

**Stormwater Coalition of Albany County
Board of Directors Meeting**

**MINUTES
Village of Green Island
19 George Street
Thursday, June 16, 2011
8:30-10:00 am**

Board of Directors Attending:

Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
James Bulmer, City of Watervliet
John McDonald, City of Cohoes
Sean Ward, Village of Green Island
Erik Deyoe, Town of Bethlehem
John Dzialo, Town of Colonie
Gerald Gordinier, Village of Voorheesville
Alexander Gordon, Albany County
Carl Fleshman, Village of Colonie

Also Present:

Nancy Heinzen, Stormwater Coalition Program Coordinator
Melissa Ashline-Heil, City of Cohoes (Minutes)
Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes
Sheldon Smith, Albany County Comptroller's Office

Absent:

Thomas Dolin, Town of New Scotland
Kenneth Runion, Town of Guilderland
Bradford Burns, City of Albany

I. Approval of March 17, 2011 Minutes

Paul Reuss moved to approve the minutes. Carl Fleshman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

II. Budget Reports

1. Coalition Account

a. 2010

Nancy projected \$10,600 in unspent reserve money at the last Board of Director's meeting. However, the County Comptroller calculated only \$151 remaining. For the 2010 budget we need to bring unspent in as Adjusted Reserve Balance which will bump is up to \$10,669. Chairman Sean Ward

recommended sitting down with the County Comptroller to determine the discrepancy. He emphasized that the money is not missing; it is just a matter of determining how to account for the money, given Comptroller procedures.

Jim Bulmer asked if the County and Coalition disagree on the \$20,385 amount. Nancy explained that the two parties only debate where the money comes from. Also there are procedures for reconciling year end of accounts, such as the personal services line, about which Nancy is unfamiliar. She is anxious to resolve the matter because the deadline when she must submit the budget is near.

Sean suggested a separate account for the Coalition, independent of the County General Fund and the current Reserve fund arrangement. Nancy added that tracking the grant revenue and expenses, in addition to the Coalition revenue and expenses, all within the same Stormwater Coalition account is also confusing. Mayor John McDonald asked if the County is open to creating such an account. Sean will check with John Branigan.

b. 2011

All members paid the annual dues, shown in the revenue line. The revenue line also reflects grant monies as well as stormwater reserves. Nancy transferred money from the grant to the Tech/Admin Assist-GIS line to pay Christina, who meets with human resources next week to choose a health insurance plan. She must pay 10% of her salary for the health benefits.

Nancy requested an executive transfer of \$1000 from office supplies to a newly created equipment repair and rental line. Sean moved to approve the transfer. John McDonald seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Staffing

The Coalition will pay for student intern staffing out of the temp help line. Six applicants applied for the position. Of those, one did not meet the basic criteria of enrollment in a Master's program. Three of the remaining applicants have a strong science background. Finally, one of the three with a science background in science is available during the hours the Coalition needs assistance. Her name is Patty Shultis and she is only available for one year because she will graduate in August, 2012.

Nancy developed a "How to" matrix showing the decision making process for County hiring processes. Both the County and municipalities share the minority/women business enterprise requirement. The main difference between hiring someone in a municipality as opposed to the County is the County's affirmative action requirement. The affirmative action posting of the job led to one more applicant. She had a strong planning background but no experience with stormwater outfalls or knowledge of the Clean Water Act.

Nancy hopes for a July 1st start date. The remaining step is the "Committee to Fill" which must review and approve the applicant. Although that group can turn down the Coalition's decision, it is unlikely in this scenario.

The two other candidates with a strong science background are available 1-2 days a week. Nancy would like to hire them to enter the stormwater management program information into the CBI-MS4 Permit Manager database. The Coalition would need to post the job for affirmative action purposes which is a two week process. Sean also recommended interviewing the one applicant who initially applied because he is enrolling in a master's program. Nancy added that two other applicants have approached the Coalition since the original posting that may qualify for the job.

