

Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (I O) Meeting Minutes 2/27/19

Attendance: Rich De Paolo, T Ithaca; Michelle Henry, T Newfield; Lynn Leopold, V Lansing & Discover Cayuga Lake (Floating Classroom {FC}); Darby Kiley, Tompkins County; Shawn Murphy, Cayuga County, SWCD; Anne Koreman, Tompkins County Legislature; Becky Sims, T Enfield; C. J. Randall, T Danby; Michael Solvig, T Ithaca; Deborah Dawson, Tompkins County Legislature; Cynthia Brock, C Ithaca; Tee Ann Hunter, T Ithaca, Chair I O; Mike Murphy, V Dryden, Mayor; Elizabeth Thomas, T Ulysses; Liz Cameron, Tompkins County Health Dep't; Roxanne Johnston, C Ithaca, Water Treatment Plant; Grace Bates, Aurora Trustee; Tom Vawter, T Lansing; Joe Wetmore, T Lansing; Michael Boggs, T Ulysses; Jackie Cassaniti, T Caroline; Jennifer Karius, Independent Contractor, worked on the Cayuga Lake Water Quality Project (CLWQP); 5 students from Ithaca High School came to listen to the meeting; by phone: Katherine Hogle, NYS DOS - she is taking over for Stephanie Wojtowicz.

Jennifer presented preliminary findings for the CLWQP, which took about an hour. The findings are still in the form of a rough draft and will be available later this year (there were 3 main spreadsheets; towns, villages and city/ county health and water authorities/ and soil and water districts); an overview report of all the water quality projects will be shared with the municipalities (munis) in the Cayuga Lake Watershed. Then the munis will be invited to an I O presentation of the report, date to be announced. The purpose of this investigation is to have it for the grant from the DOS.

The minutes from January were approved. At the end of 2018 the I O had \$49,835, with a revenue of \$25,906.73 and expenses of \$15,060.09. This January the I O received 2018 membership dues from the Town of Ledyard, also in January there was a payment of \$7,000 to the FC now, and to be \$3,000 in September.

Tee Ann and Hilary Lambert will go to Syracuse on Monday, 3/4, to meet with Kathy Bertuch from CNYRP&DB about her work for the present DOS grant.

Roxy and Liz talked about the watershed rules set up in 1936 that should be updated. For example, the drinking water rules apply to Six Mile Creek, but not to Bolton Point, the two main drinking water sources for this area because a lake is seen as being different than a creek. The Tompkins County Health Dep't oversees both areas for the present time. Cynthia said these regulations were checked in the mid-1990's and that is what the city follows now, but these are also outdated (newer rules for Bolton Point were written in the 1990's, but were never adopted).

Tee Ann is waiting to see the updated rules that Ed Wagner, the supervisor of the Town of Owasco, will be coming up with for the entire watershed of Owasco Lake. There is a problem between Owasco and Cayuga Lakes because of the big farm operations there. We need regulations for both lakes to be the same; Ed may come to an I O meeting soon, but right now, according to Eileen O'Connor, the Cayuga County Director of Environmental Health, who came to an I O meeting in June to talk about sanitary codes for septic systems, the rules are still an inter-committee document and not public yet. Joe said that it would be good to talk about all the rules and regulations at that time. And Tee Ann said the TMDL and watershed management plans will be coming out soon, Roxy added that there are almost 40 papers on phosphorous research for the TMDL and that is one reason why it is taking so long for it to come out. The City of Ithaca could update their rules, but enforcement is the question. This is where munis can learn from each other. (It was suggested that Bonnie Apgar Bennett, Mayor or Aurora, should go for redundancy when it comes to putting in new piping for drinking water.) Will NYS OK these rules?

It is possible that the NYS legislature will take up this problem. Becky asked what the newer requirements and restrictions are but Liz wasn't able to say at this time. It is seen from the above discussion that the I O has no regulatory teeth. How can the I O do the job without that regulatory authority? The I O has contacted State Senators Pamela Helming (Ranking member of the Legislative Rural Resources Commission) and Thomas O'Mara (member of the Environmental Conservation Committee) whose district, 54 & 58, are partly in the Cayuga Lake Watershed, about the problem.

When the I O gets model regulations from Owasco, we could start to develop a structure of the I O for NYS or try to get regulatory authority in the communities. Roxy mentioned that the DEC has rules and regulations about cyanobacteria.

An upcoming event is Jose Lozano will make a presentation to the water resources council (3/18) on the before and after of removal of containments from wastewater. Deborah Dawson from the Tompkins County PEEQ will be talking about express needs to upgrade water and wastewater capabilities (not sure of the date.)

Submitted by Jackie Cassaniti