

Watershed Agricultural Council

Agriculture ♦ Forestry ♦ Conservation Easements ♦ Economic Viability

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Executive Committee Meeting May 21, 2024

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Tom Hutson

Members Present: Wayland “Bud” Gladstone, Chair, via Zoom Fred Huneke
 Jennifer Grossman, via Zoom Tom Hutson
 Marilyn Wyman, via Zoom Karl Gockel, via Zoom
 John Vickers, NYC DEP

Others Present: Ryan Naatz Amy Faulkner
 Carol Bishop Heather Magnan
 Steve Reed, via Zoom Michael VanderWerff, NYC DEP, via Zoom
 Dudley Harris, NYC DOI, via Zoom

The IT Work Plan will be presented in June. The majority of Ryan’s report will be moved to Executive Session.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2024 meeting, as presented.

Motion: Tom Hutson

Second: John Vickers

Approved

III. Executive Director’s Report

- A. Operational and Programmatic Updates: These updates will be provided in Executive Session.
- B. Communications Work Plan – Heather Magnan: The proposed FY25 Communications work plan was provided to the Committee in advance of the meeting. Heather Magnan presented the plan to the Committee and highlighted the changes in the work plan for this year. She has been and will continue to provide the list of upcoming events across WAC to DEP monthly and to the Council quarterly. Heather is working with Tyler Van Fleet and Heather Hilson on a WAC Outreach and Education plan aimed to strategize and streamline all efforts to be more cohesive and expand where allowed. Those are two new items in the work plan for this year. John Vickers commented that the long-term outcomes and indicators are great, particularly 1-3 with respect to approving continuity of messages internally and externally. Oversight of consistent brand recognition is important as well and coordinating efforts to have a consistent message. Ryan stated that this will also be invaluable in the way that it will outline a process and plan that will allow Heather Magnan to be aware of and involved in all that is happening to ensure the goals are met. Jennifer asked if there were any opportunities for WAC to join DEP at events or other presentations in the City where there is a role for us. John stated that those connections will absolutely be made in the future, and some things are already underway.

Motion to recommend that WAC approve the FY25 Communications Work Plan as presented.

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: John Vickers

Approved

IV. Chair's Report

A. Executive Committee Charge

The Committee reviewed the proposed Executive Committee Charge and provided comments and questions in advance of the meeting. John questioned whether the Committee should have the authority to abolish and establish positions. Ryan explained that the majority of the staffing decisions rest with the Executive Director, and most are handled with the negotiations of contracts. Karl felt that some Council Members not on Executive Committee may feel as though they are cut out of the decision making. Fred feels that he prefers a larger number of members approving of a decision at that level. The committee consensus was to leave that requirement as-is. Marilyn questioned the statement that within limits determined by the Board, how is that defined, and is it open to interpretation? Ryan explained that is not well defined, the Committee agreed to strike that phrase from the charge. Fred expressed concern that the quarterly meetings may not be enough, the modified charge reflects that additional meetings may be added by the Chair as-needed.

Motion to approve the Executive Committee Charge, as modified, and recommend the Council approve.

Motion: Marilyn

Second: Tom Hutson

Approved

B. Data Sharing Policy

This policy was requested about two years ago, to reflect good practice on what can be shared, the committee consensus is that the process and form are good. The Committee questioned how this correlates with the Transparency Policy. Ryan explained that this avenue is something WAC mutually wants to ensue, a collaboration that we want to explore. A denied data sharing request may lead to a Transparency Policy request, but this is for items that are beneficial and/or neutral to WAC to share. Ryan and Amy will modify the proposed policy to better outline the intent to include the goal of any data sharing be complementary to our efforts and further support WAC's mission.

V. Executive Session

Motion to go into Executive Session.

Motion: Karl Gockel

Second: Fred Huneke

Approved

Ryan Naatz, Heather Magnan, Amy Faulkner and Carol Bishop left for a portion of Executive Session.

Motion to come out of Executive Session.

Motion: John Vickers

Second: Tom Hutson

Approved

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned by common consent at 12:25pm.