

TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

April 18, 2022 Zoom meeting

Final Minutes

Attendance

Member		Seat	Member		Seat
Annie Bastoni	E	At-Large	Holly Payne	P	At-Large
Fay Benson	E	Agriculture	Frank Proto	E	At-Large
Cynthia Brock	P	Municipal	Brian Rahm	P	Environment
Liz Cameron	E	Co. Environmental Health	Stephanie Redmond	P	At-Large
Amanda Champion	P	County Government	Steve Riddle	P	Water Purveyor
Jenna DeRario	P	Cooperative Extension	Elizabeth Thomas	P	Recreation
Michelle Henry	P	EMC Representative	Linda Wagenet	P	At-Large
Kristen Hychka	P	Municipal Government	Chris Bordlemay Padilla	A	Associate
Emelia "Mia" Jumbo	A	At-Large	Roxy Johnston	P	Associate
Darby Kiley	P	County Planning & Sustain.	Cedric Mason	A	Associate
Patrick King	P	Business & Industry	Steve Penningroth	E	Associate
Liz Kreitinger	P	Watershed Organization	Elaine Quaroni	P	Associate
Lynn Leopold	P	Municipal Government	Tom Vawter	P	Associate
Jon Negley	P	Soil & Water Cons. District			

Guests: Mara Alper, Doug Barnes

Call to Order/Agenda Review or Changes – Chair Cynthia Brock called the meeting to order at 4:16pm. An action item regarding a letter of support for a grant application was added to the agenda.

Privilege of the Floor – No comments.

Presentation: New State Legislation Connects the Dots: Soil Health-Water Quality – *David Wolfe, Professor Emeritus, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University*

David Wolfe gave an overview of the NYS 2022 Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Act and the many steps that led to its passage, sharing that it was exciting to see it go from an effort led by pioneering farmers and scientists in the 1990s to codification by the state. His presentation and the subsequent Q&A discussion covered several topics, including relationship-building with farmers; impact of excessive plowing and tillage; soil degradation and soil diseases; funding mechanisms; winter cover crops and other tools known to improve soil health; carbon sequestration; reduced tile drainage; impact of heavy rains and flooding, which cause soil erosion and lead to runoff of sediment and chemicals into waterways; nitrogen management and greenhouse gas emissions; CAFO regulations; and bipartisan support for the Act in Albany.

Action: Approve Letter of Support for Town of Lansing Grant Application for Salmon Creek Streambank Stabilization Project

The Town of Lansing is applying for funding from the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Program to implement a long-term strategy, in concert with the Tompkins County Soil & Water Stabilization District, to stabilize the Salmon Creek streambank and seeks a letter of support from the WRC for their grant application. Cynthia provided a synopsis of the project, which aims to reduce the flow of sediment into Cayuga Lake and protect the roadway.

Action: Cynthia Brock made a motion, which Lynn Leopold seconded, to approve a letter of support from the Tompkins County Water Resources Council on behalf of the Town of Lansing's application for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds for the Salmon Creek Streambank Stabilization Project. Motion carried.

Presentation: Resiliency and Recovery Plan Update – Scott Doyle, TC Department of Planning & Sustainability

Scott provided an update on the County's Resiliency and Recovery Plan (RRP), which is largely funded through the NYS Department of State and comprises several components: the foundational Hazard Mitigation Plan, which post-adoption allows municipalities to apply for FEMA mitigation funding and recommendations from which are being implemented as part of the RRP; the Water Supply Drought Assessment; Inventory of Critical Assets in Relation to Floodplains and Mitigation Resources; Debris Management Plan; and the Local Government Community Rating System (CRS) Flood Assessment. He shared some details of the Town of Lansing's experience with CRS assessment and recommendations for that program as well as that a continuity of operations training was held for municipalities and that one is planned for businesses in coordination with the Tompkins Chamber of Commerce. Part II of the RRP will focus on the Community Economic Recovery plan and recommend items to incorporate into updates to the County Emergency Management Plan. Next steps in the project include presentations to additional advisory boards and legislative committees, an interactive story map, and public outreach. Q&A discussion touched on various topics, including capacity of current water supply infrastructure, rural water supplies, alternatives to CRS model, redundant energy systems, funding mechanisms, engagement with utilities, draft FEMA flood map updates, and more.

Darby shared that Scott will be leaving the Department of Planning and Sustainability for a new position at Ithaca College later this spring.

Action: Approval of Draft Minutes – The draft March 21, 2022, meeting minutes were approved (moved by Amanda Champion, seconded by Michelle Henry) as submitted.

Committee Reports (as needed) – Lynn suggested resiliency and recovery/hazard mitigation as a topic for the Education/Outreach Committee, and Michelle Henry shared that the EMC's Climate Adaptation Committee is working on these issues. Municipal Training Committee is developing a workshop or other initiative for this fall.

Chair and Staff Reports – No chair's report given. Department of Planning and Sustainability is hiring for a sustainability coordinator, environmental planner, and housing and community development planner.

Member Announcements – Members shared news regarding site plan review application for a Dollar General in Newfield, passage of NYS budget and boost for Environmental Protection Fund (Jon Negley can share more details at May meeting), Drive Electric Earth Day event at Cass Park, and changes to NYS wetlands regulations.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 5:40 pm.