



Owasco Lake Watershed Management Council  
April 19, 2022, 10:00am – Meeting

Meeting of the Directors

**Owasco** – Ed Wagner, **Cayuga County** – Aileen McNabb -Coleman, **City of Auburn** – Ginny Kent  
**Niles** – Joan Jayne, **Locke** – Thane Benson, **Scipio** – Melinda Pitman, **Fleming** - Don Oltz,  
**Moravia** – Terry Baxter, **Village of Moravia** – Gary Mulvaney, **Village of Groton** – Nancy  
Niswender,  
**Summerhill** – Charlie Ripley, **Sennett** – Tom Blair, **Dryden** – Anne Clark  
**Executive Director**- Adam Effler

Presiding: Dr. Adam Effler, Executive Director

A. Board of Directors- Roll call: **Owasco**- Ed Wagner (remote), **Cayuga County** –Aileen McNabb -Coleman, **City of Auburn** – Ginny Kent, **Locke** – Thane Benson (remote), **Fleming** - Don Oltz, **Moravia** – Terry Baxter, **Village of Moravia**–Gary Mulvaney, **Sennett** –Tom Blair, **Dryden** – Anne Clark (remote)

Ex Officio attending: Dr. John Halfman, Lydia Greene, Jon Negley, Doug Kierst, Olivia Green, Tony Prestigiacomio, Michele Wunderlich (remote), Dana Hall (remote), Greg Rejman, Ally Berry, John West, Camille Bouvet-Boisclair, Steve Lynch, Daniel Welch, Seth Jensen (remote), Courtney Alexander, Skaneateles, (remote), Lydia Brinkley, Jon Negley’, Eileen O’ Connor, Jillian Aluisio

- B. Approval of the Agenda with change to move Michele Wunderlich’s report following financial report due to scheduling conflict. Motion to approve Gary Mulvaney Seconded by Don Oltz Unanimous vote. Motion carried.
- C. Approval of Minutes from the March 15, 2022, meeting as distributed via email. Motion to approve Don Oltz. Seconded by Ginny Kent, vote was unanimous. Motion carried.
- D. Public to be Heard: None heard.
- E. Director’s Summary- Adam Effler (distributed for review prior to meeting)  
Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division (OLWIPD) Updates

- The OLWIPD of the OLWMC is watching closely for watershed land disturbances that might pose a threat to increased sediment runoff and pollutant loading to the lake.
- Watershed Inspectors participated in a septic system inspection training program offered by the Cayuga County Department of Health March 28 and 29, 2022.
- On March 31, staff met with Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District (TCSWCD) staff to coordinate planning and preparation for a collaborative sediment sock implementation project for reducing erosion along exposes ditches in Owasco Lake watershed portions of Tompkins County.

- OLWIPD staff performed a scheduled tour of the Village of Moravia wastewater treatment facility on April 12.
- On April 21, Watershed Inspectors will participate in a sediment and erosion control training course provided by the Cayuga County SWCD.

#### Recognition, Awareness, Education and Outreach

- The OLWMC's April feature article with the Citizen newspaper spotlighted the Lake Friendly Living Coalition's pledge program, recent NYS commemorative resolution, and May, 2022 awareness webinar and live event series.
- Staff have finalized the OLWIPD/OLWMC combined 2021 annual report. Consistent with previous years, the annual report was prepared in the form of an informational brochure and delivered to watershed municipal offices for further distribution.
- The Owasco Watershed Lake Association (OWLA) plans to provide watershed science education in the classroom and are poised to use the OLWMC's physical grant awarded watershed model as an educational tool.

The OLWMC's aquatic invasive species (AIS) 'Clean, Drain, Dry' Portaboard® trailer will be moved from its winter location outside the Cayuga County Parks and Trails office to the Emerson Park boat launch for the purpose of increased visibility.

#### Hyfi Watercourse Level Sensors

##### Hyfi Project Updates:

1. With project support from OLWMC staff, OWLA's 2022 sediment and nutrient sampling program, , will align with watercourse level sensor locations. A project will provide invaluable lake loading information for continued calibration of the SWAT model.
2. The project team has requested an additional sensor and assembly for a newly targeted monitoring location on Long Point Creek.
3. The Owasco Lake watershed piloted Hyfi sensor platform recently won the Verizon Climate Resilience Prize for 2022.

#### Watershed Partner Collaboration- Projects Updates

- The OLWMC awaits guidance and project funding opportunities from NYS based on the completion and approval of Cayuga County's Nine Element Watershed Plan (9E) for Owasco Lake. The Cayuga County Planning Department is nearing the end of the 9E process and has recently developed an appendix to report recent project and programming outcomes associated with 9E recommendations. There will be a third public meeting for the public to review project updates.
- The Steering Committee for the updated community consensus watershed rules and regulations (WRR) awaits a meeting schedule from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to discuss next steps and will be convening soon. NYSDOH upper management are holding off scheduling a joint DOH and WRR Steering Committee meeting until they meet with the NYS Chamber in April.
- The OLWMC offers partnership and support for the City of Auburn's NYS-awarded Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2). The working group has identified high risk areas and is finalizing source water protection recommendations.
- The OLWMC endorsed the Town of Owasco's application for a grant from NYS and

