

**OATKA CREEK WATERSHED COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING**

DATE: January 28, 2019
PLACE: Woodward Memorial Library, LeRoy, NY
TIME: 7:00 PM
RE: Regular OCWC Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Lent, Maureen Leupold, Jim Seiler, Ray Cipriano, Alan Garrett, Jennifer Keys, and Lisa Compton

I. Call to Order and Welcome:

- The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM. Again welcome Alan Garrett of Caledonia.

II. Approval of Draft Agenda for January 28, 2019

- Maureen would like to add an item under new business to discuss the iMap invasive/PRISM (Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management) program. Lisa made a motion to approve the draft agenda with this item added and Jennifer seconded. All were in favor and the draft agenda was approved with the addition.

III. Delay of approval of Draft Minutes for December 17, 2018

- Lisa suggested delaying approval of the minutes, as she had just sent them out not long before tonight's meeting, and doubts anyone had time to read them. She had also noted some errors, and will resend a corrected version out before the February meeting when she sends the draft January minutes. Maureen made a motion to delay the approval of the December 17, 2018 minutes until the February 2019 meeting. Jennifer seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried.

IV. Officers Reports & Review Action Items & Announcements:

A. Chair (Peter)

- Pete will talk about items under business.

B. Treasurer (Jennifer)

- No transactions last month.
 - Balance \$3,309.30
- Jennifer saw last month that there a \$50 donation, and asked about it (see below).

C. Vice Chair (Maureen)

- **Contributions:** Maureen elaborated on the donations received through Facebook. As well as the \$50 "Giving Tuesday" donation that had been received, **she did a birthday fundraiser through her own personal FB page to raise funds for the OCWC. The event spanned three weeks and generated \$290.** She noted at the time she organized this fundraiser that it was possible to set it up taking donations through PayPal. **Setting up PayPal for a 501(C) (3) charity appears to be a fairly simple three step process.** She would've done it, but does not have access to the account info. She wanted to bring the PayPal issue up again, because set up looks so quick to do, and people might be more likely to contribute. *Jennifer is willing to do the set up but needs additional 501 (C) (3) info, as well as a dedicated email address (she already has account routing number). *Pete can send needed info. Lisa noted that the oatka.org/wordpress associated email seems to be not working real well these days, so advises against using those addresses, even though there are accounts set up for each corporate officer. However, there is an oatka creek associated gmail account address that isn't being used that Jennifer can have. Jennifer said that it would probably be easy to create an OCWC treasurer gmail account, so that is what *she will do.
- **Western NY Soil Health Alliance Workshop:** Maureen attended the workshop that was held in Batavia on December 19. Orleans & Genesee County SWCDs got some grants to support the organization, and though these grants are in their last year and will be ending, **the two SWCDs will continue Alliance activities through funds generated and saved through their soil health meeting registration fees. They will be encouraging other counties to become members, as well as inviting any farmers (or anybody) who may want to participate.** A number a people from Erie county also attended the workshop. Maureen found the presentations to be very interesting. The name given to this soil health initiative is "the brown revolution" and she said that agencies have shown interest and support with money being made available for these types of workshops. She pointed out that the WNYSHA goals (soil fertility and protection) tie in with the OCWC's work and she strongly encourages Committee members to attend any future workshops. A good resource person for information on information and philosophy of the system is Dr. Kristine Nichols, a soil researcher from Cornell, who does education and consulting work in the field. See: kris-systems.com (email:Kris@kris-systems.com).
- **The main idea that was presented is that it is important to view soil as a living entity; the goal being to maintain soil fertility at its peak so plants grow the best without destroying the networks in the soil's dynamic system.** Soil health means using techniques that encourage the growth of what you want vs. merely eliminating weeds. There was discussion of techniques for manipulating

conditions to the grower's benefit while protecting the environment of the microorganisms in the soil layers. There was a lot of talk on cover cropping, no till techniques, and also considerable information about timing as a major soil health tool - there should always be something growing on the land. There was a lot of information on soil system composition, and on the huge role fungi play. Jim and Maureen further elaborated on the subject, with Jim speaking about his experience with the changes in thinking that have come about over the years (i.e. clean surface vs. having something always growing, plowing vs. not plowing, etc). There was continued discussion on the effects of plowing (destroying macropores, etc).

D. Secretary (Lisa)

- Pete's and Lisa's email lists have been updated.
- Municipal contact lists have preliminary been updated. She still need to contact municipal clerks individually to confirm correct info.
- Idea to consider: **How to promote communication through interaction on social media (ala Stroud website)?** Lisa asks Committee to start considering ideas and to revisit the topic at a future date. She suggests an example might be trying to engage the municipalities by encouraging them to blog about local watershed issues/projects on our website.

