

**CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY WATER QUALITY TASK FORCE**  
**Frank Bratt Agricultural Center**  
**3542 Turner Road, Jamestown, NY 14701**  
**Monthly Meeting**

**December 12, 2019**

- 1. Meeting Called to Order:** 10:06 AM. By Chair Spann.
  - a. Present: David Spann - Chair/CCSWCD; Melissa Mee - Secretary/CCSWCD, Peter Beeson - RTPI, Brad Bentley - CCDPF, Bill Boria - CCDOH, Joe Galati - STWRPD Board Member, Peter George - CLA, Whitney Gleason - CWC, Dan Heitzenrater - Chaut. Co. Executive Office, John Jablonski - CWC, Bernie Klaich - BLA, Rhonda Lindquist - WNYCMA, Carol Markham - CWC, Dave McCoy - CCWC, Robert Nothdurft - USDA NRCS, Taylor West - CLWMA, Mike Wilson Ph.D. - ORSANCO
- 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The November 2019 Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force Meeting focused on the direction of WQTF and a Membership Drive was proposed.
- 3. Old Business:**
  - a. Membership Drive. Spann reported today's attendance represented one third of the group that used to attend. Spann went on to say that the last email that was sent out to members of the Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force (CCWQTF) prior to December's meeting produced a response from those who are in attendance at today's meeting along with a few other replies. Boria shared that attendance is not what is used to be, he and Dave Wilson discussed inviting other lake associations at one point in the past, and that the DEC is increasingly passive in its recognition of CCWQTF. Boria and several other persons in attendance stated that despite the decline in attendance, those who do not regularly attend meetings continue to verbally express their interest in the group and say that they rely heavily on the CCWQTF Meeting Minutes. It was also noted that several members are only permitted to attend if there is a specific task to be addressed by the CCWQTF. Beeson shared that his attendance at CCWQTF meetings is limited to when there is a specific task to be carried out by the CCWQTF. All in attendance agreed suggested that the following course of action regarding a CCWQTF Membership Drive be taken:
    - i. A letter is to be drafted and sent out that shares the new location, time date, and vision for the group in hopes of increasing meeting attendance. The letter is to be sent to current members, as well as, the DEC (Buffalo office), fisheries, Highway Superintendents, other businesses closely associated with lakes in the area, lake associations, as well as, John Shed.

- ii. A generalized survey is to be created through Survey Monkey or Google Forms to capture the thoughts of CCWQTF members regarding the direction of CCWQTF and meeting frequency. It was noted that Google Forms may be a better choice for the survey, as it allows the user to ask more than eight questions and it is free.
- iii. In addition to drafting a letter and creating a survey, the group agreed that the meeting notice should be submitted to local news publications in the form of a legal notice or a press release.
- b. Meeting Frequency.** At this time, CCWQTF will continue to meet monthly, however the meeting frequency is subject to change. The next meeting is to be held on January 9, 2020.
- c. Meeting Location.** The majority of those in attendance thought that the Katherine Jackson Carnahan Center located on the Jamestown Community College Campus might be the best possible location for CCWQTF to hold monthly meetings on the basis that the meeting rooms are capable housing larger groups and teleconferencing equipment is available upon request. Teleconferencing could be utilized in the future to include members who are not centrally located. The Turner Building located at the Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, New York and GOB Campus Building in Mayville, New York were proposed as possible alternate locations.
  - i. Spann noted that the Cornell Cooperative Extension invited CCWQTF to utilize the meeting rooms at their new location in the Jamestown Community College (JCC), Carnahan Building, located at 525 Falconer Street, Jamestown, NY 14701, as the Frank Bratt Agricultural Center is set to close its doors on December 15, 2019.
  - ii. Boria commented that his offices would be happy to contact JCC to reserve a meeting room for the upcoming meetings.
  - iii. In conclusion, Spann noted that he will create a survey that will include all of the components that have been discussed today that is to be sent out with the minutes from today's minutes.
- d. WTQF Direction**
  - i. Historically, the CCWQTF was created as a grassroots effort in the 1990's as an extension committee of the Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District that was informally chartered by DEC in effort to address Nonpoint Pollution as an extension committee through SWCD. Chautauqua County was one of the first participants. Currently, the DEC is extremely passive and no longer contributes to the CCWQTF.
  - ii. In recent years, the group has been sourced occasionally by various municipalities to obtain grants to fund projects like the Brocton Reservoir and Findley Lake Streambank Stabilization, has acted as a Technical

Advisor for Lake studies conducted by S.U.N.Y. Fredonia, has been involved with mini grants related to the Chautauqua County Fair, and is primarily used as an information platform/tool for its members.

