

Minutes of the Watershed Agricultural Council Meeting

January 28, 2010

I. Meeting called to order at 1:05 p.m.

Fred welcomed the new members Steve Reed and John Riedl .

Directors Present:

David Cammer	Fred Huneke
Linda DeWitt	Darby Hartwell
Tom Donnelly	Richard Giles
Sally Fairbairn	Ken Smith
William Coleman	Joe Eisele
Dave Post	John Verhoeven
John Schwartz, NYC DEP	

Directors Absent:

Barbara Howard	Tom Hutson
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Others Present:

Craig Cashman	Thomas Artale
Cheryl Marion	Seth Hersh
Jeff Graff	Tom Pavlesich
Carrie Davis	Brian LaTourette
Elaine Poulin	Tara Collins
Challey Comer	Dan Flaherty

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 22, 2009.

Motion: Dave Cammer

Second: Bill Coleman

Approved

III. Executive Director Report – Craig Cashman

Craig detailed the Operational Report and the Program Report/Approvals dated January 26, 2010 that were distributed.

Operational Report

Easement Contract Negotiations – Jeff and Craig have met again with the DEP to discuss the framework for the easement contract. The majority of the discussion focused around the conceptual plan moving from unanimous consent to majority rule. The challenge however centers on the presence of “veto power” in the future on the part of DEP with any changes to guidelines. Dave Tobias will be asked to visit the next Board meeting and the Directors have been asked to formulate their questions. .

NYSERDA Grant – Two checks will be forwarded to WAC. The first check we will receive is \$39,000 and the second is \$102,000. NYSERDA is finalizing the signatures.

DSA Report – Craig will begin work this next week on formulating an RFP for the Board and Staff coach to build governance and policy skills, program accountability and coordinate training to ensure a cultural shift with oversight roles.

Committee on Open Government (C.O.O.G)– WAC received an opinion letter from the C.O.O.G. regarding our relationship to Sunshine Laws. Though WAC does not agree that we are subject to Sunshine Laws as per our attorneys, we will remain transparent as an organization and work collectively and collaboratively with all parties and potential requests.

Program Reports/Approvals:

Coalition of Watershed Towns – Craig and Jeff met with Dean Frasier to provide training on the Easement program in particular the appraisal process. Craig and Jeff will now focus on developing a training program for towns and villages in the Watershed.

PAR Update – Seth Hersh

Seth stated that PAR continues to run late and January 19th was the extension deadline for stabilizing the system and testing. PAR is anxious for the check for the completion of Phase II but the work has not been completed. Since June 30th is the deadline for DEP funding for this project it doesn't appear that it will be feasible to get the Farm to Market, Easement and Forestry work completed by that time. DEP and Seth do not feel they can complete the work in that timeframe. DEP has been very willing to let Eric work with WAC in identifying the short comings of Phase II before we proceed. Breaking the contract with PAR may not be the best approach. 3-6 months of time has been lost. James Samek is capable of finishing the short pieces. Eric will be coming up from Kingston next week of assist with the final punch list. At the end of next week a letter will be generated to PAR stating they do not have approval to being Phase III until Phase II is completed.

Farm to Market – Challey Comer

The Farm to Market Program has approved an RFP to begin another grant program in addition to a scholarship spot which is open. The Dairy Conference was very successful with 124 in attendance. A Beef Group mtg and one for Custom Feeding will be scheduled shortly. The Farm to Market Conference will be held again in the spring.

Forestry – Tom Pavlesich

Josh VanBrakle has been hired as the Wood Utilization and Marketing Specialist for the Forestry Program. The EoH forester position has been posted and interviews will be conducted the end of February. Regular reports have been submitted timely to the DEP and the program is on track with their deliverables. 2010 Forestry Handbook has been completed and is available.

Agriculture – Small Farms – Dan Flaherty

The Small Farms Program has had a banner year and has met deliverables of 10 WFPs and 6 revisions. The Assessment Report has also been completed. The goals for 2010 are 10 WFPS and 12 revisions.

