



MEETING MINUTES

April 18, 2024, 4:30 PM

Waterville Village Offices, 122 Barton Ave., Waterville, NY 13480

Present

Jamie Bechy (V. of Waterville) *
Robert Rockwell (V. of Clinton) *
Gene Whipple (T. of Sangerfield) *
Roger Potenski (T. of Westmoreland) *
Shaun Gannon (Ramboll)
Alyssa Flint (Ramboll)
Jake Voelker (NYSDOT)

Paul Hoole (FEMA)
Liseli Haines (Clinton-Kirkland Climate Smart)
Steve Johnston (Clinton Resident)
Kristin Campbell (HOCCPP Staff)
Jeff Rehler (HOCCPP Staff)
Madalyn DeCarr (HOCCPP Staff)

*Authorized or alternate voting representative

Jamie Bechy opened the meeting at 4:35 pm.

Meeting Minutes

Approval of meeting minutes from March 21, 2024 was tabled due to lack of quorum.

Discussion of Commission Member Goals

At the previous OCWC meeting, Members were asked to consult with officials from their communities and report back to help OCWC set goals for future programming and initiatives. Members shared responses to the following questions on behalf of their municipality:

1. What information (data, expertise, etc.) would you like to come away with from OCWC participation?
2. What would make OCWC meetings as beneficial as possible to your community?

J. Bechy mentioned a desire to obtain funding to address flooding, replicating successes of the Sauquoit Creek Basin Intermunicipal Commission. K. Campbell noted the importance of working collaboratively to identify issues and continuing to participate to ensure Members will be prepared to act when local conditions become favorable to taking on projects (such as changes in local governance and shifts in priorities). R. Potenski discussed interest in getting upstream communities on board to help mitigate downstream impacts, connecting communities with resources, identifying critical problem areas as opposed to issues that are unfixable or easily identified, and legal avenues to ensure communities work in the best interests of the region. G. Whipple noted that while it is easy to identify some problem areas, it is difficult to spur action in addressing them. J. Bechy agreed that many issues had been identified in the County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Members agreed they would like to see State/Federal grants that are more accessible to help smaller communities that aren't necessarily just for disadvantaged communities. Members discussed barriers to grant applications and K. Campbell said there are sometimes helpful events nearby such as a recent Syracuse University Environmental Finance Center grants workshop in Jefferson County.

S. Gannon stressed the importance of seizing upcoming grant opportunities such as the Bond Act and WQIP applications. He also stressed ongoing sources of funding such as FEMA and the County Flood Mitigation Program and encouraged Members to consider taking on a project to gain momentum for the Commission. Members discussed the possibility of taking on an upstream project with many possibilities in the Town of

Sangerfield (US Route 20 near Chittning Pond, McCabe Rd, Osborne Ave, etc.). R. Rockwell mentioned upsizing culverts may have downstream impacts and S. Gannon agreed, noting grade control may also be needed in these areas.

R. Potenski mentioned the need for local officials to be trained in submitting grants. An Oneida County and Ramboll collaboration on a grant application was discussed as a possibility to get momentum for OCWC projects.

FEMA BRIC DTA Program

P. Hoole, Hazard Mitigation Planner from the Albany Field Office of FEMA, discussed a project to compile grant opportunities for municipal officials to make identifying opportunities easier and more efficient. J. Bechy expressed concerns about the new lead and copper EPA laws and the need for adjusting meet grant standards.

Oriskany Creek Watershed Study: Sediment and Debris Management Plan

S. Gannon discussed Ramboll's activities including a possible collaboration with Hamilton College. He noted that modeling work for the Watershed Study had slowed due to issues incorporating the large number of culverts in the Oriskany Creek Watershed. Ramboll expects to have this completed soon and is on track to have a draft report in time for the July CFA season so that OCWC Members can review and use it to apply for funding.

Army Corps of Engineers Grant - Planning Assistance to State (PAS)

J. Rehler discussed the PAS grant opportunity. The opportunity relates to two types of assistance: (a) comprehensive water resources planning and (b) technical assistance. A Letter of Intent is needed to start the process. It is a rolling application process with no deadline, expected to take about 3 months from LOI to approval. Awards are in the \$25k-\$100k range and there is a 50/50 cost share requirement. The program is generously funded and has historically had unspent funding each year. A 12-24-month timeframe is required to complete projects related to stormwater planning, modeling, green infrastructure, watershed plans, sediment management plans, and more. J. Voelker mentioned Dolgeville may have been granted this award recently and is going to share a contact from the Army Corps that he had recently worked with.

Treasurer's Report

The balance in the Commission's bank account is \$97,220.96. Approval of the Treasurer's Report was tabled due to lack of quorum.

Member Reports

Waterville – J. Bechy discussed two projects. The first involved a permit the Village recently obtained from DEC to work in the creek near a culvert below Stewart's on Main St. The project will involve NYSDOT collaboration and is expected to begin in mid-May. The second is also slated for May and involves collaborating with Soil & Water and FEMA on a new approach to replace a rock retaining wall near the wastewater treatment plant.

Other Business

There was a question from a member of the public about removing fallen trees and/or debris from streams. Members responded that, under current guidance from DEC, no equipment can enter a stream to clear debris. If equipment on the shore could reach the debris, it can be dragged out if disturbing the streambed can be avoided.

K. Campbell discussed MS4 communities and efforts to get the Mohawk Valley Stormwater Coalition up and running. Municipalities will need to get a signed resolution to join, and the first meeting is expected in mid-June. Services to be provided to Members include recordkeeping, data collection, education, and training. J. Voelker mentioned DEC will soon be issuing new SPDES guidance.

Next Meeting

The next meeting date is May 16, 2024, at the Westmoreland Town Offices at 4:30 pm.
The meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.