- iii. According to the CCWQTF Bylaws: "The purpose of the CCWQTF shall be to develop and implement the Chautauqua County Water Strategy. The Strategy shall identify goals and objectives to reduce nonpoint source pollution impacts on county waterways, including but not limited to: recognizing best management practices to be used in areas of agriculture, construction, forestry, residences and road maintenance to ensure water quality; and support decision makers (local governments) with educational resources and expertise to better protect water resources within their localities. The Strategy shall be reviewed and updated periodically as needed."
- iv. Moving forward, all in attendance agreed that they feel that the purpose of the group is too broad to be impactful and that the groups purpose and strategy needs to be updated so that the CCWQTF can more constructively serve the local community. This process can be achieved by:
  - a) Reviewing the current Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force Bylaws (last updated on May 17, 2016) and Water Quality Strategy Document (last updated in 1996) in direct comparison with the areas of expertise and capabilities of the group's active members with the intent of updating both documents.
  - b) Identifying the roles of similar groups within the region that address issues related to water quality, as well as, best management practices, water sampling and projects that are effectively being carried out in the region. This will prevent CCWQTF from wasting its time, effort and expertise on issues that are effectively being addressed. Spann highlighted the significant amount of effort and money that is being allocated towards Chautauqua Lake. Without identifying best management practices that are currently in place, the CCWQTF would only be adding another layer of work that is already being carried out. Nothdurft noted that redirecting effort towards the reduction of agricultural nonpoint pollution could dramatically increase the availability of funding.
  - c) Spann pointed out that focusing the groups energy on specific "tasks" or detailed studies such as the Brine Study that was conducted in 2014 would allow

CCWQTF to utilize its unique expertise, spearhead studies that cannot be executed by a single entity so that CCWQTF can start to operate at its full potential.

- d) Wilson raised the point that the group will need to decipher how funds will be managed and how the work will be absorbed in relation to new studies/projects that are taken on by CCWQTF in the future.
- e) Ultimately, CCWQTF will need to decide how the group should continue without the support of the DEC. Those in attendance agreed that the group is critical in addressing issues at the local level, as most of the focus in New York State is focused on particular watersheds. Klaich specifically pointed out that several issues in the Bear Lake Watershed would not have been addressed without the CCWQTF. Others in attendance noted that the group is an excellent asset to the community regarding the networking that occurs at meetings and outside of meetings among CCWQTF members.

## **2. New Business:**

- a. Brine Study - It was proposed that the effects of road spreading gas and oil well brine that were captured in 2014 should be revisited. It was also noted how impactful the study was on the region and that the use of oil well brine has almost been eliminated in New York State.
- b. Road Salt - Jablonski proposed that the Chautauqua County Water Quality Task Force investigate the impact of road salt countywide in addition to spreading gas and oil well brine, and that the study should capture surface and ground water salinity levels.

## **3. Reports:**

- a. McCoy, CCWC - Chautauqua County Watershed Coordinator Dave McCoy stated that he is happy to report that resolution to remove debris has been approved by Audit Control for the Northeast corner of village in Bemus Creek. The committee determined that debris/tree removal is necessary to prevent flooding, property damage, potential to damages to bridges downstream, the trees in that location ultimately from being carried into Chautauqua Lake in the future. This project fit nicely into the 2% undesignated off-cycle projects. Spann noted that this project will significantly reduce streambank erosion and that the landowner that is primarily affected will be extremely happy with the outcome. McCoy also mentioned that the Committee is currently closing out project contracts for 2017, 2018 and 2019, and noted that Spann and his team are working diligently to complete three 2017 agricultural

projects. McCoy stated that he cannot stress the importance of agricultural projects in the county, as the projects keep nutrients and other pollutants from entering watersheds. The projects also alleviate the costs for farmers. McCoy also noted that the Drain Marking Campaign was a success. Yard Waste Management and Microplastics campaign will continue to be addressed in 2020. It will be necessary to be clear as to what is accepted by the landfill regarding household waste disposal events in 2020, as the public regularly tries to dispose of items that are not listed or accepted. 2021 Applicants are currently being reviewed for the Occupancy Grants for 240K. In response, Lindquist stated that she would like to see funding for 2% projects become available to all watersheds in the region. Sewer Agency - The Committee is focused on Findley Lake, Peak n Peak Resort, Town of Mina currently as it has many needs and nutrient loading is a concern.

