

## **5.6 A Resolution Endorsing and Supporting the Adoption of the Revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations**

By Alderperson Murtagh: Seconded by Alderperson Brock

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca became a water purveyor in 1903 using Six Mile Creek as its drinking water source,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Public Health Law Section 1100, the New York State Department of Health adopted Title 10 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, water purveyors are granted the authority to develop and update Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, Watershed Rules and Regulations are developed for the preservation of public drinking water sources and their protection from point and nonpoint source pollution; and

WHEREAS, the current Six Mile Creek Watershed Rules and Regulations protecting the City of Ithaca's drinking water source were adopted in 1933,

WHEREAS, Cornell University is a water purveyor using Fall Creek as its source of drinking water and has Fall Creek Watershed Rules and Regulations adopted in 1928,

WHEREAS, the Southern Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Water Commission (otherwise known as Bolton Point), is a water purveyor and uses Cayuga Lake as its source for drinking water and does not have Cayuga Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca, Cornell University, Bolton Point and the Tompkins County Health Department jointly developed model Watershed Rules and Regulations in 1995 to be used as a template to update the City of Ithaca and Cornell Watershed Rules and Regulations and create Watershed Rules and Regulations for Bolton Point; and

WHEREAS, progress was not made due to the complexity of the task and lack of support at the State level; and

WHEREAS, representatives from the City of Ithaca and Cornell University have been working with the Tompkins County Water Resources Council since 2016 to update their respective Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn together with the Town of Owasco are a water purveyor using Owasco Lake as its source of drinking water and has adopted Watershed Rules and Regulations in 1984, and since that time the lands within the Owasco Lake watershed have witnessed cumulative changes in land use and development; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, as a part of the continued efforts to protect water quality, the City of Auburn, the Town of Owasco and Cayuga County passed resolutions endorsing a project to update and revise the 1984 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, over the last three years the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations Steering Committee has worked diligently and used a very engaged public process with staff representatives, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and Project Stakeholder groups, serving as a model in their coordinated effort to create and recommend a revised draft of the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca recognizes that environmental threats to drinking water sources are not adequately addressed in the outdated Six Mile Creek Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca recognizes that emerging threats to water quality not envisioned in earlier decades such as harmful algae blooms, microplastics, emerging contaminants, industrial uses or withdrawals and other contaminants are best addressed at a watershed level; and

WHEREAS, enacting Watershed Rules and Regulations to protect water resources from point and non-point pollution is both environmentally protective as well as economically prudent as it is more efficient and cost effective to keep pollution out of natural areas and waterways than to remove pollutants from soil, creeks, and waterways; and

WHEREAS, the City of Ithaca is pursuing an update of their own outdated Six Mile Creek Watershed Rules and Regulations; and

WHEREAS, on October 29, 2020, a final draft of the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations was endorsed by the City Council of Auburn and the Town Board of Owasco; and

WHEREAS, on October 29, 2020, the City Council of Auburn and the Town Board of Owasco requested that New York State repeal the 1984 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations and replace them with the revised 2020 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the City of Ithaca does hereby express support to the Town of Owasco and City of Auburn in their efforts to update the Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that while the City of Ithaca does not specifically endorse any rule or regulation within the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations, the City of Ithaca endorses any revisions based on the authority of the Town of Owasco and City of Auburn to do so, and the communal process by which those revisions which made; and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the City of Ithaca does hereby request that the New York State Department of Health repeal the existing 1984 Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations, which are cited at 10 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, Section 104.1, and replace the same with the revised Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations.


**Carried Unanimously**

**STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS  
CITY OF ITHACA**

**SS:**

I, Julie Conley Holcomb, City Clerk of the City of Ithaca, do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution is a true and exact copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Common Council of said City of Ithaca at a regular meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021, and that the same is a complete copy of the whole of such resolution.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the Corporate Seal of the City of Ithaca, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of January 2021.



*Julie Conley Holcomb*

Julie Conley Holcomb,  
City Clerk  
City of Ithaca, New York