

**OATKA CREEK WATERSHED COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING**

DATE: March 18, 2019
PLACE: Woodward Memorial Library, LeRoy, NY
TIME: 6:30 PM
RE: Regular OCWC Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Lent, Maureen Leupold, Steve Leupold, Alan Garrett, Jennifer Keys, W. Jerome Smith, Richard Schimley and Lisa Compton

I. Call to Order and Welcome:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:34 PM.

II. Approval of Draft Agenda for March 18, 2019

- Maureen made a request that there be a change in order of business. She asked that Officers' Reports be moved to after New Business, near the end of the meeting. Jennifer made a motion that the agenda be approved with this change. Maureen seconded the motion. All were in favor and the draft agenda was approved with changes.

III. Approval of Draft Minutes for February 25, 2019

- Lisa noted one error in the section about the outreach talk in Wheatland. Where it mentions the 'Village' owning land adjacent to the Oatka Creek, it should probably read either the "Town of Wheatland" or the "Village of Scottsville". It is now accurate according to the recording of the OCWC meeting, but she will listen to the Wheatland presentation tape to clarify which municipality was actually referred to, and make the correction to the final minutes.
- Maureen made a motion to approve the February 25, 2019 minutes with the correction Lisa noted. Richard seconded the motion; all were in favor and the minutes were approved.

IV. Old Business:

A. Green Infrastructure (GI) Champions Workshop:

- The **preliminary draft program for the workshop was reviewed** and the recent email soliciting comments and planning participation sent to Pete by Shannon Dougherty was discussed. Jayme Thomann of Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council has been working on the project with the Great Lakes Commission who are funding the effort. Jayme is a GI mentor in the Commission's GI champion program and they are looking to promote GI practices at a local level. **The proposed program will highlight Green Infrastructure in the Oatka and Black Creek Watershed Communities.** There is support from

NYSDEC (Shannon, specifically). **Pete gave input for tentative date already.** Lisa had mentioned to Shannon that Rick might be a good resource regarding local GI projects if they needed additional ideas for the workshop's proposed site tour, etc. Maureen thought also a good project to look at might be the development near Black Creek in Chili, where they put in plantings along swales. Some members were a little unclear what types of things were wanted from OCWC? Pete said **perhaps our role is to provide ideas on how to solicit participation/ attendance from the two watersheds** (i.e. Black and Oatka). Additionally, he expressed that he saw a good role for us was to come up with a **template/format for getting input from municipalities and then share with them how they can go through and do an inventory of their own community for where they might use Green Infrastructure.** This way, before they pick something, they can do a plan before looking for grant money. Maureen asked what support in the planning of the workshop do they need or want? What topics to place on the agenda? It was noted that the Black Creek Watershed Coalition "approved support" of the project. We should tell them that **OCWC also supports the effort.** There was some discussion on what people the workshop will attract, considering that it proposed having a daytime weekday slot? Perhaps: County Planning Department personnel, highway superintendents, Town engineers and maybe Planning board members? We could also help by **sending watershed municipal/county contact lists to Jayme?** Jerome suggested **with regard to Wyoming County, it would probably be more effective to go to that county for any type of program or discussion** as he believes many Wyoming personnel unlikely to travel that distance. There were questions about the availability of designs for rural GI projects (it was remembered that this was something that Jayme proposed to create at one time). Pete says both G/FLRPC and Monroe County have design manuals that have examples for range of urban, suburban and rural situations. He noted that many rural designs focused on improving riparian areas and trying to get water to spread out and infiltrate. In urban areas, the focus is to find places to direct the water from impervious surfaces (e.g. bioswales). One thing he would like to **recommend to Jayme and Shannon is for them to contact Sheila Hess regarding the language used in the Green Genesee Plan** and see how terminology corresponds with what they will be using. He also noted that at least one quarter of WMP recommendations were GI practices. He reminded that **there is still work to be done explaining the basics of riparian corridors.** Lisa described some literature she found that may be helpful. If anyone thinks of things, let Pete know so he can communicate ideas to Jayme, Shannon, et.al. **OCWC can and will promote event through our website and social media.** *Pete will respond to them with comments.

