

Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (I O) Meeting Minutes 5/27/2020

Attendance on ZOOM: Tee Ann Hunter, I O Chair, T Ithaca; Bud Shattuck, V Union Springs; Hilary Lambert, CLWN; Roxanna Johnston, C Ithaca; Elizabeth Graeper Thomas, T Ulysses; Jill Henry, Seneca County; Marina Howard, _____; Michael Allinger, T Newfield; Ronny Hardaway, V Lansing; Deborah Dawson, V Lansing; Grace Bates, V Aurora; Roxanne Marino, Cornell; George Patte, CLEAN; Bronwin Lowey, T Lansing; Darby Kiley, Tompkins County; Jen Karius, Ithaca College; Cynthia Brock, C Ithaca; Tony Del Plato, V Interlaken; Tom Vawter, T Lansing; Stephanie Redmond, T Enfield; Dave Sprout, T Dryden; William Sherman, V Cayuga; Jackie Cassaniti, T Caroline. There were at least 23 participants.

The minutes from the April I O meeting need work, and were not approved. This will be done soon. The financial report for this meeting was \$60,479.97 as it stands, and was approved. There was discussion as to whether Mike Solvig, finance officer for the Town of Ithaca, should put money in a bank CD, but that was rejected because \$30,000 will go to Kathy Bertuch, CNYRPDB, the money may be needed for other things and CD's don't pay that much anymore. Elizabeth said this idea might be premature since the I O hasn't heard from its committees yet. This was moved by Mike A. and seconded by Cynthia.

Tee Ann stated that her chairmanship ends at the end of 2020. Bud said there should be a succession plan in place now, so they don't have to deal with this later.

Committee Reports: Executive committee (ex. com.). At their first meeting they approved the RFQ (see below). On May 8th they looked at the MOA for the I O and how it compares with that of Lisa Cleckner, from the Finger Lakes Institute, she will talk to the ex. com. on 5/29/202. This discussion will be reported at the June meeting. Last Friday, 5/21/2020, they talked to Steve Lynch, the Cayuga County Planner, about Owasco Lake and their watershed group and if it feasible for the I O to incorporate and get a tax ID number. This would give the I O a chance to apply for different funding. Elizabeth said there is a lot coming for the June meeting from the ex. com. Cynthia said she knows someone from one of the Owasco Lake organizations who isn't sure if becoming a 501c3 is a good idea because of regulations they had to follow. She asked if their watershed manager is a county employee and Bud said no.

Finance Committee (fin. com.) from Liz Thomas) they looked at the Canandaigua Lake Watershed Council that hired a Watershed Manager*** in 1999, and based what is being called a Fair Funding Formula on their ideas. Other Finger Lakes with Watershed Managers (or the equivalent) are Keuka, Owasco, and Seneca. Cayuga Lake is the only big lake without a person working for the watershed. But now is the worst time to ask for money...it is a good time to plan for a new dues structure. "The I O could reach out to foundations, the state or state representatives to see if there is money to bridge the gap." About 40% of the watershed is included in Tompkins County and a big population, so it would pay a larger part of the I O budget. The minimum would be \$100 for a municipality to be an IO member. Elizabeth is still working on the formula and needs to finalize all the data and wants to run it past Steve Lynch. Elizabeth said the evaluation of the fee structure for the I O has 2 different scenarios; based on each municipality's acreage in the watershed, waterfront feet, taxable assessed value, and population density. Counties pay 1/3, while the rest of the munis pay 2/3, with a \$100 minimum. The Finance Committee looked at 2 financial goals: \$50,000, or \$130,000. According to the chart constructed by the Finance Committee, the Town of Lansing's bill would be high because so many of the variables used are high. Cynthia Brock asked to see the calculations, she said the City of Ithaca doesn't have any shoreline, since it is mostly private land or parks and had a 27% drop in sales tax revenue in March and April; but according to the Fair Funding Formula calculations, the city would pay \$4,186 or \$10,884 depending on

