

Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Watershed (I O) Meeting Minutes 6/28/17

Attendance: Michael Boggs, Town of Ulysses; Grace Bates, Village of Aurora; Cynthia Brock, City of Ithaca; Tee Ann Hunter, Town of Ithaca, Chair of the I O; Lynn Leopold, Village of Lansing; Hilary Lambert, Steward, Cayuga Lake Watershed Network (CLWN); Dave Sprout, Town of Dryden; Mark Witmer, Town of Caroline; Jackie Cassaniti, Town of Caroline

Tee Ann said the approved letter to the municipalities (munis) will be placed on a town letterhead before being sent out. This is to ask for continued membership in the I O and any projects around Cayuga Lake that can be done in the future. The financial report of the I O was \$27,621.91 as of the end of May 2017, and the I O will give \$7,000 to the Floating Classroom (F C) program for this fall.

The main topic of this meeting was the hydrilla found in 27 acres of Cayuga Lake by Aurora. Hilary Lambert gave a report.

1. The US Army Corps of Engineers (US ACE) will help out with funding for the eradication of hydrilla at this site. Please check this site for more information about the US ACE in Aurora: http://auburnpub.com/news/local/u-s-army-corps-of-engineers-to-fund-treatment-of/article_5fcbda3d-f3ad-5198-82c7-8bb87b9b6e4b.html
2. There is a concern that hydrilla could already be in other areas of Cayuga Lake that have not been discovered. Should the public be involved in this concern? See the article in the Ithaca Journal, 6/16/17 entitled, "In hydrilla fight, public discussion is needed" by Brian Caldwell. (Mark wondered about all the weeds at the north end of Cayuga Lake; could hydrilla be there?) Hilary mentioned the "Bassmaster Elite at Cayuga Lake" how they could help or hinder; and how Fred Bloom of Bass Nation is now a supporter of hydrilla eradication.
3. There are different ways of fighting hydrilla, by liquid, crystals or mats of chemicals, as best suited for different areas. Temperature makes a difference also. (Cynthia asked if the geese could be part of the problem because they could keep the water warm.)
4. Tompkins County Soil and Water (TCSW) had an outreach person who retired, and that position was not filled, this has now been restored as of 6/27/17 at a meeting of Sharon Anderson, Jon Negley, and Mike Hall. But this is only for Tompkins County, the other major counties around Cayuga Lake are Cayuga and Seneca.
5. In the south end of the lake, no tubers of hydrilla have been found, but there would be enhanced monitoring of the area, there has been some seen by the golf course and the outlet of Fall Creek.
6. Hilary had a conference call with Finger Lakes Institute and Finger Lakes Partners for Regional Invasive Species Management suggesting a lake-wide water monitoring committee to see if hydrilla could be eradicated. (Bill Foster from FC said the grants are only for treatment,

not prevention or outreach, this should be changed.) The US ACE could spend up to \$400,000 for all of Cayuga Lake.

7. Seneca County has a history of mowing the weeds near shore every year, but will probably not do it this year because of the possibility of spreading hydrilla if it is in the area.

Tee Ann said this I O group wants to do everything possible to help in the fight against hydrilla. She then went on to talk about the 3 year grant contract with the DOS to revitalize the local waterfronts and access to the lake. Tee Ann hasn't been able to contact Stephanie Wojtowicz from the DOS as of this meeting; does the project start at the award of the contract or the receipt of the money? Kathy Bertuch of CNYRPBD will help with this and receive the bulk of the money. Once again, Tee Ann wants to look at the organizational structure of the I O, it needs to be changed so more people and munis will join. The I O needs staff to accomplish its goals. This is more important now that there is a need for lake-wide management. Mark said shared services could be the answer. Darby Kiley was the first hire to try to get projects around the lake. Tee Ann said there needs to be a breakdown of barriers so munis can work together with staff, experiences and grants. This could be worth more than the \$900 a year to the munis. How will the I O address the plan to roll back the strength of the federal Clean Water Act, turning the authority back to the states? Regionally, the I O has taken responsibility for protection the lake by working with the Agriculture community. There was an Amicus Brief filed about CAFOs and given to TCCOG. The I O could come up with a statement to send to the EPA against the roll back. Hilary found out about the roll back of regulations for rivers, creeks and vernal streams from the group River Network. They have 15 templates for letters and twitter messages. The EPA will have a 30 day comment period after Scott Pruitt publicizes the changes and receives a docket number. This should be something the general public should know about and send letters during this time, and that means to get the word out to the local papers, newsletters and online. (ex.) Patricia Haines mentioned it at the Reggie Fest on Saturday and received some signatures. We want clean water for all.

Lynn gave a report on the FC; the Handel is still not usable for the FC (the coast guard has to pass it for that use), and Bill Foster is looking at other boats to buy for the program, but will the Center for Transformative Action, another backer of the program, accept that they will own a boat? The Handel is good because it can accommodate 32 students and staff and has a lower level to do the lab experiments. Bill Foster put up a mural at the Reggie Fest to bring attention to the FC, he had wood scraps for people to color and paste on the mural. Lynn said the FC is working with Seneca Lake to start a program there.

Submitted by Jackie Cassaniti