Erik Deyoe pointed out that the process seems complex for a one year hire. In Bethlehem the Town hires all interns as laborers even if they perform engineering duties which streamlines the process. He also suggested one municipality hire the intern and the Coalition reimburse the municipality. Other members of the Board thought that would create tension between the levels of government. Sandy suggested completing the affirmative action step earlier in the process. Nancy feels okay with the process.

3. Contracts

Nancy requested ratification of the website vendor decision (Gramercy Communications). James Bulmer moved to approve the website vendor. Paul Reuss seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. Coalition Work Plan

1. Coalition Work Plan 2011

a. Activities

Nancy submitted the 2011 MS4 Annual Report on time (due June 1). She hosted a public meeting about the Annual Report on May 17 at 24 Martin Rd, Cooperative Extension Building, which included a Power Point presentation. Josh Arnold of Stantec attended the public meeting and submitted a comment that the meeting was informative. Finally, Nancy summarized the minimum control measure data gleaned from the Annual Report to display the strengths and weaknesses of the Coalition's work.

Watershed layers have been added to AIMS. The tax parcel layer is an ongoing project. The chart disseminated by Nancy shows the actual number of tax parcels with problems. Problems include wrong SBL numbers, parcel boundaries, etc. On July 1st the final ORPS list will be available, but until the problematic tax parcels are corrected, future tax parcel uploads onto AIMS will show the same number and type of errors. To help correct these problems, the Albany County tax map coordinator is contacting local assessors, explaining various problems, and suggesting corrections.

Christina Chiappetta is finishing up Outfall Reconnaissance Inventories (ORIs) with municipalities.

The May Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) webcast was attended by a number of engineers.

b. Grant Activities

The model local law subcommittee sent out green infrastructure training needs surveys to municipal employees, elected officials, and Board members (Planning/Zoning Board of Appeals/Conservation Advisory Committees). The group is also analyzing existing codes using a scoresheet that will be finalized by next July. The next step is to figure out what consultant would best meet the group's needs.

Jerry Gordinier commented that despite reviewing the color photographs with his Board members for two hours, those individuals taking the survey still indicated a lack of knowledge concerning green infrastructure practices. He believes the problem is a lack of confidence.

c. By Request

The Coalition assisted with the Voorheesville Elementary School Getting to Know the Stream Next Door program; a Cohoes Beautification Committee presentation; and two Earth Day events, one at Clarksville Elementary School in New Scotland, the other at Elsmere Elementary School, both in the Bethlehem School District. .

C. Other Discussion Items - General Updates

1. Proposed 2012 Coalition Work Plan and Budget

Nancy highlighted the high priority items, which include the following: outreach and education, website, storm system mapping, ORI, green infrastructure training and model local laws, addressing enforcement issues using the website, coalition operations, and the stormwater management program plan. Sandy moved to approve the 2012 work plan. John McDonald seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The 2012 budget plan can either A) keep the status quo or B) make room for future considerations. Sandy asked if the municipal dues are tied to Census Data and if the recent increases in population might increase some municipalities' dues. Erik replied that the agreement refers to the 2000 Census Data, so it would need an amendment to hold municipalities to 2010 numbers. Even so, those municipalities with the greatest growth – the City of Albany and the Town of Colonie - are still in the same population bracket for dues.

The budget as submitted, due June 30 to the County Management and Budget, will require some adjustments. For example, the grant funded line item for Christina as a full time employee is listed in the revenue line at \$47,511. However she is only allotted \$30,000 and the budget will reflect that cap. The \$62,511 in "other unclassified," which includes that full time employee line for Christina, plus \$15,000 for the Homeland Security Grant and \$8,000 from the County for in-kind services totaling \$174,511 may need to be adjusted both on the revenue side and expense side.

2. Intermunicipal Agreement – Contract Ends 12/31/2012

In the Plan B Future Considerations budget Nancy set aside \$90,000 for a consultant potentially hired to tweak the intermunicipal agreement or to create a regional entity. Sean pointed out that the County places unspent money in its general fund, so the Coalition has to carefully present its budget. In addition, he recommends a grant to conduct a study for any regional expansion.

