



MINUTES OF THE EASEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

February 4, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tom Hutson, *Committee Chair*
Paul Gallay, via Teams
Wayland 'Bud' Gladstone
Jennifer Grossman, via Teams
Fred Huneke
Michael Vander Werff, *NYC DEP*, via Teams

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Serena Orleski, *Easement Program Manager*
Rebecca Morgan, *Land Protection Coordinator*
Mike Morales, *Easement Program Stewardship Coordinator*
Dennis Heinz, *Land Conservation Systems Specialist*
Matt Schaefer, *Land Conservation Stewardship Specialist*
Julian Motola, *Land Conservation Stewardship Specialist*
Troy Bookhout, *Easement Program Conservation Planner*
Kayla Atanasoff, *Easement Program Executive Assistant*
Ryan Naatz, *Executive Director*
Amy Faulkner, *Director of Operations*
Patrick Palmer, *NYS DOH*, via Teams

PUBLIC ATTENDEES:

Kristin Schneider, via Teams

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the Minutes of the January 7, 2026 public meeting of the Easement Committee.

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: Bud Gladstone

Motion Carried

III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

A. Ernest Sutton (PID 6133): New Stream Work Request – *updated motion*

B. ACE Project Motions – *updated motions*

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT/PROGRAM MOTIONS

None

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

VI. STEWARDSHIP MOTIONS

A. Ernest Sutton (PID 6133): New Stream Work Request - Beaver Dam Removal

Matt presented this motion. He explained that the landowner reached out because of flooding damage to his and his neighbor's properties from numerous beaver dams. Matt worked with the landowner to ensure that the proper permitting and approvals were obtained before any stream work began. The NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) permit was in-hand at the time of the site visit and later confirmed with Stamford DEC staff. Staff from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) indicated that the landowner did not need to seek FSA Committee approval to proceed with the stream work. The landowner will be utilizing an excavator to take the dams down. The DEC permit did not specify the time of year that the stream work should take place, but the landowner will likely need to wait for the snow and ice to melt and the ground to become less saturated. Matt asked for any questions ahead of the motion.

Motion to approve the Ernest Sutton (PID # 6133) Stream Work, Beaver Dam removal activity request dated January 23rd, 2026, as described in staff memo and attached materials dated January 23rd, 2026.

Motion: Bud Gladstone

Second: Jennifer Grossman

Motion Carried

VII. STEWARDSHIP UPDATES

A. Brian Mountford (PID 6070): Forest Harvest Plan – Staff Level Approval

Dennis presented this update. He explained that Mr. Mountford is a newer easement landowner. He submitted the request for his Forest Harvest Plan in March 2025, but it took a while to coordinate the necessary documentation. The total harvest area is just over 100 acres in size. Approximately 142,000 board feet of white ash, birch, cherry, maple and white pine will be harvested. There is one existing stream crossing that will be reinforced. He asked for any questions before moving to the next agenda item.

B. Richard Toebe & Kimberly Cassano (PID 6255): Forest Harvest Plan – Staff Level Approval

Troy presented this update. He explained that he received a request from the landowner for approval of a commercial timber harvest on his easement property. The total harvest area is 51 acres in size and approximately 60,000 board feet of ash and other hardwoods will be harvested. A skidder bridge from the WAC Forestry Program will be used to cross a classified

stream and there will be minimal disturbance because an existing trail system will be utilized.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (IX-XI)

Motion at 10:17 a.m. to go into Executive Session to discuss Violations/Legal Updates, Acquisition Project Motions/Updates, and Other Business.

Motion: Paul Gallay

Second: Fred Huneke

Motion Carried

Motion at 11:37 a.m. to come out of Executive Session.

Motion: Bud Gladstone

Second: Fred Huneke

Motion Carried

IX. VIOLATIONS/LEGAL UPDATES

None

X. ACQUISITION PROJECT MOTIONS/UPDATES (*MOTIONS IN PUBLIC MEETING*)

ACE Project Motions

- A. ACE Property 1 (PID 6297): Applicant Approval

PID 6297 – Motion to Approve Applicant.

Motion: Bud Gladstone

Second: Fred Huneke

Motion Carried

- B. ACE Property 2 (PID 6331): Applicant Approval

PID 6331 – Motion to Approve Applicant.

Motion: Paul Gallay

Second: Fred Huneke

Abstained: Tom Hutson

Motion Carried

- C. ACE Property 3 (PID 6332): Applicant Approval

PID 6332 – Motion to Approve Applicant.

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: Jennifer Grossman

Motion Carried

- D. ACE Property 4 (PID 6302): Applicant Approval

PID 6302 – Motion to Approve Applicant.

Motion: Paul Gallay

Second: Jennifer Grossman

Motion Carried

FCE Project Motions

None

Updates

None

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER BUSINESS

- A. 2025 Q4 Easement Program Quarterly Report

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 10:00 a.m., via Teams**