

TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

May 16, 2022 Zoom meeting

Final Minutes

Attendance

Member		Seat	Member		Seat
Annie Bastoni	A	At-Large	Holly Payne	E	At-Large
Fay Benson	A	Agriculture	Frank Proto	P	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	E	Recreation
Michelle Henry	P	EMC Representative	Linda Wagenet	P	At-Large
Kristen Hychka	P	Municipal Government	Chris Bordlemay Padilla	A	Associate
Emelia "Mia" Jumbo	P	At-Large	Roxy Johnston	P	Associate
Darby Kiley	P	County Planning & Sustain.	Cedric Mason	A	Associate
Patrick King	P	Business & Industry	Steve Penningroth	P	Associate
Liz Kreitinger	E	Watershed Organization	Elaine Quaroni	P	Associate
Lynn Leopold	P	Municipal Government	Tom Vawter	P	Associate
Jon Negley	P	Soil & Water Cons. District			

Guests: Doug Barnes, Olaf Gustafson, Tony Ingraffea, Teresa Jordan, Susan Riley

Call to Order/Agenda Review or Changes – Darby Kiley called the meeting to order at 4:18pm. No changes to the agenda.

Privilege of the Floor – No speakers.

Presentation: Earth Source Heat and Cornell University Borehole Observatory – Sarah Carson, Director, Campus Sustainability Office; Olaf Gustafson, Professional Geologist, College of Engineering; Anthony Ingraffea, Dwight C. Baum Professor of Engineering Emeritus and Weiss Presidential Teaching Fellow at Cornell University; Teresa Jordan, The J. Preston Lewis Professor of Engineering, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

Darby introduced the group from Cornell’s Earth Source Heat project, disclosing that she serves on the community advisory team for the project. The presenters shared a bit about their backgrounds and roles on the project, with Sarah Carson, director of Cornell’s Campus Sustainability Office, then segueing into a high-level review of the various components of the Earth Source Heat initiative and progress made to date. She talked about how the project leverages some of the unique attributes Cornell brings to it, such as access to faculty experts right on campus, and whether such geothermal heat production will be sufficient to meet Cornell’s Climate Action Plan goals and do so at a cost acceptable enough to justify the investment. Other large-scale issues the team is considering include risk and mitigation of unintended consequences, such as possible environmental contamination and other negative impacts on the community. To answer those questions, however, data are necessary, which is where the Cornell University Borehole Observatory (CUBO) comes into play. The goal of CUBO is to conduct ground truthing in order to predict specific site performance versus range of possible performances, inform analyses of risks and benefits needed for decisions about the project, and provide technical information for project planning and design. The borehole will be drilled to a depth of 10,000 feet, allowing team to gather data on geophysical rock properties, fracture characteristics, and more. Presenters talked about the location site, which was chosen for minimal environmental impact, with maintaining a small

footprint and ongoing monitoring in mind. In addition, the project will use an electric drill rig to cut down on noise from diesel generators.

Chair Cynthia Brock arrived at 4:50pm and took over running the meeting at this point.

Q&A discussion covered field parameters for groundwater and surface water monitoring, seismicity and noise monitors, readings from Cargill salt mine blasting, quarterly water quality sampling from area wells, collaborations with partners such as the Paleontological Research Institute (known as PRI) and geothermal drilling consultants, and more.

Update: Environmental Protection Fund in NYS Budget – *Jon Negley, TC Soil & Water Conservation District*

Jon Negley provided information on the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) included in the state's 2023 executive budget. He screen-shared a spreadsheet with the details of the EPF, which at \$400 million is at record levels for environmental spending in New York State. Explaining that these funds will not be available until 2023 and beyond, Jon highlighted pertinent line items in categories such as solid waste, parks and recreation, climate change and mitigation, and more. He also touched on increased funding for farmland protection, Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance programming, Climate Smart Community Projects, as well as the annual state budget process in general.

Q&A discussion covered several topics, including funding for pollinator protection initiatives, water management tracks for the Climate Resilient Farms Program, restrictions on how grant monies can be used, and timetables and points of contact at County for funding requests from WRC committees.

Action: Approval of Draft Minutes – The April 18, 2022, meeting minutes were approved (moved by Darby Kiley, seconded by Jon Negley) as submitted.

Committee Reports (as needed) – The Watershed Rules & Regulations Committee met with Andy Zepp from Finger Lakes Land Trust to explore how land conservation strategies can protect water resources.

Chair and Staff Reports – Cynthia did not have a chair's report. Darby informed group that advisory board budget requests are due by June 24. Committee chairs should get their requests to her two weeks before then to ensure the executive committee has time to review them. Members present agreed to reschedule next meeting to Monday, June 27, as County offices will be closed on the 20th in observance of Juneteenth.

Member Announcements – Members shared news about a Sustainable Finger Lakes webinar on reducing flood risks for your home, which among other topics will cover the new draft FEMA flood maps; an upcoming public meeting on the County's Resiliency and Recovery Plan; and efforts to restore Fuertes Overlook at the "swan pond in Stewart Park.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 5:31pm.