Nancy explained that there is some talk of combining sanitary sewers, stormwater, and CSOs into some combined management structure. She believes the future in the field is regional watershed based planning. EPA wants watershed based permitting, which would allow for a shared implementation and

management of multiple Clean Water Act SPDES Permits. NYSDEC, however currently regulates the MS4 and CSO Permit independently. Sean thinks rolling CSO and MS4 permits into sewer districts might be a good idea. However, John McDonald found it ironic that it would be creating an Authority during a time government is disassembling so many Authorities.

Nancy turned back to the Plan A Status Quo budget, reiterating that some adjustments are needed. Erik added that state retirement contributions are increasing 15%. He wondered when Nancy needed a decision. She preferred a decision or some direction from the Board of Director's meeting so that she can submit the Coalition budget to the County by June 30th. The general idea would be to keep the membership fees the same. John Dzialo asked if she needed a statement of intent, which she confirmed.

Sean added that Deb Shannon stated during the most recent training that the EPA would like to make every municipality in a county with an MS4 an MS4 too. He thought this would be a dramatic request for the Hilltowns (Berne, Knox, Westerlo, Rensselaerville). Sandy suggested joining CDRPC for geographic reasons (covers a bigger area) and 1) all stormwater items are important to Hilltowns; 2) agricultural issues complicate matters; and 3) CDRPC receives grants to handle issues that frustrate municipalities.

Nancy asked if the Coalition should continue as is, keeping the agreement the same. Jerry moved to keep the agreement. Erik seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Nancy expressed concerns about sustaining the current workload. The Coalition is doing more and it is becoming overwhelming. She can keep up the pace for another year, but recommends additional staff in order to expand services. Jerry recommended amending the Coalition's goals. However, Nancy finds the services need to expand because the Coalition wants to protect water quality.

Erik recommended identifying who is doing the same work and partnering with those organizations such as CDRPC. Nancy is street level partnering with Susan Lewis from Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District and other similar organizations but suggests a memorandum of understanding to clarify those relationships. Erik suggested finding out what everyone else is doing and remember the Coalition's main purpose is to address MS4 Permit requirements.

Sandy proposed conducting a forum for informational purposes initially. Nancy countered those other organizations, such as Cornell Cooperative Extension, as accountable to their own Boards so partnering informally does not necessarily provide a guaranteed level of support, which is important if expected to implement the regulations and avoid fines. James Bulmer advised meeting with Rocco Ferraro. Jerry warned not to expand just for the sake of expanding as meeting with others creates more work for the Coordinator.

Nancy is trying to figure out how to get work done while looking to the future. She wants the Coalition to be smart about water quality and other issues. Jerry commented that 80% of reaching our goal is educating the citizenry. The Coalition is not doing enough to educate others, focusing instead on enforcement, discharges and construction sites.

The stormwater management program plan gets at educating the public. The watershed map shows how the region is connected. If the Coalition coordinates their educational programs with others this would help, but since there is not a formal relationship with Cornell Cooperative Extension, CDRPC or other relevant organizations, how this coordination takes place is unclear. Those relationships need to be tightened up through formalization. The Coalition has many brochures, but meetings and presentations would be more effective. Board members disagreed, informing Nancy that no one would show up at meetings. As a former teacher she believes that creating interesting events to teach elements of the issue, based on a process that would pull more people in, could be effective.

Sandy counseled that the Coalition should invite all the players to a meeting. Jerry wanted to petition the governor to create a state wide education program. Nancy thinks the webpage and events would better educate the public.

III. Close of Meeting

Sean Ward moved to adjourn at 10:15am. John Dzialo seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 15th, 2011, Village of Green Island, 8:30am – 10:00am

These minutes were approved at the September 15, 2011 Board of Director's Meeting.