- b.** Jablonski, CWC - The Chautauqua County Watershed Conservatory (CWC) is currently collaborating with Andy Johnson from Eco Strategies to develop a 12,000-foot wetland that will allow the Grandview Developments located on Fairmount Avenue in Lakewood, New York to manage stormwater. The CWC is also currently addressing the Fairmount Avenue Railroad Junction by implementing storm water basins. The CWC would also like to focus on raising the awareness of the importance of storm water and work on suggested designs. The Leaf Management Ads via Facebook and local radio were a success and received positive feedback. Fifty trees were planted at Ball Creek.
- c.** Beeson, RTPI - Beeson noted that his focus currently has been on using Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) technology to create various land use maps and models for projects within the county. Beeson stated that mapping created with LIDAR are an excellent tool in terms of identifying areas that are at high risk for erosion and could help to detect sediment movement. Beeson said that he often uses the word river is a verb when in terms of identifying problem areas within our local waterways and shared about the concept of watershed stabilization vs. the stabilization of one streambank at a time. Beeson went on to say that a Land Use Map of a specific problem area created with LIDAR could be used as a water quality model. Beeson also noted that LIDAR technology could also be useful in identifying groundwater contribution trends. Beeson encouraged all in attendance to contact him with the coordinates of any problem areas so that he can look at that location more closely.
- d.** Lindquist, WNYCMA - Lindquist, of the Western New York Crop Management Association has been focused on Farm inspections.

- e. George, CLA - George stated that he wanted to commend Spann and the Chautauqua County Soil & Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) on the work that was done to stabilize the erosion that is occurring on Dale Drive in Cassadaga, New York. George also commented that the Cassadaga Lake Association was experiencing a Beaver issue and had tried installing Beaver Deceivers. However, this approach was not fully effective due to the scale of Cassadaga Lake. Klaich mentioned that Beaver Deceivers were effective approach for Bear Lake but mentioned the success could have been appropriated to Bear Lake being a smaller lake. Spann shared that CCSWCD recently secured a nuisance permit and utilized Gary Dudeck who is a licensed trapper to remove a beaver family from Farrington Hollow.
- f. Klaich - BLA. Klaich reported Emery Masiker has started the demolition of the Clever Store which is almost complete (90-95%). The Boat repair building is less than 50% demolished. Masiker is still trying to sell the boat launch property to the state.
- g. Boria, CCDOH - Boria was happy to report that Jamestown Community College is considering developing a water and wastewater operator training center. Currently, the closest training for wastewater operators is at SUNY Morrisville. Boria also noted that a new Source Water Protection initiative is being coordinated by New England Water Environment Association through DEC and DOH. This program is schedule to begin in 2020.
- h. Hetzenrater, Chautauqua County Executive Offices. Hetzenrater noted that the outcome of the survey will be shared with the new intern to help that individual understand the purpose of the CCWQTF. Hetzenrater shared that his focus currently as been on coordination with other half lakes to form a clean lake collaboration.
- i. West, CLWMA - West encourages any interested persons who would like to join the NYS Invasive Species Group to contact him (Taylor West) directly at the Chautauqua Lake & Watershed Management Alliance at 716-661-8923.
- j. Bentley, CCDPF - Bentley noted that rip rap that was implemented along Dale Drive was a success and commended Spann on his work to stabilize the banks of Cassadaga Lake. Bentley noted that residents mentioned losing 8 to 10 feet as a result of erosion in the last 10 years. Bentley noted that the Mayville parking lot expansion has been completed, however there is a plan to implement rain gardens to deal with stormwater effectively. Bentley also noted that the Frank Bratt Agricultural Center is to close its doors as of December 15, 2019 and proposed the possibility of using the Mayville GOB Campus as an alternate location for future CCWQTF

meetings. Bentley also shared that FEMA Flood Maps are being updated.

- k. Nothdurft, USDA NRCS - Nothdurft shared that a new Farm Bill and Agricultural Act was introduced around December of 2018. The framework for programming is revisited every four years. In the Farm Bill there was a focus on partnerships. NRCS specifically will be meeting with several county entities to discuss how applications are funded. The meeting will be held at the USDA center in Jamestown, New York in the summer of 2020. Topics related to conservation will vary but will all pertain to Chautauqua County. The intent of the meeting is not to dictate how money will be allocated throughout the county, the intent is to actively identify the needs within the county and identify new partnerships. Nothdurft passed around a Source Water Map and noted that funding for source water protection is mainly allocated in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed at this time. Nothdurft shared that Chautauqua Lake could be recognized in the future, and that could increase in funding in the region as a result. Once funding becomes available it would be used for cover crops and other practices that protect soil nutrients yet provide buffers that prevent nutrients from entering bodies of water. Nothdurft also shared that there is a new state conservationist.

**4. Treasurer Report: Motion** by Spann to approve holiday lunch expense \$74.94. Seconded by George.

**5. Next Water Quality Task Force Meeting** - Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 10 AM in Room 123, Katherine Jackson Carnahan Center, Jamestown Community College, 525 Falconer Street, Jamestown, NY 14701.

**6. Adjourn - Motion** by Spann. Seconded by Boria. Carried.

Melissa Mee

Secretary

David Spann

Chairman