Agriculture – Large Farms – Brian LaTourette

Brian stated that for the first time the WAP staff has met their deliverables of 12 new WFPs and 24 revisions. The renovating of the office space and restructuring of staff to forms team planning again is moving along well. Brian is hoping this will assist in helping the program meet their goals more efficiently. Elaine Poulin mentioned there will be no contractor meeting this year so the WAP will be

mailing a brief overview of the program to them in addition to requirement updates.

East of Hudson – Carrie Davis

The EoH program has met their deliverables of 6 WFPs and 4 annual status reviews. A participant event was also held this year. 15% of the EoH engineer's time is being used by the WoH Program. Carrie is looking to integrate resources more efficiently with other programs. Two new farms have been chosen and the goal is for six this year. Looking for help from the WoH Nutrient Management Team and perhaps they will also look into having landowners provide soil samples.

Outreach – Tara Collins

The most recent WAC newsletter has been mailed. Tara encourages WAC Directors to serve as Ambassadors for the Council by writing op-ed piece of support for WAC in local papers, talking before groups or taking three friends to lunch to tell them about WAC.

Easements – Jeff Graff

95 easements are now held on 108 properties covering 17,000+ acres. 2 donated easements are also held. Ground and aerial monitoring has been completed. The program continues to construct guidelines.

Motion to authorize the Watershed Agricultural Council to execute a contract for the expenditure of one thousand three hundred fifty dollars (\$1,350) per acre for the purchase of a conservation easement of approximately 145.2 acres on lands included in the whole farm plan under farm number DE-C-212 located in the Cannonsville Basin.

Acres under easement:	145.2
Appraised "before" value:	\$2,900.00/acre
Appraised "after" value:	\$1,550.00/acre
Appraised easement value:	\$1,350/acre
Total Purchase Price (Approx.):	\$196,020

Motion: Linda DeWitt

Second: Darby Hartwell

Approved

Human Resources – Cheryl Marion

In addition to positions already discussed in other program reports Cheryl stated ads are also running for a Nutrient Management Specialist, and an Executive Assistant for the Ag Program. Interviews for Ag Program Manager are being held this week.

IV. Chair's Report – Fred Huneke

Cost Guidelines – The cost guidelines for EoH and WoH will remain the same as last year.

Endowment Committee – Fred stated that Chris Gaddis and Alan White have agreed to serve on the Endowment Committee. He is waiting to hear who the DEP have chosen.

Operating Statements –

Motion to approve the WAC Operating Statements as listed below to serve as Committee Charges:

Outreach Communications Department:

The Outreach Communications Department will guide the organizational message and means by which the Council communicates with its various constituents, stakeholders and the community.

Easement Program

The Easement Program acquires and stewards conservation easements on eligible agricultural properties in the NYC Watershed as defined by the WAC Conservation Easement Acquisition Policy and the WAC Conservation Easement Stewardship Policy. The purpose of the conservation easement is to protect the water quality of the New York City Watersheds, and to protect agricultural and forestry lands by limiting the form, location, and density of development and to promote good stewardship by the implementation of Whole Farm Plans.

Forestry Program

The Forestry Program will promote sustainable forest stewardship, improve and protect water quality and support the economic viability of forest based industry in the NYC watershed region.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department is responsible for the development and oversight of processes that ensure positions are filled in a fair manner with highly qualified individuals in accordance with WAC policies and in conformance with all federal and state laws. The Department further ensures that staff benefits are administered fairly and equally and that all WAC personnel policies and guidelines are complied with.

Data Base Department

The Data Management Group is responsible for the formal data systems which support the daily, on-going business and activities of WAC. The release of any data to groups, agencies or individuals outside the direct oversight of WAC is under the authority of the Data Management Group and must adhere to WAC's existing policies of privacy and confidentiality.

Finance Department

The Finance Committee will oversee and be responsible for the finances of the Watershed Agricultural Council by: Ensuring that annual budgets and monthly financial statements are prepared in a timely and accurate manner and made available to the Board, Overseeing the administration of the financial resources of the organization, Advising and make recommendations to the Board regarding short and long term financial goals and stability and creating guidelines and recommending financial policies to the Board.

