

**TOMPKINS COUNTY WATER RESOURCES COUNCIL**

July 15, 2024

Via Zoom

Final Minutes

**Attendance**

Member		Seat	Member		Seat
Annie Bastoni	E	At-Large	Frank Proto	P	At-Large
Shawn Bossard	P	Agriculture	Brian Rahm	P	Environment
Cynthia Brock	P	Recreation	Stephanie Redmond	P	At-Large
Liz Cameron	E	Co. Environmental Health	Steve Riddle	A	Water Purveyor
Amanda Champion	P	County Government	Becky Sims	P	Municipal Government
Jenna DeRario	E	Cooperative Extension	Linda Wagenet	P	At-Large
Brett Hayhurst	P	At-Large	Douglas Barnes	E	Associate
Kristen Hychka	P	Municipal Government	Roxy Johnston	P	Associate
Darby Kiley	P	County Planning & Sustain.	Lynn Leopold	P	Associate
Patrick King	P	Business & Industry	Rebecca Minas	E	Associate
Liz Kreitinger	P	Watershed Organization	Elaine Quaroni	P	Associate
Jon Negley	E	Soil & Water Cons. District	Grascen Shidemantle	A	Associate
Holly Payne	P	At-Large	Tom Vawter	E	Associate
Peter Penniman	P	Environmental Management Council			

**Guests:** Abigail Conner, Harry Greene

**Call to Order/Agenda Review** – Chair Cynthia Brock called the meeting to order at 4:15pm. No changes to agenda.

**Privilege of the Floor** – No privilege of the floor.

**Presentation: My Coast - A statewide tool for engaging communities and documenting flood and storm events**  
– Kristen Hychka, NYS Water Resources Institute

Kristen gave a presentation on the MyCoast New York project, specifically the Flood Watch New York component. She explained that MyCoast New York is a community science portal for documenting changing water levels and weather impacts across New York State. Emphasizing the increasing frequency and severity of storms due to climate change, she demonstrated how the portal works, allowing users to upload photos and reports via a mobile app or browser. The project has gained 723 registered users and 1,293 total reports in almost two years. Discussion topics included incorporating video into the portal, linking with lake levels and citizen science data, presenting the platform to the Tompkins County Council of Governments, and exploring the potential use of the storm reporter to estimate or corroborate flood damages, especially for hazard mitigation planning

**Action: Approval of draft minutes**

The June 2024 draft minutes were approved as submitted.

**Committee Reports**

**Municipal Training** – The committee continues to work on the 201 Watershed training for highway officials, and Kristen reminded everyone of the upcoming presentation by Town of Ulysses deputy supervisor, Michelle Wright, on asset management, specifically culverts, at the Tompkins County Council of Governments in July.

### **Chair and Staff Reports**

Cynthia did not have a chair's report.

As part of her staff report, Darby shared that NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers representatives will present at the September WRC meeting on 2024 Hydrilla projects and funding challenges. Additionally, she noted that two significant documents are under review: the wetlands regulation changes, with comments due by September 19, and the draft "30 by 30" conservation strategy aimed at protecting 30% of land in the state by 2030, with comments due by August 30. Concerns were raised about the timing of addressing hydrilla funding issues, considering the election year. It was agreed that the September presentations would provide essential information for guiding future actions. There was also discussion about reassessing the urgency of the hydrilla issue after September to prevent potential delays. Finally, questions were raised about the reduced budget for the hydrilla pilot program.

### **Member Announcements**

Peter provided details on the upcoming Cayuga Lake Summit at Stewart Park. Sponsored by the Cayuga Lake Watershed Network and Cayuga Lake Environmental Action Now, the event will focus reducing road salt usage and PFAS contamination in the Finger Lakes. Roxy reported that Cayuga Lake Watershed Intermunicipal Organization (CWIO) is assisting the Town of Covert in securing funding for a salt barn and collaborating with state parks and PRISM on addressing the hemlock woolly adelgid infestation. CWIO is also working in Seneca County to assess and improve the condition of roadside ditches, with plans to use the findings to secure grant funding for prioritized projects. In addition, she highlighted a presentation by geologist Ray Vaughan on the Cargill salt mine. The presentation emphasized the need for an environmental impact statement to prepare for and mitigate issues, prompting discussions among WRC members about the need for further investigation and potential mitigation strategies. The group also shared information about upcoming events, such as the Manure Expo in Auburn.

**Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 5:31pm.