

Stormwater Coalition of Albany County of Albany
Board of Directors Meeting
June 11, 2009
MINUTES

Board of Directors Attending:

Sean Ward, Village of Green Island (Chairperson)
Alexander Gordon, Albany County
Bradford Burns, City of Albany
John McDonald, City of Cohoes
Carl Fleshman, Village of Colonie
Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
Thomas Dolin, Town of New Scotland
Gerald Gordinier, Village of Voorheesville
James Bulmer, City of Watervliet

Absent:

Erik Deyoe, Town of Bethlehem
Peter Gannon, Town of Colonie
Ken Runion, Town of Guilderland

Also Present:

Nancy Heinzen, Stormwater Coalition Program Coordinator
Laura DeGaetano, Albany County (Minutes)
Josh Carvajal, Town of Bethlehem
Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes
John Dzialo, Town of Colonie

Chairman, Sean Ward called the meeting called to order at approx. 8:10 a.m.

I. Approval of March 20, 2009 minutes

Sean Ward made a motion to approve the minutes. John McDonald second.

II. Budget Reports

Two sets of budget reports were reviewed, the Coalition budget and the stormwater grant budget.

Stormwater grant: Two big-budget items remain. One is the production of general maintenance cards for post-construction practices. Seven firms were contacted for a request for quotes. Two quotes were received; one from Center for Watershed Protection, and one from Hazen and Sawyer. An evaluation form was used to analyze the proposals after which, Hazen and Sawyer was chosen to do the work. They will design general maintenance cards to be completed by October 1. The firm is associated with Staten Island Blue Belt and has great expertise.

Leftover money will be used for publications and other things to be decided in the next couple of weeks.

The stormwater grant has been extended to October 2009, however, DEC advised to extend it further to ensure time to complete all of the necessary paperwork.

Mr. Gordinier asked is cards would be specific or existing systems and how that fits in with the new requirement that designs for newly constructed practices include a maintenance plan. Nancy explained that these are generic maintenance cards for 12 types of practices to act as a general guide. Mr. McDonald added that the cards will be helpful to municipalities as they will give them information on DEC-approved maintenance practices to confirm what developers are telling them. Nancy added that the Coalition workgroup will also be reviewing the cards for accuracy and applicability.

Mr. Gordon and Mr. Gordinier had a question about the scope of the work. Nancy noted that Hazen and Sawyer had proposed 12 general maintenance cards whereas Center for Watershed Protection had only proposed 7. There is \$5,000 in the budget to reproduce the cards so every municipality will get sets.

Coalition Budget: Money spent to date has been on salary and training/conferences. Now that the annual report is complete, Nancy will focus on spending from the Coalition budget. Her focus will be on set-up for additional staff.

Mr. Ward asked if the balance of the Coalition budget was \$88,798. Nancy confirmed that to be correct.

Mr. Gordon suggested looking into used county computers as a discounted source of equipment. Nancy explained that she believes we will need higher capacity equipment to meet the mapping and computing needs of the Coalition.

Mr. Carvajal asked on behalf of Eric Deyo what happens to unspent money, especially \$26,220 in the temporary help line. Nancy explained that she had been discussing the matter with Albany County Management and Budget and that it could be moved to another line and encumbered if necessary.

Mr. Ward expressed that municipalities are all struggling and he wants to ensure that unspent funds are not spent unnecessarily. There was also concern amongst several coalition members about the safety of unspent funds. Mr. Ward and Mr. Gordon assured the Board they will make sure any unspent money does not get swept from the budget.

III. Workplan

Nancy reported that the demonstration rain gardens are in the ground. The City of Albany is producing educational signage for each garden, which should be complete by weeks end. Guilderland is working on an additional rain garden.

Nancy and Josh Carvajal from TOB attended an Earth Day event at Clarksville Elementary School with a Coalition display and did Project Wet activities with the kids.

A Trees-for-Tribs stream buffer restoration project was completed on a portion of Vly Creek with collaboration from Albany County, Village of Voorheesville and DEC Hudson River Estuary Program. Mr. Gordinier extended thanks to Laura DeGaetano for her help and for keeping the project participants motivated.

Nancy reported that she has been working with Tim Murphy (Albany County Sewer District) on completing the IDDE kits for water quality testing.

IV. Staffing Update

There is \$26,220 in the budget for help, to be split between student interns, working 10 to 20 hours a week, and water quality educators, working fewer hours, depending on the number and type of educational programs.