- **Jerome retiring from Board of the OCWC:** - He'll be 90 this year and driving in bad weather as well as the long commute up to meetings is getting more difficult. **He will probably attend less often but still plans to be involved.** There was interesting discussion regarding his property; on a visit to the Wyoming SWCD, he was shown a new map which indicated that there is **a considerable amount of Federal wetland on the property with parts coming 100 feet within his house.** It was always there, he just didn't realize it was a federal wetland! Additionally, there are village water supply connections, so it really emphasizes to Jerome that **the area is environmentally critical and needs to be monitored and protected** much better than it is now. Maureen reminded everyone that if there are unresolved problems with sensitive federal areas like that, the EPA tip line can always be contacted. It is a way to guarantee any problems will be addressed. From there, discussion went to the changes that have taken place in agricultural practices since Jerome farmed his property. In the past, he said it was generally more polluting even if you tried to be a conscientious steward of the land, as they didn't do things like store manure and didn't have cows in the barn. He says they know much more about the proper timing and amount of manure spreading - and noted it is a very tricky balance. However, even with new techniques, there are still problems and it bothers him that certain conditions and practices are still allowed when there are solutions. He also wryly noted that when the population of cows goes up in Wyoming County, at the same time the number of people goes down.
- **County IMA.** There hasn't been a change in status since the last report. Livingston County does not have a copy of the agreement, though the other three counties do. Pete had intended to go talk with Livingston County SWCD District Manager, Bob Stryker, and give him the county WMP book and deliver the draft IMA document. Maureen has to go to the Livingston County SWCD office soon in her capacity as the NYACD Division II Director and offered to go in Pete's stead, as she can combine the two errands. Alan had recently talked to Bob about trees for the May 4th Arbor Day event, and offered to go with Maureen to follow up with Bob on that. Maureen wanted to know if the wording on the IMA agreement is correct for Livingston County, and if it is directed to the Board of Supervisors? Pete confirmed it is updated and yes, the Board of Supervisors is the intended recipient. ***Pete will get Maureen the booklet WMP as well IMA.**
***Maureen and Alan will arrange to visit Mr. Stryker at the SWCD office.**
- **Joint Planning/Outreach efforts:** Rick was not able to attend the meeting so he emailed some notes with recommendations and suggestions. His primary suggestion was to have **presentations every other month** (and start them soon). Further, he recommended **assigning specific persons to each community.** Suggested also was **printing literature for half a dozen municipalities now in**

anticipation of presenting to those communities. Committee questions: Do we want to pursue joint presentations as a priority? Lisa provided a reworked list of joint municipalities and noted that in each watershed the major communities to each watershed are not joint. Also, Pete pointed out that landmass or percentage of the watershed area should not be the sole consideration either, as it is probably more critical to reach out to those towns and villages with large percentage of land on the main stem (e.g. Warsaw and Middlebury). **The Committee agreed to go forward with Oatka WS communities at this time, starting with: Village of LeRoy, Village of Scottsville, Village of Caledonia, Town of Caledonia, Town of LeRoy and Town of Pavilion.** As Rick had already casually mentioned the talk to a couple of Scottsville officials, ***Maureen will contact him about getting it scheduled. *Lisa and Jennifer offered to look into Village LeRoy issues** in preparation of composing a presentation. ***Pete will be contacting Shannon about what we would like printed** for the upcoming presentations, and send her the files, pictures, etc. (5 or 6 copies each?) We will include the Town of LeRoy in the first group, but Pete doesn't want to schedule anything with them until we get some feedback from what he sent to the Supervisor regarding the Town's recent planning work that was discussed by OCWC last meeting. We already have the booklets for Scottsville - Pete thinks Rick has them? **Pete should also talk to Shannon about creating more Flood plain/Erosion Risk maps** like she and Tiffany did for Wheatland. These were thought to illustrate conditions very clearly.

V. New Business - 2019 Plans:

- **Tree check:** The check at Oatka Creek Park will be **April 6, from 8:30AM - Noon.** We will be checking the plantings that were done three years ago, removing tubes and stakes from dead trees, and straightening and securing those tubes still protecting live plants. **We will meet at the parking area of the fishing access point off Union Street.** In addition to this activity being regular maintenance of the sites, another purpose is to clear any tubes to provide more possible access routes for the **several projects that are going to be undertaken in the coming months.** The fish habitat project being undertaken by Trout Unlimited, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, NYSDEC and Monroe County will require having heavy equipment come in, with work to be done both east and west of the plantings. They will be cutting down dead ash trees and using parts of the dead trees for the project. The plan is to put the trunks of the dead trees on the bank and extend the root wads into the stream to try to create deep cover for fish and also encourage velocity changes. A contractor under U.S.F&W will do the work, with oversight by USF&W scientist. It is anticipated that 30 trees will be put in - but Pete is not sure where, and supposes they will not really know until they get in there. Pete also hopes to identify good shrubs clumps to steer work

away from the shrubs; Maureen suggested marking them with surveyor's tape. Regarding other anticipated work, Maureen hasn't heard when Monroe County Parks/SWCD will be planting the trees that are part of that big tree grant. She is wondering if it will be put off until after the other work (most likely)? She inquired about the main contact person on habitat project, so she can make sure activities don't conflict. Pete says Rick would be best to talk to. He also says they have to wait to do the work until after sensitive trout/fish breeding period which means work will be later in summer. Regarding the tree check event, ***Lisa will post map & info on the website. *Maureen will post/make event on facebook.**