E. Other news (Alan)

- **Arbor Day in Caledonia:** Alan will be organizing this event which will be on **May 4th (the 1st Saturday in May)** and coincides with the opening day event for Little League. Alan's group's goal is for the Village to become a Tree City USA certified member. Member communities are then eligible to apply for grants from the Arbor Day Foundation for tree planting. Alan has been working on his own planting trees (mostly on Village property) since learning about the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) and the temperature issues with Spring Creek. He says the Village is aware of those issues also. He has done all the ground work for the Arbor Day event/membership, where **they will be dedicating a tree to Barry Ganzhorn**, who has been a 'mover and shaker' regarding Mackay Park. Maureen asked if the OCWC could participate or help? We could set up our **booth with the EAB and Trees for Tribes project display**. The purpose of OCWC participation would be educational outreach to explain how important trees are for buffers, etc., and talk about Trees for Tribes and info on the EAB. **A "Tree Walk" was also suggested.** The tree dedication will be very near Spring Creek, with the dedicated tree being planted by the footbridge. Pete suggested it would be good to start a tree walk from that location. Alan seemed to think either or both were good ideas (and he knows Steve Leupold would be good to lead a tree walk). *Maureen and Alan will discuss possible arrangements. Alan has to get back to the Mayor, etc. for

approval. There was some discussion regarding both Mackay Park (very interesting trails and karst topography) and the Spring Creek trout population vis-a-vis Merganser ducks as well as Spring Creek issues with Canada Geese.

F. Other news: (Ray)

- **Manure Spreading Issues?:** Ray wanted to know if OCWC had heard any complaints regarding issues with liquid manure spreading on snow pack near the Oatka Creek this season? He related a recent experience regarding some property that he rents out to farm operations.
- Ray wanted confirmation on current DEC (and Federal) regulations having to do with application of liquid manure to farm land on snow pack. He described what the material is like and how it tends to behave: it is black, absorbing sunlight, and consequently melts snow to make a highly concentrated slurry. He remembers that application of manures used to be right away but that now there is much larger lagoon storage. There are CAFO permit regulations, and farms must follow Cornell guidelines for manure spreading.
- As far as the spreading incident itself, he has written into the lease that there is to be no spreading of liquid manure on snow on his property and that generally it is not a problem. Recently, he came across some spreading activity on this property and put a stop to it. He was wondering about the 4" or less deep regulation, though he did note, in this instance it wasn't really applicable as the snow at the time of the incident was deeper than 4" in some places, and additionally, the lease conditions prohibited it. He expressed concern about how to mitigate such activities that "happen under radar" and was curious to know if we have had other complaints on liquid manure near the Oatka? How can he find out who may be the contact leasee?
- Pete says there is a tendency now to increase storage capacity so operations can hold more and then can go out when conditions are right. One issue may have been that this year, there has been snow on the surface, but the ground has not been always been frozen - though he noted application should be done with a 'second layer of caution', i.e. if you have to do it, put it on flat areas away from the Creek.
- **Maureen suggested calling his district SWCD** & said she had thought spreading wasn't supposed to be on frozen soil at all. Also the SWCD would know if there is a conservation plan in place or if federal funding is involved. The new District Manager for Genesee County is Brad Mudzynski. He is listed on the website.
- Jim has much experience in the issue and related how many farms that handle manure these days have solid separation systems which make the manure very liquid, so there can be a greater potential for run-off and water quality issues. Jim also said if a farmer is bringing manure in a large quantity, he would most likely

be a CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) and be permitted. **He said Ray could get specific information on the current regulations by looking at the NYDEC CAFO permit (NYSDEC ECL/SPDES discharge permit). The standard for when you can apply or not apply liquid manure is a Cornell standard that is referenced in this permit - the adverse conditions spreading guide (which includes winter) is on pg. 13.** He says that there had been a really wet fall, and lots of farms weren't able to spread at the 'right' (i.e. regular) time this year. Consequently, there is a lot of spreading going on now. There was some question about whether regulations are more lenient or don't apply if you operate on your own property? Pete did not think this was the case and says if it is a CAFO, they have a plan associated with the operation that follows it to wherever operations take place; owner of the property or not. Jim says that the next permit in 2020 may not permit winter spreading at all. He further says that many farmers of large operations will designate a list of emergency fields that they know are safe for spreading (no run-off, good soil type, etc).

