

# Watershed Agricultural Council

Agriculture ♦ Forestry ♦ Conservation Easements ♦ Economic Viability

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## MINUTES OF THE WATERSHED AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING

January 28, 2025

### I. Meeting called to order at 10:09 a.m.

#### Directors Present:

Dwight Bruno  
James Darling  
Paul Gallay  
Wayland 'Bud' Gladstone, *Chair*  
Karl Gockel, *Treasurer*, via Teams  
Jennifer Grossman, *Secretary*, via Teams  
Barb Hanselman, via Teams  
Jason Helmbold  
Fred Huneke  
Tom Hutson, *Vice Chair*  
Steve Reed, via Teams  
John Verhoeven  
Marilyn Wyman, via Teams  
Shilo Williams, *NYC DEP*, via Teams

#### Directors Absent:

None

#### Others Present:

Ryan Naatz, *Executive Director*  
Amy Faulkner, *Director of Operations*  
Carol Bishop, *Finance Director*  
Connor Young, *WOH Agricultural Program Manager*  
Tom Pavlesich, *Forestry Program Manager*, via Teams  
Serena Orleski, *Easement Program Manager*  
Mike Morales, *Easement Program Stewardship Coordinator*  
Bill Martin, *Easement Program Acquisition Coordinator*  
Kayla Atanasoff, *Easement Program Executive Assistant*  
Kristan Morley, *Economic Viability Program Manager*  
Heather Magnan, *Communications Manager*, via Teams  
Michael Vander Werff, *NYC DEP*  
Sara Storrer, *NYC DEP*  
Lee Harris, *NYC DOI*, via Teams  
Patrick Palmer, *NYS DOH*  
Paul Kacmarczyk, *NYS DOH*  
Morgan Tarbell, *NYS DOH*  
Alyssa Bement, *NYS DOH*  
Bruce Dolph, *DC SWCD Board*, via Teams  
Mary Crisafulli, *The Mountain Eagle*, via Teams

### II. Approval of Minutes

***Motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting as presented.***

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: Tom Hutson

**Approved**

### **III. Executive Director's Report – Ryan Naatz**

#### **A. Operational and Programmatic Updates – Dashboard Reports**

Ryan asked for any questions or comments regarding the included Dashboard Reports (there were none).

#### **B. Subcontract Updates – *moved to Executive Session***

### **IV. Chair's Report – Wayland 'Bud' Gladstone**

#### **A. Committee Assignments Update**

Bud presented updates to Board member committee assignments and asked for any feedback. He encouraged members to reach out to him directly if they had any questions regarding their assignments.

#### **B. Approval of Governance Committee Members per By-laws**

***Motion to approve the Chair's appointment of the following members to the Governance Committee: Jason Helmbold – Chair, Fred Huneke, Tom Hutson, Steve Reed and John Verhoeven.***

Motion: John Verhoeven

Second: James Darling

**Approved**

#### **C. Approval of Audit Committee Members per By-laws**

***Motion to approve the Chair's appointment of the following members to the Audit Committee: Paul Gallay – Chair, Dwight Buno and Steve Reed.***

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: Tom Hutson

**Approved**

#### **D. Easement Program Records Retention Policy**

***Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, motion to approve the Easement Program Records Retention Policy as presented.***

Motion: Tom Hutson

Second: Paul Gallay

**Approved**

E. Director and Non-Director Reimbursement Policies

***Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, motion to approve the Director and non-Director Reimbursement Policy as presented.***

Motion: Marilyn Wyman

Second: Steve Reed

***Approved***

F. Employee Handbook/Policy

***Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, motion to approve Employee Handbook as presented.***

Motion: James Darling

Second: Tom Hutson

***Approved***

V. Governance Committee – John Verhoeven

A. Slate of Officer Elections

***Upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee, motion to elect the following officers for the term of February 1, 2025, to January 31, 2027:***

***Wayland “Bud” Gladstone for Chair***

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: James Darling

Recused: Bud Gladstone

***Approved***

***Tom Hutson for Vice-Chair***

Motion: Bud Gladstone

Second: Paul Gallay

Recused: Tom Hutson

***Approved***

***Jennifer Grossman for Secretary***

Motion: Tom Hutson

Second: Dwight Bruno

Recused: Jennifer Grossman

***Approved***

***Karl Gockel for Treasurer***

Motion: Jason Helmbold

Second: Steve Reed

Recused: Karl Gockel

***Approved***

**B. Board Member Recruitment**

John reminded everyone of the Board Member Recruitment process, as outlined in the packet materials included. He reported that the Committee did receive a nomination from a senior staff member.

There are fourteen (14) Board members currently serving, which is too few according to the WAC By-laws. There are also currently four (4) members at large. If there is not a timely appointment of new members, it would be worth considering revisions to the By-laws.

**C. Officer Job Descriptions**

John asked for any questions regarding the Officer Job Descriptions included within the packet materials (there were none).

**D. Directors Only Meeting**

John turned the floor over to Amy to give an update on the upcoming Directors Only meeting. Amy reported that the Directors Only meeting will be held at the Andes Hotel on Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. The Governance Committee is scheduled to meet later today to finalize the agenda.

**VI. Finance Committee – Karl Gockel & Carol Bishop**

**A. October Financials**

*Karl Gockel stepped away from the meeting, so Carol presented his updates.*

Carol reported that staff from NBT Bank will be attending the February Committee meeting to review the Stewardship Endowment Fund.

***Motion to approve the October Financials as presented.***

Motion: Marilyn Wyman

Second: Dwight Bruno

***Approved***

**VII. Building Committee – Karl Gockel**

Carol reported that the Building Committee has not met since the last Council meeting, but Finance is currently working with the selected subcontractor to finalize the terms of a contract agreement for site-scoping and building design.

#### **VIII. Economic Viability Committee – Jennifer Grossman**

Jennifer had a few updates to report since the last Council meeting. First, the new Economic Viability Handbook is currently being finalized. Second, she explained that the Micro Grant Program has been opened up to include farm and forest landowners within the East-of-Hudson (Croton) watershed. Additionally, the pilot Fruit and Vegetable Expansion Grant will become a permanent grant category. Finally, Jennifer reported that the Economic Viability Program will be working with Cornell University on a Capacity Study. Along with other program surveys, this study and its findings will serve to better inform the program of participant's needs.

#### **IX. NYC DEP Report – Shilo Williams**

Shilo had nothing to report on at this time. She looks forward to a continued partnership with the WAC.

#### **X. NYS DOH, US EPA Reports – Patrick Palmer & Katie Lynch**

Patrick had nothing to report on at this time.

#### **XI. Other**

*None*

#### **XII. Executive Session**

***Motion to enter Executive Session at 10:40 a.m.***

Motion: John Verhoeven

Second: Tom Hutson

***Approved***

***Motion to come out of Executive Session at 11:16 a.m.***

Motion: Tom Hutson

Second: Fred Huneke

***Approved***

#### **XIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 a.m. by common consent.

The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 10:00 a.m., via Teams.**