- **Pick Up the Parks:** The event is **Sunday, April 28th from 9:00AM to Noon.** We will meet at the Lodge a little before the 9:00 start time. *Lisa had sent PUP coordinator, Corey, an email regarding the requested logo, but hadn't heard back yet. *She will send another email. Maureen had gone in to see him and drop off pellet bags. Lunch will be delivered this year. *Lisa & Maureen will post/ make event on website/facebook.
- **Arbor Day in Caledonia: May 4th (the 1st Saturday in May).** Alan gave an **update of the planning effort:** . Maureen had some literature that she picked up that would be good for the event. The Arbor Day Foundation also provides some handouts, etc., and Alan plans to take a look at what is available He says the event is coming together; the Mayor has spoken to the Little League about it. So far, the events will proceed as follows: the parade **begins at noon**, then there will be announcements and the thanking of sponsors. This will be followed by the opening day pitch, and then the crowd will be asked if they would like to join in for the tree dedication and the location in park will be announced. Alan is guessing this will part will happen sometime between 12:30 & 1 PM. They still have to figure out what type tree to use and where to put it (right by footbridge?). He was asked if the planting event will be followed by a tree walk? He agreed he would like to have the walk. Steve will help out, but would like if it can be a team effort. *Alan, and his group (& Steve?) will check out a good route for walk that has tree diversity - maybe even other side of spring street? The LL event will be having hotdogs around the shelter.
- An end of May date was proposed for the Green Infrastructure workshop, however Pete says maybe it will be later in summer.
- **Storm Drain Marking in the Village of LeRoy - Maureen's brother (with a business on Mill St.) noticed a good number of medallions missing.** There was discussion on what are the problems and some possible solutions. What about

stenciling? Lisa pointed out that it was discussed and rejected previously, but maybe we want to revisit the issue? What about using vinyl medallions. **Jennifer has been looking at the condition of the medallions** and says some have been beat up, while others are ok. She noted that more did indeed come off this winter. She was wondering if it was application technique? What is the difference with the amount of caulk adhesive? Is the bad adhesion to the curb or the medallion? Is it a string trimmer problem as had been suggested before? Jennifer noted that it seems more prevalent in places where equipment can dig in like on Pleasant St. Maybe because of the sidewalk plow clearing on areas with no grass terrace between walk and curb. **Lisa can finish/redo inventory over summer** and note conditions like that. It was decided to look at **early September to finish the project**. A tentative date and time was decided of Sept. 14th at 8:30.

- No **iMaps invasive** training for now. Maureen says that upgrades made to system makes it too difficult this year to both learn changes and organize workshop.

VI. **Officers Reports & Review Action Items & Announcements:**

A. Chairman (Pete):

- Pete plans to attend an **open house for Solar panel project**. He got the information from Alan. **Horseshoe Solar will be holding the open house on Wednesday, March 20**. There will be two sessions; one from **1-3pm and the other 5:30-7:30. It will be held at Jones Hall, 366 Leicester Rd, Caledonia**. They will be speaking about a proposed project that will be in both the Town of Caledonia, in Livingston County and in the Town of Rush in Monroe County just north of Avon. The project is located on River Road, and looks to extend on both sides of the road. Maureen says a question that has arisen is how do these types of projects relate to Farm Land protection? She gave some background: Monroe SWCD contacted the Dept. Ag & Markets about how/if these projects would be considered a 'practice' under a farm's conservation plan? **Ag & Markets is not considering a solar farm agricultural use**. This is regardless of animal grazing or bee friendly plantings on the property. A solar farm is considered a commercial enterprise by them and SWCD was told that it was up to the local assessor to tax the land as agricultural or commercial. If the land was previously assessed as agricultural, it is considered a conversion. These projects are large: the River Road one is 1500 acres. Alan says the arrays have a 35 year anticipated life span and that owners need to post a bond for money to remove structures after use (analogous to a mine reclamation plan). More discussion ensued: this project is not in our watershed, but the issue has come up at Genesee River Watch meetings. There is thought that the initial plan was to develop up slopes as opposed to prime farmland, but when looking at the

plans, this doesn't really seem to be the case. Pete says GRW discussed how it is now an **opportunity for water quality protections** because there is change in land use and they can urge developers/owners to come up with a riparian corridor plan. Because the land was open crop land, there will not be a loss of any more forested area. This project abuts the river. It seems like an Environmental Impact Statement would require run off retention and improvement of riparian buffers. Will it improve conditions overall? Perhaps it will help reduce run-off by having vegetation between. It appears there may be some gains in improvement of the corridor. There is a typical crop rotation of soybeans and corn at the proposed site now.

