

Minutes
Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force
Chautauqua Fish Hatchery/Stow Pavilion
June 22, 2017

Prior to meeting, a tour was given to the Task Force of the Chautauqua Fish Hatchery on Prendergast Creek.

Call to Order: by Chairman David Spann at 10:36 AM

WQTF Members Present: David Spann, Cassandra Pinkoski, David McCoy, Bob Pickett, Tom Pilling, Erin Brickley, Rhonda Lindquist, Douglas Conroe, Peter George, Bill Boria, Bryan Nothdurft, Bernie Klaich, Jan Bowman, Peter Beeson, John Jablonski.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by R. Lindquist to approve the May meeting minutes. Seconded. Carried.

Correspondence: None

Old Business:

1. Chautauqua Lake Partnership Letter- D. Spann presented the draft letter regarding the Chautauqua Lake Partnership's request for support. The draft letter was provided to the membership prior to the meeting. Motion by B. Klaich to mail out the letter (see attached). Seconded. Carried.

New Business:

1. 2017 TMDL Report for the Legislature – Last year, the TMDL Update went to the Legislature in the August meeting. Outreach will be made to the stakeholders that have contributed to the report in the past. A draft document will be anticipated at the August meeting.

Member Comments

1. Chautauqua County Watershed Coordinator – D. McCoy is currently working on a CFA (NYS Dept. of State grant) application for the Towns of Hanover and Westfield and the City of Dunkirk for an economic impact study on the Lake Erie Harbors. This will be a useful tool to attract funding as well as investors when there is a documented economic impact that the harbors draw to the local communities. The Army Corps of Engineers Section 107 Continuing Mitigation program might be a suitable fit for wave management in the inner harbor and extension of the breakwater in the City of Dunkirk. County and City representatives met with Edgewater Resources, who invest in harbors around the world to aid in this project. The Great Lake Experience event was one again held in Dunkirk and had a good turnout. The Dept. of Planning had a booth set up advertising the ongoing LWRP project for the Lake Erie waterfront and were available to answer any questions. For the 2018 2% Bed Tax Grant Program, six projects were scheduled for funding and presented to the Legislature for approval. There will be around \$200,000 of County funds given to the projects, which in turn leverage around \$800,000 in state or local monies.
2. Chautauqua Lake and Watershed Management Alliance – The Alliance will be starting its 3rd Annual Membership Drive this month. The annual Chautauqua Lake Rally will be held once again this August at the Bemus Point Casino. The Lawson Boat Museum will be hosting an educational seminar in July. The presentation given by Tom Erlandson will be a Lake Ecology 101. The Alliance will be submitting an application in the CFA in conjunction with the Village of Mayville and Town of Chautauqua for a stormwater study, much like what was funded previously for the Village of Lakewood/Town of Busti.

3. Western New York Crop Management Association – R. Lindquist shared that right now is a tough time for farmers, and the NYS DEC is finalizing the new CAFO permit regulations.
4. Chautauqua Lake Association – The CLA is currently keeping busy with aquatic vegetation harvesting, boater education (boat stewards), CSLAP data collection and toxic algae bloom monitoring. The watercraft steward program is up and running, and in addition to Chautauqua Lake coverage, there will be stewards at Bear and Cassadaga Lakes, as well as the harbor in the City of Dunkirk on Lake Erie.
5. Cassadaga Lakes Association – P. George shared that the student doing the lake management plan from SUNY Oneonta will be working with SUNY Fredonia to share test equipment and work on an invasive species protocol. He is making progress on the lake plan is continuing sampling. Harvesting is currently underway.
6. Chautauqua County Department of Health – Findley Lake sewer district vote has failed. The Dept. of Health will now be starting a mandatory septic inspection this year. There is only about half of the cottages around the lake on file at the DOH office. B. Boria inquired with D. McCoy regarding the CLP Demonstration Project for the herbicide application to Bemus Bay. D. McCoy shared that he did receive a copy of the permit, referred to as a “research permit”, the day before. There have been a lot of questions, and the CLP will be hosting an informational meeting on the project on Saturday at 8 AM. They are using the Macrophyte Management Strategy (MMS) as a guidance document for the zones, but not on the herbicides. J. Bowman questioned the timing because they plan on applying the herbicides on Monday at 10 AM. She had questions regarding consideration for fish spawning. B. Klaich shared that he attended the Memorial Day CLP hosted meeting and was surprised at the attendance. People understood that the idea application time should have been earlier in the year, but they are now switching to focus on what they are permitted to do. D. McCoy said there are a lot of stakeholders and passionate people in the group, and as herbicides are legally used throughout the state, there needs to be some trust in the NYS DEC to make educated decisions regarding their use in Chautauqua Lake.
7. SUNY JCC – J. Bowman updated the group regarding the data collection she performed on Bemus Bay this spring/summer with her students. The day before, she performed eight rake tosses in the Bay, with no Eurasian water milfoil present. They did find what they suspect to be a rare plant species, which was sent out to a lab for verification, a little elodea and coontail. There was a diversity of six different species. In her opinion, if the herbicides proposed are used in the Bay, it would affect the rare plant species she observed to be growing in the Bay. Her students and she also did a plankton sample, and three weeks ago there was a high diversity of diatoms. On Tuesday’s sampling, there was a high amount of microcystis, 3 of the 4 toxic producing algae, and a lack of zooplankton and diatoms. In her opinion, the Bay is situation for an algal bloom. She questioned how well the herbicide will knock back the target species because they are not found in the Bay currently. One of her students found a study from Eurasin where the milfoil variety is native in which it acts as a natural inhibitor for blue green algal blooms. Another study, from Wisconsin, which spanned 11 years, that long term herbicide use will not achieve the results intended. No one has seen the survey data on the species composition of the Bay commissioned by the CLP. J. Bowman said she is concerned about the mixing of science and politics in this instance. J. Jablonski questioned if there is any funding for an outside entity to do data collection in their test plots? E. Brickley said maybe it will be better to have the CLP revisit the original problem, and brainstorm solutions; the shoreline clean-up may be the better solution to the problem. D. McCoy verified that there is no County funding going towards this demonstration project. J. Jablonski brought up the question of how this can affect the disposal of weed cuttings, which currently go to an organic producer in the County. J. Bowman said she would put together a report to distribute. Her students will be presenting on Thursday at 12:30 PM at JCC Science Center 120 on the data they have collected this summer. The current herbicide permit will be forwarded to the group when we obtain a digital copy.

8. Bear Lake Association – B. Klaich provided an update that the Association has seen SUNY Fredonia become motivated to work on the Lake Management Plan, and Jeff Diers will be out conducting a plant survey. The density of milfoil is in excess of what is typically seen, but he hopes the weevils are up to the task.

Public Comments: None.

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tuesday July 18, 2017**
Time: **10:00 AM**
Place: **Frank W. Bratt Agricultural Center**

Adjournment: Motion by J. Jablonski to adjourn. Seconded. Carried at 11:33 AM.

C. Brower- Recorder

DRAFT