Mr. Ward inquired about the salary for interns. Suggested hourly wage ranged from \$12.00 to \$20.00/hour for interns and \$8.00 to \$15.00/hr for water quality educators. Cost breakdowns were presented showing the cost of each at the various salary ranges for different hours.

Dr. Gary Kleppel, Program Director of the SUNY Albany Department of Biology Masters program in Conservation, Biodiversity, and Policy at SUNY Albany has advised Nancy on pay expectations for interns. With a higher salary, we can expect a higher level of skills and a more solid commitment of time. There is currently a potential intern in the Biology Department at SUNY. Details about the job description for a Water Quality Educator and intern are contained in the packet distributed to the Board.

Mr. Gordon asked if additional resources would be needed to host an intern. Nancy confirmed that additional resources would be needed, but these were already included in the 2009 Coalition Budget.

Mr. Ward pointed out that Civil Service should be contacted to find out the procedures for hiring interns.

V. Press Updates

Nancy reported that a reporter from the Altamont Enterprise had attended the Voorheesville annual report meeting and contacted Mr. Gordinier and herself about the annual report process and the Coalition. The Enterprise plans to do a series of articles on stormwater.

VI. MS4 Annual Report

The annual report was completed and submitted on time. It proved to be a big job for the MS4s and Nancy. The need for common forms to record activities was revealed in the

process. As a result of collecting information from all of the municipalities, Nancy compiled a profile of each MS4s reported activities.

To summarize, the capacity for mailings and newsletters is great, green infrastructure, planning, and site design are rising to the surface as a priority, lots of clean-up events were organized but there is a need to focus them more toward stormwater. There is a great range in # of outfalls across MS4s as well as # of SWPPPs reviewed and actions taken.

Mr. Ward thanked Nancy for her work on the huge project of completing a joint annual report which was one of the main goals of the Coalition. Great job. Mr. Gordinier added that doing a joint annual report is worth the effort as it sends a message to the State that we're united which may be especially important in protecting MS4s against enforcement violations and fines.

Mr. Gordon asked for guidance on where we are in terms of enforcement. The Board members agreed that the message is that the need for enforcement is varied. The program has been focused on education up until recently and is just now ramping up for enforcement. Colonie has issued fines while Bethlehem has been able to get voluntary compliance so far.

VII. SUNY Albany Contract

A contract for SUNY Albany to join the Coalition has been drafted. Mr. Franconere currently responsible for the SUNY Albany MS4 Program will be retiring and his replacement will be attending Coalition Board and Working Group meetings. There was a brief discussion of the membership fee.

Mr. Gordon inquired about voting status and was informed that SUNY would not be a voting member of the Board under this contract.

A motion was made by Carl Fleshman authorizing Chairman, Sean Ward to sign the Contract with SUNY for an annual fee of \$1750, prorated for 6 months (July 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009). The motion was seconded by Tom Dolin.

VIII. Sewer District Contract

Mr. Ward reviewed the fees for services contract with the Albany County Sewer District for \$2,000/yr for technical support, data collection, analysis, access to lab equipment, personnel for training, and back-up testing in a certified lab. It is a 1-yr renewable contract, effective date TBD.

Motion was made by John McDonald to authorize the Chairman, Sean Ward to enter into a contract with the Albany County Sewer District with an effective date to be determined. The \$2,000 annual fee will be prorated with an ending date of December 31, 2010. The motion was seconded by Alexander Gordon.

VIII. Budget Membership Fees

Nancy reviewed the proposed budget and work plan that was distributed to the Board. Not detailed in the proposed budget, it was clarified that the money for the Sewer District contract would come out of miscellaneous contractual services. The cost to MS4s that is listed would also go down slightly due to SUNY joining the Coalition.

There was discussion on the requested amount from each MS4 for next year. Mr. McDonald suggested trying to estimate excess in the budget this year to potentially reduce the cost next year. Mr. Ward, Mr. Fleshman, Mr. Dolin, Mr. Gordinier, Mr. Reuss, and McDonald confirmed that they were prepared to contribute the amount listed in the budget for 2010. John Dizialo indicated that Colonie was in as well. The Town of Bethlehem and Guilderland have not confirmed a commitment to 2010 yet.

Mr. Ward explained that last year it was necessary for the budget to be submitted to the County before approval by the Board so if change is needed, it can happen in the legislature. Mr. McDonald recommended that Nancy reach out to City of Albany, Bethlehem, and Guilderland to make sure there are no major problems with the budget.

The Working Group will meet to finalize the budget and work plan.

John McDonald made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 a.m. Alexander Gordon second.

Minutes approved by the Board of Directors on September 17, 2009.