the goal used. Elizabeth said the dues could stay at \$900 for this 2021, because of Covid 19, but could change in the following year. Tom Vawter said the I O needs to show the munis what they would get for their money and the I O hasn't done a good job of that. Elizabeth said that since the I O doesn't have a watershed manager, like other lakes, it is a harder job. Deborah Dawson said it is a bad time to increase dues because all governments will be cutting back, eg. the state may cut education by 20 - 25%, making it hard to justify a raise in rates considering membership is voluntary. It could be 2023 before things get back to normal. Tee Ann said the Owasco watershed manager gets their money from a combination of sources; some contributors are not on the lake. Tee Ann added that the I O has been struggling for 20 years and needs staff to put the plans into action. She wonders if the I O should be not-for-profit? Jennifer Karius wondered if a watershed manager could get enough grant money to pay their own salary, they would have to be very qualified; Elizabeth Thomas said the I O can use the job descriptions from the other watershed organizations as a basis for writing one for Cayuga Lake. Tony Del Plato said this is new to him, since he has only been in the I O for about a year; is the I O doing such a bad job? Tee Ann said the only source of funds is the munis, and there is no staff. Bud added that the payback for DOS grants has been pushed back another year and that is hard on the munis.

Hilary said she likes what the I O is doing and her task of finding out what other organizations have been doing has "taken off" so that she would like a different task. She will have a spreadsheet ready in a few weeks and only some of the feedback she received was during this Covid 19 crisis. The Upper Susquehanna Coalition has a lot of answers and Angel Hinickle from TCSW talks to them quite a bit for their ideas. Hilary suggested going back to the RPP again and look at the map.

Roxy J said the Education and Outreach Committee (eoc) has met 3 times. There are 3 organizations requesting money from the I O; Discover Cayuga Lake (AKA the Floating Classroom), the Community Science Institute (CSI) and CLWN. Roxy doesn't know how much money to donate because if the I O wants a watershed manager, they will have to keep money for that. The Floating Classroom (FC) has been part of the I O from the beginning (now as a partner) and the education focus of the I O, CLWN has also been with the I O for a long time, but CSI hasn't received money from the I O before and the eoc doesn't think it should get any now. Roxanne M suggested a resolution from the I O, it was moved by Roxy J and seconded by Tom. Roxanne M said the FC hasn't been able to have spring education tours and may not have summer cruises, they also check for HAB's, so we should give money to them. They originally wanted \$5,500, but will now get \$3,000, with another amount if they get the boat in the water (2,000); CLWN's original request was for \$5,500 for their programs, including hydrilla, and this is very important; so we will fund them at a reduced level (\$1,700) even though they are our partners in the RPP. The motion to accept these ideas was moved by Elizabeth and seconded by Dave, and the vote was unanimous. Roxy J asked if the fin. com. could create a budget so the eoc would have some guidance, but Elizabeth said that should be the job of the whole I O. Jen said the I O should attach funding to what the I O wants to achieve. Roxanne M said it would take a while to figure out a budget and to check the bylaws; should the ex. com. do it? Tee Ann wanted one of the members to send an invoice to Mike S for the money to donate to the FC and CLWN. This motion was made by Roxy J and seconded by Tony. The vote was unanimous.

Roxanne M said again that the muni officials should be told what the I O does and Tom said they change every 2 years or so, Tony added, maybe the information should be presented every 2 years then. Darby requested a change in the meeting time and set up a "Doodle Poll" to check if other times were acceptable. Elizabeth reminded the I O of the RFQ It was approved by the Aurora Board of Trustees to

get beck papers from Rigger Network, Building Institute and Planning Foundation. Cynthia noted that the map in the RPP is different than the one CLWN has for their area of the Cayuga Lake Watershed.

Submitted by Jackie Cassaniti

*** watershed manager: A job description needs to be developed, but ideally this person would help implement the RPP and DEC Cayuga Lake HABs Action Plan along with other plans and strategies such as the Tompkins County Water Quality Strategy. Additionally, this person could help identify problem areas and help implement solutions, network with others with the same water quality goals in the Finger Lakes Region.