- **Environthon:** Pete is instructing this year again in aquatics. They want to **redo the aquatics guide** & make it simpler. He is doing this task for them.
- **Aquatic workshop:** He is also doing an **aquatic insect workshop in Geneva** at the Finger Lakes Institute.
- Also there are some planning opportunities for GRW in Allegany in May.

B. Vice Chair (Maureen):

- **Environthon** - She will also be participating in Monroe County. **'Ag and the Environment' is a special topic this year.** There will be training next Tuesday.
- She will be attending **Genesee River Watershed Agricultural Forum.** It being presented in partnership with the American Farmland Trust and is a free workshop for agencies, organizations, farmers and landowners to discuss opportunities to improve water quality. It will be on Wednesday, March 27, from 10AM to 2 PM at the Livingston County Emergency Operations center in Mt. Morris.
- **Annual Water Quality Symposium/Annual Training Session NYS Conservation District Employees' Association** - Maureen just recently attended this workshop. It was a really great event and she got interesting information on the USDA system **iTree**. She passed around an informational sheet. iTree is a free set of tools that can be used in managing tree and forest programs.
<https://www.itreetools.org/>

C. Treasurer (Jennifer)

- Transactions last month.
 - P.O. Box payment: - \$76
 - Donation Deposit: +\$131
- Statement through 3/12/19:
 - Balance: \$3,031.30
- The **PayPal donation button has been added to the Facebook page.** She did note that she had to generate a different link so the existing button on the website needs to be updated. *Lisa will ask John to do it.

- Maureen noted that there was a significant **discrepancy between what was pledged in the Facebook fund raiser, and the amount of the check that was recieved**. She thinks maybe the later pledges are part of a different cycle, and that an additional check will probably be issued. Both she and Jennifer had trouble finding where to access any statements. *She will check into it.

D. Secretary (Lisa):

- She has had the **municipal contact list** (both Black Creek and Oatka) finished except for calling municipalities to confirm information. *She will send to list to Pete.
- More discussion on **iTree June 16-19 training in Syracuse (SUNY-ESF)** <https://www.esf.edu/itree/>. Also the "Model my Watershed" app by Stroud might be a good tool to look into for educational outreach. <https://wikiwatershed.org/model/>.
- She had a question about the newest copy of the Oatka CreekWMP: she saw the final version had corrupted text near the end. Do Pete's & Maureen's copies also have problems? They had not looked into it.
- She also wanted to note that there are **several publications by UN organizations that Committee members might be interested in**: An extensive report from IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) on biodiversity that will be released in May <https://www.ipbes.net/news/ipbes-global-assessment-preview>, a report on biodiversity in food and agriculture by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations <http://www.fao.org/3/CA3129EN/CA3129EN.pdf> and an assessment report for policy makers on pollinators in food production by IPBES, https://www.ipbes.net/system/tdf/spm_deliverable_3a_pollination_20170222.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=15248

VII. Adjourn:

- A motion was made by Jerome to adjourn the meeting. Jennifer seconded, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM

VIII. Action Items:

- Pete will respond to Shannon and Jayme regarding GI workshop/Sheila Hess & Green Genesee
- If any members of the committee think of comments for Jayme/Shannon let Pete know
- Pete will get IMA document, etc to Maureen
- Maureen will contact Livingston County SWCD regarding IMA
- Alan will visit SWCD with Maureen & check on trees
- Pete will contact Shannon about printing for outreach
- Maureen will contact Rick about scheduling Scottsville for presentation

- Lisa & Jennifer to look into Village Leroy issues
- Tree check: April 6, 8:30 to Noon. Lisa/Maureen, et al post to social media
- Pick Up the Parks: The event is Sunday, April 28th from 9:00AM to Noon. To be posted on web, Facebook
- Arbor Day in Caledonia: May 4th Noon- ? Alan et. al. to look for good route for tree walk
- Lisa to continue drain inventory
- Lisa/John fix donation button on website
- Maureen to check out Facebook donation issue
- Lisa make calls to confirm municipal contact list in.
- Members check latest version of Oatka WMP
other Action from Feb
- Pete will look into access of the water withdrawal registry

Next meeting: April 15, 2019. Location Woodward Memorial Library, LeRoy. Start time 6:30PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa M. Compton