Audit and Regulatory Oversight

This Committee will assist the Board of Directors in fulfilling its financial responsibilities by reviewing all financial information, providing oversight of all regulatory requirements and internal control functions.

Agricultural Program

The Agricultural Committee shall provide guidance, oversight and be responsible for the development and implementation of the Watershed Agricultural Program's (WAP) governing guidelines, DEP/WAC/WAP contract deliverables, WAP Annual Work Plan(s)/deliverables and the WAP annual budget. The Agricultural Committee shall also provide guidance to Whole Farm Planning, implementation of conservation practices and annual monitoring of eligible voluntary participating agricultural enterprises in the NYC Watershed Regions to reduce point and non-point agricultural pollution, improving water quality while striving to maintain the viability and sustainability of the working landscape of participants of the WAP in accordance with the WAC policies. The Agricultural Committee shall appoint a Nutrient Management sub-committee to implement the Nutrient Management Credit Program and other issues assigned by the Agricultural Committee.

Nutrient Management Sub – Committee

This Committee shall provide guidance, oversight and be responsible for the management of all nutrients within the NYC Watershed Regions reducing point and non-point pollution, improving water quality while striving to maintain the viability and sustainability of the working landscape in accordance with the WAC policies and WAP guidelines. The Nutrient Management sub-committee shall report to the Agricultural Committee. The Nutrient Management sub-committee will also oversee and be responsible for the Nutrient Management Credit (NMC) and Enhanced Nutrient Management (ENMC) Programs and other issues assigned by the Agricultural Committee.

Farm to Market Program

The Farm to Market Program works to support the economic viability of agriculture in the greater Catskills region in order to build and maintain a critical mass of agricultural producers.

East of Hudson Program

The East of Hudson (EoH) Committee shall provide guidance, oversight and be responsible for the continued development and implementation of the EoH Program and its governing guidelines, DEP/WAC contract deliverables, annual work plans and operating budget. The EoH Committee shall also provide guidance on Whole Farm Planning, Forestry Program initiatives, easement opportunities, implementation of conservation practices and annual monitoring of participating farms in the New York City water supply watersheds EoH. This guidance shall be provided for the

purpose of protecting water quality by reducing the potential for point and non-point source pollution from properties enrolled in WAC's Programs while supporting land conservation and the viability of the working landscape in the New York City water supply watersheds EoH in accordance with the WAC policies.

Motion: Dave Cammer

Second: Ken Smith

Opposed: Linda Dewitt & Tom Donnelly

Approved

WAC Policy vs. Committee Guideline Review:

Motion to remove the 24 WAC policies that were determined to be more suitably defined as WAC Committee Guidelines as outlined in the document dated 12/22/09 written by Dave Cammer, Brian LaTourette, Tom Pavlesich, and Carrie Davis.

Motion: Sally Fairbairn

Second: Joe Eisele

Approved

Farm to Market Policy – this policy was written by the FtM committee and will be addressed at the February meeting as to what process/committees it should follow before becoming a WAC policy.

Motion to approve the Chair's appointments of Ken Smith, Chair; Linda DeWitt, Tom Donnelly, and Tom Hutson to the WAC Audit Committee.

Motion: Dave Cammer

Second: Bill Coleman

Approved

Motion to absorb the responsibilities of the Policy Committee into the Executive Committee.

Motion: John Verhoeven

Second: Bill Coleman

Approved

Motion to approve the Chair's appointments of John Verhoeven Chair; Bill Coleman, Richard Giles and Barbara Howard to the WAC Governance Committee.

Motion: Linda DeWitt

Second: Dave Cammer

Approved

Motion to approve the Chair's creation of a Human Resources Committee.

Motion: Joe Eisele

Second: Richard Giles

Approved

V. Finance Committee – Bill Coleman and Thomas Artale

Motion to accept the November Financial Statement.

Motion: Bill Coleman

Second: Ken Smith

Approved

Motion to approve WAC Draft 5 Budget FY 2009-2010

Motion: Bill Coleman

Second: Dave Cammer

Approved

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.