- Federal representatives for a sanitary system improvement project.
- The OLWMC continues to work towards a transfer of ownership of a ~160-acre priority parcel in Sempronius from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to the OLWMC that will advance the council's position as a land conservation steward within the watershed. Insurance details and premium estimates were provided by our insurance provider. As part of a successful transfer of ownership of the property, TNC will offer \$15,000 of upfront land stewardship dollars to help the OLWMC get started with funding needs (e.g., insurances) to own and maintain land preserves. The OLWMC will develop a land stewardship/maintenance plan for land holdings to ensure project responsibilities are met.
  - OLWMC staff are coordinating with the State University of New York Environmental Science and Forestry for a May 2022 collaborative willow planting project at the OLWMC's nursery in the Town of Owasco with the intent that the nursery will act as a long-term source of willow canes for the installation of future riparian buffers within the watershed. This project can also host an opportunity for a student undergraduate internship and/or capstone project in 2023.
  - The OLWMC is ramping up its LED road flares promotional program in partnership with Wegmans Food Markets, as part of a Finger Lakes regional effort. LED flares provide a safer and watershed friendly alternative to conventional incendiary flares.
  - Our Keynote Presenter for next month's May, 17 OLWMC public board meeting will be Kirsten Workman, Nutrient Management and Environmental Sustainability Specialist from Cornell ProDairy. She will present on advancements in, and recommendations for, cover cropping with the Owasco Lake watershed.

### Grants Projects and Programs

- GLRI Conservation Kick Project

Project Review: In partnership, the Cayuga County SWCD assisted a watershed farmland owner to finalize application installation of a water and sediment control basin (WASCOB). The project will be funded, in part, by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) Conservation Kick Program. The City of Auburn invested the required cost share for the grant award to be administered through the OLWMC, demonstrating the city's commitment towards supporting conservation advancements for local agriculture. Based on the Great Lakes Commission's upfront analysis, and relative to all other Conservation Kick projects planned across the Great Lakes Basin, the CCSWCD/OLWMC project will result in the greatest nutrient reduction outcomes (*17,258 'water quality credits' will be generated by the practice installation. This reflects an estimated 17,721 pounds of nitrogen and 1,262.5 pounds of total phosphorus reductions over the course of the project period*). Project partners finalized contract details. Seneca County Soil and Water Conservation District Engineer and Auburn Director of Municipal Utilities have reviewed the final WASCOB design for approval.

- NRCS RCPP

Project Update: On April 13, the OLWMC submitted a project proposal through the Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program (NRCS RCPP). retooled last year's NRCS RCPP proposal, according to review comments, and requested federal funding intended to help advance the Cayuga County SWCDs' conservation farm planning and BMP implementations within the Owasco Lake watershed. The proposed project will help build local capacity for certified farm planning within the watershed and provide support for targeted conservation projects, a prospect intended to increase efficiencies for local agriculture that will

benefit both farmers and watershed conservation.

- Climate Smart Communities

Project Update: The Town of Owasco has earned the bronze level certification through the NYS Climate Smart Communities program. This is the greatest program certification achievement of any municipality within Cayuga County. The Town's application was approved for 20 actions in 7 categories for a total of 172 points.

#### Municipality Buy-In

Project Review: The OLWMC continues to encourage participation and directorship from the remaining towns within the watershed that have yet to join to help direct project initiatives. They include the Towns of Venice, Sempronius, Groton, Genoa, Skaneateles, and Lansing; we continue to encourage the Board of Directors to reach out to representatives from these towns to elicit municipality interest.

#### HABs

Project Update: The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC's) NYHABs website remains unavailable until the 2022 monitoring season begins in May 2022. We are coordinating a HABs reporting training opportunity by the NYSDEC Finger Lakes Hub to ensure partners and volunteers properly identify and report HABs occurrences in 2022.

- F. Board of Directors/Municipality Representatives Feedback: Municipalities doing a good job keeping inspection division updated on construction site development. Looking for increased visibility for Councils work, perhaps town's websites. Do towns need assistance with climate smart communities applications?
- G. Treasurer's Audit and Finance Report
- i. March 2022 Financials Approval –
  - ii. As of February 28, 2022, Total Liabilities & Equity were \$333,143.69 and Total in checking account \$274,265.24. Motion to approve Don Oltz seconded by Gary Mulvaney. Vote was unanimously approved. Motion carried.
  - iii. Discussion and Approval of US Treasuries Investment Allocations – Adam suggested evaluating cash flow and move some into a liquid low interest savings account that would be set aside for a short term. Something to think about.
  - iv. Discussion of Land Holding Liability Insurance Scenarios
- H. Nine Element Watershed Plan Update– Michele Wunderlich Draft has gone to NYS DEC for review not enough data for both sediment and Nitrogen so will be on phosphorus so the Nitrogen and sediment will go into the appendix. In future will update 9E with sediment and Phosphorus.
- I. Projects and Strategies of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition- Lydia Brinkley; Riparian Buffer Projects of the Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay headwaters. To view this very successful program and slides and contact information please visit the video of the Director's Meeting at <https://www.olwmc.org/news>
- J. 2021 Project Outcomes and Future Outlooks for the Cayuga County and Water Conservation Districts- Doug Kierst: Doug Kierst presented Projects in Cayuga Co in 2021. To view this

presentation please visit the video of the Directors Meeting at <https://www.olwmc.org/news>

i.

