



MINUTES OF THE EASEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

March 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, via Teams*
Matt Schaefer, *Land Conservation Stewardship Specialist, via Teams*
Troy Bookhout, *Easement Program Conservation Planner*
Kayla Atanasoff, *Easement Program Executive Assistant*
Ryan Naatz, *Executive Director*
Amy Faulkner, *Director of Operations, via Teams*
Carol Bishop, *Director of Finance, via Teams*
Connor Young, *Agricultural Program Manager, via Teams*
Patrick Palmer, *NYS DOH, via Teams*
Morgan Tarbell, *NYS DOH, via Teams*

PUBLIC ATTENDEES:

Nick Carbone, *Delaware County Watershed Affairs, via Teams*
Kristin Schneider, *Delaware County Planning, via Teams*

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the Minutes of the February 4, 2026 public meeting of the Easement Committee.

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: Bud Gladstone

Motion Carried

III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT/PROGRAM MOTIONS

A. Chair's Report

Tom took a moment to highlight an article that Ryan shared with Committee members prior to the meeting. The article was about the newly emerging pressure to farmland from tech developers looking to site artificial intelligence (AI) data centers. Subsequent discussions ensued.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

None

VI. STEWARDSHIP MOTIONS

None

VII. STEWARDSHIP UPDATES

A. The County of Putnam (PID 6600): Pesticide Application in the FCEA – Staff Level Approval

Mike presented this update. He explained that staff approved a request from Christopher Ruthven, the Deputy Commissioner of Parks for Putnam County, for the application of pesticides within a 1-acre area of the Forest Conservation Easement Area (FCEA). He referred to the section of the County's Deed of Conservation Easement (CE) that grants the use of pesticides with prior notice to the Easement Program. The application will be performed by a NYS Licensed Applicator, in combination with mechanical removal methods, to manage for Japanese barberry, multi-flora rose, and bittersweet. The application area is located 200-300 feet away from any streams and the work will be completed between the Spring and early Winter 2026.

B. The County of Putnam (PID 6600): New Rural Enterprise (2026 Concert Series) – Staff Level Approval

Mike presented this update. He explained that he reviewed and approved a request for the rural enterprise structure (stage) associated with the 2026 Tilly Foster concert series. Last year's event layout will be used again this year as County officials continue to work through an amendment to their Deed of CE. On that note, he gave an update on the amendment process. The County is currently waiting for a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR), as requested by the Watershed Inspector General (WIG). If a negative declaration is received and the WIG approves the amendment, the next step would be a property survey.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (IX-XI)

Motion at 10:32 a.m. to go into Executive Session to discuss Violations/Legal Updates, Acquisition Project Motions/Updates, and Other Business.

Motion: Bud Gladstone

Second: Fred Huneke

Motion Carried

Motion at 10:56 a.m. to come out of Executive Session.

Motion: Paul Gallay

Second: Michael Vander Werff

Motion Carried

IX. VIOLATIONS/LEGAL UPDATES

None

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

ACE Project Motions

- A. (PID 6316): Land Plan Approval & Appraisal Authorization

Motion to approve the land plan for PID 6316 on the Land Planning Map dated February 20, 2026, as presented, and authorize appraisal of an easement under the following scenario:

One (1) acre ADA of ~11.51 acres, one (1) RPA consisting of ~8.51 acres, and one (1) FA consisting of ~101.45 acres and zero (0) additional tax parcels.

<u>Existing</u>		<u>Land Plan</u>		<u>Total</u>
Tax parcels: 6	+	Subdivisions: 0	=	Tax parcels: 1
Residences: 1	+	Residences: 1	=	Residences: 2
		ADAs: 1	=	ADAs: 1

Motion: Bud Gladstone

Second: Fred Huneke

Motion Carried

FCE Project Motions

None

Updates

None

XI. DISCUSSION/OTHER BUSINESS

None

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 a.m. by common consent.

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 1, 2026 at 10:00 a.m., via Teams**