- On a related note, Alan reported he saw cattle in a creek, just south of Avon and contacted DEC about it. He was told that if there are 200 or fewer cattle (as was the case), the animals are permitted to enter the water. Jim notes there has been a change to up to 300 head before there is a requirement to be permitted, provided there is no discharge from the operation. Pete responded that there may be controls if downstream sampling shows water quality issues; then the Health Department gets involved, and restrictions may then be applied.
- Ray concluded that part of the problem in this recent instance was that there were numerous management layers/subcontractors involved, and communication between seemed to have failed. He expressed the opinion that his lessee is a very responsible operator, and says he will be contacting Genesee County SWCD for information.

V. New Business:

- A. **Approval of Draft Budget for 2019:** Jennifer submitted a draft budget for 2019.
- This budget reflects the actual amount paid for insurance in the last cycle. As she has noticed consistent small increases over the last few years, she asked whether a small, additional amount should be added to the insurance line item to anticipate further increase in costs; perhaps the line item should be \$390? After brief discussion, Maureen made a motion that budget be adopted with a change to the insurance line item to allow payment of up to \$400. Lisa seconded the motion. All were in favor and **the 2019 budget was approved.**
 - Jennifer has filed the taxes for 2018

- B. **iMap Invasives:** Maureen gave a brief background of her experience with this 'citizen science' program. She received training with field work in 2017, as well as took a webinar course more recently last year. **The training helps you to identify invasive species, and learn what data needs to be collected. This information is submitted to DEC where it is added to a crowd sourced map.** The program, like WAVE, helps DEC understand conditions out in the field. The webinar last year was a "train a trainee" course. She was introduced to the iMap app for mobile devices, which permits easy data gathering for participants without needing sophisticated equipment. They can use a smart phone to record data (pictures, location, etc). Maureen wanted to know what is the interest level in OCWC to organize and participate in an iMap training session? If there is interest, she will submit the paperwork to be a trainer - this way she can set participants up with accounts and issue passwords, etc. Committee members responded in the affirmative, in that it was a good idea. **Maureen suggested the training could be held in Oatka Creek Park.** She thinks that it would be possible to secure a cabin facility for the tutorials. **A preliminary date was set for June 8th from 9-12.** There was discussion on whether to have it be available for OCWC members only, or a more general public, and it was generally agreed to open up the event to the general public. She said a Winter program would be good too at some time, as they don't have many data points for that season. She was thinking that we could advertize on Facebook, and it was suggested that she might want to look into coordinating with Monroe County Parks? We can advertise it as "more details to come". *Maureen will start to organize the event.
- C. **Tree Check and Spring planting at Oatka Creek Park: We need to pull empty tubes before the next planting session,** as the session will be a big one. This way, there will be more leeway for work space and creation of access road(s). Josh was at the joint BC/OC municipal outreach subcommittee meeting, and let us know that the trees for the Oatka Creek Park will not be the big trees we heard about, these will go to other projects, but will be the bare root type. **A tentative date was set for April 13 - time to be determined.**

VI. Old Business:

- A. **Joint OCWC/BCWC outreach:** The subcommittee met and a new date for the **meeting with the Town of Wheatland was set for February 7th at 7:00 PM.** There was still some question about whether Black Creek members would want to speak at this meeting, though Rick is prepared to do the entire presentation if necessary. Pete gave a brief description of this presentation (i.e. we are starting to meet with all municipalities, etc.), and he will contact people over the weekend to see if everyone is on the same page. Shannon Dougherty intends to attend and will bring Wheatland erosion maps she created.
- B. **Joint County IMA:** no news
- C. **Proposed Flood Resilience Workshop:** Pete wants members to look at the information he emailed on January 28 that was sent from Jayme Thomann of

G/FLRPC regarding **development of a proposed flood resilience scenario planning workshop for the Oatka Creek and Black Creek Watersheds**. He notes that both watersheds have been designated "EBM" Demonstration areas by the Great Lakes Action Agenda South West Lake Ontario Work Group (GLAA SWLO work group), so there is likelihood of assistance from agencies for projects (e.g. maybe to get assistance from PRISM for training session and get agencies to work with municipalities on particular projects).

VII.

VIII. Adjourn:

- Jennifer made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Jim seconded it. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM

IX. Action Items:

- Pete will send financial information to Jennifer for PayPal
- Jennifer will work on setting up PayPal account
- Lisa to finish updating municipal contact lists
- Lisa to update committee info on website
- Maureen will work with Alan Garrett on Caledonia Arbor Day event
- Maureen will start to arrange the iMap event for Oatka Creek Park
- Pete will continue to pursue County IMA
- All members will view information on proposed flood resilience workshop email of January 28

Next meeting: February 25, 2019. Location Woodward Memorial Library, LeRoy. Start time 6:30PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa M. Compton