

Watershed Agricultural Council

Agriculture ♦ Forestry ♦ Conservation Easements ♦ Economic Viability

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Executive Committee Meeting September 15, 2015

Meeting called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Sally Fairbairn.

Members Present: John Schwartz Dave Cammer
Fred Huneke Tom Hutson
Sally Fairbairn John Riedl

Members Absent: Richard Giles

Others: Craig Cashman Bud Gladstone
Thomas Artale Ed Blouin
Amy Faulkner

I. Approval of Minutes

Dave Cammer requested a modification to the minutes in the discussion regarding the Audit Update. He asked that the minutes read '... Dave asked for more user-friendly financials.' replacing 'Dave asked for better documentation for the financials.'

Motion to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2015 meeting as modified per discussion.

Motion: Dave Cammer

Second: John Schwartz

Approved

II. Executive Director's Report – Craig Cashman

A. Operations Report

- **Property Evaluation:** The Property Task Force recently met with DEP to further discuss the option of purchasing the Treadwell property. At the conclusion of the meeting it was shared that Commissioner Emily Lloyd is concerned with the property being located outside of the watershed. Subsequent to that meeting Craig had a conference call with Paul Rush to further detail the process that resulted in the selection of the Treadwell Property as the best option for WAC. Paul stated that it would be helpful to detail that process for the Commissioner. Tom Pavlesich and Thomas Artale put together a white paper entitled *Moving the Watershed Agricultural Council to Treadwell and its Impact of Regional Economic Viability*. The report was distributed to the Executive Committee and reviewed in detail, in summation the report identifies why staff feels that a move outside of the watershed will not have a negative impact on regional economic viability of the watershed. The property task force also met yesterday with Jeff Taggart, Franklin Town Supervisor, to discuss a possible move to Treadwell. This afternoon Fred and Sally will take the white

paper to share with Paul Rush to further discuss the possible move. Dave Warne will be joining that meeting via phone. A meeting with DEP Officials has been scheduled for October 9th to further discuss the Treadwell building and determine if it is in fact an option for WAC. The task force also recently met with Scott Clark, he has decided to put a new roof on the building at his expense in order to prevent further damage. If WAC decides to move forward with the purchase of the Treadwell building, the price of the building will increase as a result of the roof being replaced. Thomas updated the group on the work he has been doing regarding mortgage options for the Council. He received a draft commitment letter that details the requirements for a loan through NBDC. At the September Council meeting he will ask for approval to explore mortgage options with a few additional banks in order to be sure that WAC is getting the best option if a decision is made to move forward with the property.

- B. Contract Negotiations:** Craig met with partnering agencies yesterday to review the timeline for negotiations of those subcontracts in relationship to WAC/DEP contract negotiations.
- C. CCE Delaware County:** Craig, along with select WAC staff, and DEP met with Delaware County CCE staff today to discuss how WAC and CCE can collaborate to better serve the economic viability of the watershed region. The pure Catskills Marketplace and Delaware Bounty were discussed. Craig will continue to make the push that WAC and CCE should be collaborating along with other key organizations working to improve economic viability of the watershed.
- D. Agricultural Program:** WAC and DEP continue to work on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant funding proposal. Ed Blouin stated that the preproposal has been accepted and that the final proposal will be reviewed in November 2015. If this proposal is accepted, the funds would be awarded sometime in April of 2016. WAC has been awarded funding for an additional CREP Intern through NRCS.

III. Chair's Report- Sally Fairbairn

Sally reminded everyone of the East of Hudson Farm Tour scheduled for Monday, September 28th, she encouraged all to attend. She also reported that DeiBenedetto's Pasture Walk is scheduled for September 23rd and the Cauliflower Festival is September 26th.

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.