advantageous to the southern end of the lake.

Water Testing Parameters – Marjory Rinaldo-Lee presented the amended document for the Gas Drilling ad hoc Committee. The document was altered after publication of the draft supplemental GEIS on Gas Drilling. It was developed for citizens who have questions on the topic, presuming the landowner would be paying for the testing. Discussion included purpose of the tests, use of consultant vs. certified lab, collection methods, need for early baseline studies, and whether or not this level of testing stands up in litigation. Joan Jurkowich moved to not adopt any water quality parameters, which did not receive a second. John Andersson offered to work on language to incorporate today’s discussion in the document. Marjory moved to change “certified lab” to “certified lab or competent independent lab”, and change “compound” to “parameter” throughout the document. Seconded by Liz Cameron. Frank Proto said we need to get the County Attorney to review. Liz Cameron moved to table until January, which was seconded by Sharon. Steve Penningroth said there is little guidance for the public on this issue, and this publication would be a valuable service. Community Science Institute gets calls all the time about water testing parameters. Liz amended her motion to table indefinitely while details are worked out, which passed with 13 yes votes and 2 no votes.

Establish *ad hoc* Committee to Provide Comments on the Draft Renewal of the SPDES General Permit for Discharges from Municipal Storm Sewer Systems – Frank Proto appointed Craig Schutt, Barry Goodrich, Leslie Schill (Planning Department staff) and himself to examine this and decide if comments will be sent. Due date for comments to DEC is 12/16/2009.

Comments on the DEC draft Supplemental GEIS on Gas Drilling – Liz Cameron said comments were solicited by email and compiled this morning. She reviewed the comments and explained committee discussion and background information used to develop the comments. The committee is preparing separate comments for aspects that are outside the scope of the dsGEIS. The committee restricted their comments to water issues, kept comments factual. Discussion ensued on proposed changes. Liz noted that DEC will be required to respond to comments that cite a specific section of the dsGEIS. Editorial comments may be sent to Liz until 11/20. Joan Jurkowich moved to adopt the letter with today’s suggestions incorporated, allow the committee to finalize the language, and allow the Executive Committee to finalize the document. Seconded by Roxy Johnston. Passed by vote of 13 yes, 1 no.

Recommendations on Administrative Support – Roxy Johnston noted the date at the end of the proposed resolution was not meant to be permanent, and noted this document should be reviewed annually. Resolution moved by Roxy Johnston, seconded by Craig Scutt. Frank Proto moved to add at the end, “or sooner if funding to accomplish these tasks is restored.” Seconded by Roxy. Darby Kiley asked if this is moot if funding is restored in the Legislature’s budget, which comes to vote tomorrow. It was agreed it would be unnecessary in that circumstance. Darby moved to table the resolution, which was seconded by Cindy Schulte and passed unanimously.

Announcements/Other Business – In Will Burbank’s absence, Frank Proto explained that PDEQ passed the WRC appointment slate with the exception of the Economic Development seat, which was returned to the council for review. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

Adjournment -- The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Planning Department Secretary
Adopted by the Council on December 21, 2009.