

Cayuga County Board of Health
Tuesday, March 8, 2022
Special Board Meeting In-person & virtual @ 12:15pm

Board Members Present: Mr. Ralph Battista
Ms. Elane Daly
Mr. Keith Batman
Mr. Tim Fessenden
Dr. John Cosachov- Virtual
Dr. Cassandra Archer- Virtual

Board Members Excuse: Dr. Brian Brundage

Guests Present: Adam Effler, Executive Director, Owasco Lake Management Council
Michele Wunderlich, Associate Planner, Cayuga County Planning Office
Kirsten Workman, Nutrient Management and Environmental
Sustainability Specialist Pro-Dairy, Cornell University

Staff Present: Kathleen Cuddy, MPH
Eileen O'Connor, PE – Virtual
Nancy Purdy, RN, BSN
Dr. Philip Gioia- Medical Director
Megan Bell

Meeting was called to order at 12:18pm.

Keith began the meeting by outlining the topic for discussion at today's special Board meeting. There are some outside staff here to present on various water quality projects happening throughout the county. The main focus being the Owasco Lake Watershed.

Kathleen shared that there was a letter that was circulated and reviewed by Board of Health members regarding supporting some changes to the CAFO permit. The letter was submitted to the State on behalf of the Board. Tim Fessenden had requested some further discussion regarding some of the more specific points in the letter.

Tim Fessenden expressed some of his thoughts regarding the letter; some of the items listed in the letter are very appropriate and some are reactionary due to previous events. Tim felt that potentially more enforcement of the current guideline along with education and guidance may see better outcomes than adding more layers of regulation. Majority of CAFO permitted facilities are following the permit and regulations outlined within, but there will always be those who do not regardless of the level regulation imposed upon them. Keith Batman mentioned the need for more money towards enforcement, education and guidance efforts. One of the specific points that Tim mentioned from the letter was reducing the permit length from 10 years to every 5 years. Tim shared that the permit process is very involved and lengthy and if the length was to be lowered it would be a constant process as one would just be finished and you would have to start to work on the renewal. Kirsten shared that at any point as new regulations, information,

techniques and technologies are available the DEC can open up the permit and require permit holders to adjust their plans. Keith mentioned that sometimes those new regulations are only recommended not required until the permits expired.

Tim mentioned the rainfall/weather events that have occurred over the course of the last 10 years are significantly worse and are causing more damage to areas that previous to that would not have been a typical area of concern.

Kirsten Workman from Cornell gave a brief introduction on herself and her experience in the farming industry. She has just recently moved to New York from Vermont and is working with farming groups. Her most recent experience was in Lake Champlain. She is learning more about the Finger Lakes watersheds and is here today to listen and provide perspective. Kristen also shared that it would be helpful for groups working towards water quality to have information regarding the types of the farming practices that are currently being used by farms in the watershed.

Michele Wunderlich from the Cayuga County Planning Department shared updated information regarding the 9 Elements plan. They are hoping to have the plan completed by August; they ran into some difficulties and delays with data clarification and COVID. There is also a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) which focuses on a single point of pollution into a water body like a waste water treatment plant and that can be regulated through State regulations. The 9E plan focuses on non-specific points of water pollution and does not necessarily have regulatory authority behind it, but more community cooperation. Michele stated that the 9E plan has 3 areas of focus including: cover crops, nutrient management planning and prohibiting spreading in riparian areas. Kirsten shared that technical assistance in the form one-on-one settings can make a huge difference particularly with smaller or struggling farms.

Elane asked Michele if putting Owasco Lake on the 303D list requires the implementation of a TMDL. Michele shared that it does not always require a TMDL as there are different levels within the 303D that require varying levels of intervention.

Adam Effler from the Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council gave a brief background on the Inspection Program and its responsibilities. Adam then shared a program that they are currently working with the City of Auburn in regards to improving water quality. The Drinking Water Source Protection Plan is different than the 9E plan in that it is administered by New York State and is intended more for water purveyors (City of Auburn and Town of Owasco). The State provides assistance via private consultants who work with the Inspection Program to identify sources of contamination and make recommendations for mitigation or prevention. The program is fairly new but is making progress in listing potential sources of contamination via mapping and then developing an area defined as critical around the lake and various tributaries. The City of Auburn is the applicant on the project and Seth Jensen is an important part of the program. Adam is hopeful that the outcome of the project will be proposals or projects that could be implemented. Elane asked if the drinking water plan will compliment the 9E plan and the watershed rules and regulations revisions and Adam was hopeful that the water quality projects would all compliment each other. Adam also shared that Ed Wagner from the Town of Owasco is also considering applying for this program, so that the work for Owasco Lake can continue.

Kathleen asked Eileen if there has been update from the State regarding the revision of the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations. Eileen shared that all the State agencies have finished their review and are compiling their comments and hope to have it back to the City of Auburn and Town of Owasco in April.

With nothing further to discuss a motion by Mr. Ralph Battista and a second by Ms. Elane Daly the meeting ended at 1:19pm.