

Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency
March 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes
Meeting conducted virtually on 8x8

Members or Designees Present: Doug Dello Stritto, Jeff Emerson, Doug Kierst, Ron Kuck, Stephen Lynch, Pat Mooney, Rick Nelson, Carl Wiezalis

Others Present: Greg Colucci, Jason Cuddeback, Adam Effler, Olivia Green, Tee-Ann Hunter, Bruce Natale, Greg Rejman, Emily Sheridan, Michele Wunderlich

Old Business

Minutes

The minutes from the February 4, 2021 WQMA meeting were reviewed. Steve Lynch made a motion to accept the February 4, 2021 minutes as written. Jeff Emerson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

WQMA Priority Working Groups Reports

Michele Wunderlich stated that the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency's 2021 Work Plan was distributed to members prior to the meeting. Rick Nelson made a motion to accept the Cayuga County Water Quality Management Agency 2021 Work Plan as written. Jeff Emerson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agency Reports

Cayuga County Buildings and Grounds Department

Doug Dello Stritto stated that they continue to plan the riparian buffer zones on both sides of the channel at Emerson Park and the work is done on-site for the sluiceway work and the contractor is waiting for ice-out to begin. They are also accepting bids for the Sterling Nature Center improvements.

Cayuga County Department of Planning and Economic Development

Steve Lynch reported that the Department continues its work on the Local Waterfront Revitalization plans for the Village of Cayuga and the Village of Fair Haven/Town of Sterling. He reported on the State's Reimagine the Erie Canal and stated that there is a design concept for a kayak park at Mud Lock and it is out to bid for design services. He reported that the Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization has their list of priority projects on their website for review. He also reported that they have signed acceptance letters for the two new planners.

Michele Wunderlich reported that Todd Walter is presenting at the Bob Brower Symposium on the status of the 9E Plan for Owasco Lake.

Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

Doug Kierst reported that they are holding their annual tree and shrub sale and their fish sale and information will be coming out soon. He reported that they have received Climate Resiliency Funding from NYS Ag and Markets for four projects in Cayuga County. He also reported work continues on farm planning and working with landowners on erosion control projects.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County Update

Ron Kuck stated that Laura Klaiber from the Miner Agricultural Institute is working on research on farm best management practices and she will be speaking at the Bob Brower Scientific Symposium.

Lake Reports

Cayuga Lake Report

Tee-Ann Hunter reported that the Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Organization (IO) is in the process of ranking shovel ready projects in the Cayuga Lake Watershed and they are listed on their website. She reported that they are still working with Ian Smith, the Seneca Lake Watershed Steward, to look for high priority projects with Cayuga Lake watershed municipalities. She also stated that the Consensus Building Institute will be presenting on the results of their organizational assessment at the March IO meeting.

Cross Lake/ Seneca River Report

Carl Wiezalis reported that there has been concern about ice fishing safety and he was looking for guidelines. He asked if there was any sewer monitoring for Covid-19. Olivia Green reported that Hyatt Green is working with the City of Auburn on this. She also stated that there will be a presentation by Dave Larson, an epidemiologist, on “Wastewater Surveillance as a Pandemic Management Tool” and she will forward the information.

Lake Como Report

Pat Mooney reported that they had an ice fishing derby on Lake Como and it was very successful. He reported that they have a permit to remove the beaver dams and remove the piles of debris left over on Fall Creek.

Owasco Lake Report

Rick Nelson reminded the Agency that the Bob Brower Scientific Symposium is on March 6th starting at 9:30 am and registration is available on the OWLA website. He stated that they have over 100 people registered.

Partner Reports

Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council (OLWMC)

Adam Effler reported that they have been holding meetings with State politicians to discuss the update to the Owasco Watershed Rules and Regulations. He reported that they are working on getting permits from the NYSDOT for installation of the Hyfi water level sensors and the data is on their webpage for those sensors that are currently installed. Finally he reported that they are looking at going for grant funding from the Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Grant program to install riparian buffers.

NYSDEC Great Lakes Program

Emily Sheridan reported on several grant programs including the Buffer in a Bag funding from the NYSDEC and the Great Lakes Small Grants Program. She reported that the 2018-2020 Great Lakes Report is available and they are updating NY’s Great Lakes Action Agenda through 2030.

The Nature Conservancy

Olivia Green reported that they are sponsoring the Finger Lakes Lake Friendly Living week on May 2nd to May 8th. She reported that they continue to work on the Our Owasco Project by working to enhance peer to peer and farmer to farmer interactions to adopt soil health best management practices. Finally, she reported on the National Parks Service's Finger Lakes National Heritage Area designation's feasibility study.

Miscellaneous

Carl Wiezalis made a motion to adjourn. Jeff Emerson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting was closed at 10:49 am.