

Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council
January 22, 2019

Meeting of the Directors

Directors Present: Aileen McNabb-Coleman, Joan Jayne, Leslie Baxter, Ed Wagner, Don Oltz
Ex-Officio Members Present: Bruce Natale, Doug Kierst, Jim Beckwith, John West, Steve Lynch, Eileen O'Connor
Others Present: Ken Kudla, Ryan Franklin, Dana Hall, John Halfman, Drew Snell, Michele Wunderlich, Thomas Haag, Tony Prestigiacomo, Charles Ripley, Jon Negley, Douglas Hirsh, Maureen Riester

Don Oltz made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Joan Jayne and it passed unanimously. Aileen McNabb-Coleman made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 18, 2018 meeting. The motion was seconded by Leslie Baxter and it passed unanimously.

Doug Hirsh spoke during the public to be heard portion of the meeting. He has developed some technology that can remove many contaminants from the drinking water. He would like to open up discussions with the interested people and organizations to see how his technology may be helpful to address HABs. He said that he had reports of studies prepared by an objective third party that illustrates the effectiveness of his equipment.

Ms. Jayne reviewed the balance sheet and profit and loss document. The current cash in hand is \$151,259.48 and the total liabilities and equity is \$201,869.48. Mr. Oltz made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baxter and it passed unanimously.

Dr. Halfman gave his report regarding his 2018 monitoring activities. The water quality parameters did not change much from the previous few years. High phosphorus levels were seen in some small tributaries that were monitored. Fewer HABs were observed, but the cause of this is not known. HABs are infrequently found in the middle of the lake, but tend to be found on the shoreline. This year more blooms were seen on the west side of the lake, due most likely to an increase in winds from the southeast which may push decaying weeds towards the shoreline. Dr. Halfman believes that the decaying aquatic weeds provide nutrients that cause the shoreline HABs. Removing the weeds before they decay is essential. Also, it was noted that HABs tend to occur after a drop in water temperature is seen. The drop in water temperature is associated with storms. It is likely that the storms stir up the sediments in the near shore area, making phosphorus available to the HABs to flourish. Dr. Halfman also said the near shore devices such as the bubblers and ultrasonic devices did not appear to impact the development of the HABs, but since the overall presence of HABs was low this year, it was hard to test them. Dr. Halfman also discussed new technologies on the market that use nanoparticles to sorb phosphorus from water bodies. He encouraged that these products be evaluated.

Jon Negley, District Manager from Tompkins County Soil and Water reported about projects his agency has been working on in the Owasco watershed. Recently his agency worked on installing a covered barn yard and a nutrient storage system. Another barnyard project is being planned for 2019. Two CAFO waste storage facilities will be installed in 2019. Two miles of ditches were hydroseeded in 2018. Highway departments are doing a better job in getting in touch with the district when ditch scraping occurs so they can stabilize. The Tompkins Highway Department now has its own hydroseeder.

TCS&W worked with farms in installing over 100 acres of cover crops within the watershed in 2017. They implemented one waterway stabilization project in 2018 and two more are in the planning stage. In addition, TCS&W is looking into applying for a climate resiliency grant to address issues resulting from storm events occurring in a deep valley located in the watershed.

Mr. Wagner announced that the Council has offered the position of Executive Director to Dr. Adam Effler after reviewing the extensive hiring process which involved assessing over 30 resumes, interviewing numerous candidates, and narrowing the choice down to two excellent candidates. Both were invited to spend a day in the watershed meeting with various stakeholders before the final selection was made. Dr. Effler brings with him an extensive scientific background with water quality projects. He will starting his position in March.

Steve Lynch said that a final draft of the revised Rules and Regs is currently being put together to address the many comments that the Steering Committee had when they reviewed an earlier draft last fall. He expects that this will be released to the Steering Committee near the end of February and then to the public.

Eileen O'Connor reported that the priorities committee met recently and have been putting dollar figures with the priority projects. A concise document will be prepared that can be taken to our state elected officials in an effort to obtain funding. Visits to Albany were discussed but details have not been finalized.

Tony Prestigiacomio reported that he is currently reviewing the 2018 CSLAP data and a summary will be put together later this year. He said that the UFI model that will be used in the 9E plan is being finalized.

John West reported that the lake is a little higher than typical this year due to the ongoing work on the downstream bridges. He hopes to start bringing the lake down to 709 ft. soon.

Drew Snell showed pictures of recent issues he has been involved with including responding to a algal bloom (that was determined to not be an HAB), a complaint regarding the disposal of rat feces and carcasses, turbid runoff caused by a logging operation, and the removal of a stream buffer. He discussed how many of the streams in the watershed have a DEC classification that does not offer them with adequate protection. Mr. Snell reported that he has observed some limited manure application in the watershed on the snow covered ground.

The next Council meeting will be Tuesday, February 26, 2019 at 10 am in the Auburn City Hall Council Chambers.

Minutes prepared by Eileen O'Connor, February 1, 2019, 2018