- K. Lake Monitoring Update- John Halfman, water quality buoy is out in the lake and is working fine.
- L. The Nature Conservancy Update - Olivia Green-working with Cayuga County to install a new improved septic system at WMCA Camp. Thank towns for Summer Hill and Venice for water source protection projects.
- M. NYSDEC Hub Update- Tony Prestigiacommo-new round of monitoring all water quality Finger Lakes. Data will be available soon. \_
- N. Watershed Rules and Regulations Revisions Update – Steve Lynch-listen to this again.
- O. Owasco Watershed Lake Association Update - Dana Hall-2022 tributary sampling program will begin first week of May continuing through October. Training session up this week. Need sampling techniques. Spring treatment for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is starting. Planning to treat thousands of critical trees for the watershed on 27 Properties .
- P. Cornell Cooperative Extension Update- Daniel Welch-Electronic collection event at BOCES with over 400 people with another event in the Fall. Looking at a solid waste planning event with outreach to entire county. In June a tire collection out at Soil and Water.
- Q. ‘Our Owasco’ Behavioral Change Project Update- Camille Bouvet-Boisclair (Evidn): wrapped up current phase of project. Project will continue to 6/2023 and would like to expand numbers of people involved in project. Looking forward to building more relationships in the community.
- R. Partners for Healthy Watersheds Update – Greg Rejman, not available
- S. Watershed Inspection Monthly Report–Ally Berry, Please see report at Director’s Meeting <https://www.olwmc.org/news>
- T. Lake Level Report – John West: Lake elevation is 712.75 this morning. We are in summer range now.
- U. Communications: Reminder fish sale. Watershed manager job for Cayuga County.
- V. Issues of Concern: Anne Clark raised a question regarding sediment socks which Adam Effler will investigate and discuss at a subsequent meeting.
- W. Schedule Next Meeting (3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of May 2022 is the 17<sup>th</sup>), Motion to adjourn made by Don Oltz, seconded by Gary Mulvaney at 11:40. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vivian Cunningham

#### 2022 OLWMC Goals

1. Increase participation of municipalities that have yet to join the Council.
  - a. Formal directorship request letters will be delivered to the remaining watershed municipalities and their responses (if any) will be documented. OLWMC staff will make a concerted effort to visit municipal offices to directly communicate organizational objectives and elicit interest

and buy-in.

2. Community Outreach
  - a. Increase awareness of the Lake Friendly Living Pledge Program and boundaries of the watershed through signage
  - b. Mobilize an outreach campaign for eventual rollout of Updated Watershed Rules and Regulations
    - i. Plan distribution methods for supportive materials for guidance for watershed programs and lines of supportive funding
  - c. Continue to advance engagement with watershed farmers' advisory group through the Our Owasco project
    - i. Plan meetings and educational events
  - d. Coordinate watershed science programming and education in schools
3. Continue to look for funding opportunities.
  - a. Advance funding support for project initiatives through collaboration for funding and partnership among agencies
  - b. Use adaptive strategies for project priorities list based on watershed planning and funding availability
  - c. Seek watershed support as a line item on the NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF)
4. Provide new and relevant programmatic opportunities to watershed municipal leaders
  - a. Offer support and guidance to assist municipalities with advancing resource protection and climate smart initiatives
5. Work with the Towns' elected officials, highway superintendents, and county soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) to improve ditching practices
  - a. Support communication between highway departments and SWCDs
6. Support the completion and implementation of the NYS Nine Element (9E) Watershed Plan
  - a. Interpretation of 9E plan information to target watershed project implementation based on recommended projects/practices and prioritized 'hot spots'
  - b. Presentation of relevant information for managers, municipalities, and implementers to support priority projects
  - b. Utilize NYS approved (9E) Plan to advocate for external project funding through grants
7. Participate in the on-going NYSDEC harmful algal bloom monitoring and surveillance program, the purpose of which is to identify priority areas for health and safety and ultimately develop mitigation strategies for HABs
  - a. OLWMC/NYSDEC/Owasco Watershed Lake Association collaboration is essential
8. Develop Owasco Lake Watershed Inspection and Protection Division (OLWIPD) program requirements according to the rollout of Updated Owasco Lake Watershed Rules and Regulations
  - a. Advance programmatic needs and SOPs for updated watershed rules and regulations, including for the proposed variance process
9. Support oversight, growth, and guidance for the OLWIPD
  - a. Foster outreach and guidance for stakeholders through the OLWIPD
10. Continue monitoring the lake to assess water quality
  - a. Ensure transferrable and accessible datasets between multiple groups, including scientists, planners, and managers
  - b. Work with the DEC Finger Lakes Hub and other partners to reduce watershed-sourced nutrient loading to Owasco Lake