

*Stormwater Coalition of Albany County
Board of Directors*

**Friday, March 19, 2021
Microsoft Teams Videoconference
8:32am to 10:03am**

MINUTES

Board of Directors Attending:

Lucas Rogers, Albany County (Liaison to County Executive's Office and Board alternate)
Dennis Feeney, Albany County
Neil O'Connor, City of Albany (Board alternate)
Paul Penman, Town of Bethlehem
Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes (Note Taker)
Sean Ward, Village of Green Island, Chairperson
Maggie Alix, Village of Green Island (Board alternate)
Doug LaGrange, Town of New Scotland
Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
Rich Straut, Village of Voorheesville
David Dressel, City of Watervliet
Frank Fazio, University at Albany – SUNY

Also Present:

Nancy Heinzen, Coalition Stormwater Program Director
Adam Wands, Town of Colonie
Brad Bunzey, University at Albany - SUNY

Absent:

Peter Barber, Town of Guilderland

I. Approval of January 15, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the January 15, 2021 Board Meeting minutes was made by Doug LaGrange and seconded by Garry Nathan. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Reports

A. Coalition Administration

1. Chairperson and alternate (deadline today)

Sean Ward is retiring, the Coalition needs a Chairperson by the June 11 meeting. A discussion followed, no action.

2. 2020 Budget Report (Medical ins charge-adjustment/other issues; M&B reserve method/SW replenish line mtg)

Nancy Heinzen reviewed the 2020 Budget Report, now closed out. The charge for Hospital and Medical is still high compared to the budgeted amount for two full time staff (\$42,249). Only one person was on staff for 2020, therefore expected charges would be half of \$42,249 (~\$21,000). Instead, the actual charge is \$34,392.

Nancy Heinzen explained that in early-February she had reached to the Comptroller's office about adjusting the charge. Chip Dott explained that the Department of Human Resources would be need to determine the amount; the Finance Department would need to make the adjustment; and any decrease in the Coalition charge would need to be increased elsewhere. Also, any adjustments need to take place by the end of February before the County budget is closed out.

The multi-step process was too complicated to pursue at the time and similar to previous years, Nancy Heinzen thought that the Coalition Stormwater Replenishment line could be used to increase our reserve balance by the amount of the overcharge as part of the 2022 budgeting process. The actual increase to our reserve would take place after the 2022 budget closes out.

Sean Ward thought that the overall cost of health insurance seemed high and Lucas Rogers agreed to discuss options with Management and Budget staff.

3. 2021 Budget Report (Dues received)

Dues from University at Albany-SUNY are in the pipeline. All other dues have been paid. Other than Nancy Heinzen's salary line, few items have been purchased by the Coalition.

There is a slight error in the amount originally appropriated from our reserve. It should have been \$25,603, instead it was \$23,810 (difference of \$1,793). Management and Budget originally intended to fix this discrepancy by including the adjustment within an overarching multi departmental budget amendment, but realized there was no matching line to increase having previously assigned these funds as a 2% raise to the Coordinator/Director salary. This would result in an unbalanced budget amendment. The correction was put on hold to be addressed later in the year.

Given budget issues, it was suggested that staff from the County Department of Management and Budget should attend Coalition Board meetings.

4. Coalition June 18 Board Mtg (Juneteenth Day – reschedule)

Nancy Heinzen explained that June 18, the date scheduled for the next Board meeting was now a holiday to commemorate Juneteenth Day (June 19). Garry Nathan made a motion to move the Board meeting to June 11, which was seconded by Rich Straut and passed unanimously.

5. Coalition Contact List (Roles, Corrections, Acknowledgments)

Nancy Heinzen requested clarification regarding Board representation and who to include on the Board and Working Group email lists. Updated contact information was provided for the Town of Bethlehem and City of Watervliet. Coalition contact information for the Town of Colonie was unavailable due staff changes and related unknowns.

Nancy Heinzen acknowledged the retirement of Sean Ward from the Village of Green Island and Frank Fazio from the University at Albany-SUNY. She thanked them for their years of service on the Coalition Board of Directors and their overall contribution to understanding and implementing the stormwater regulations.

B. Other

1. NYS EFC GIGP Grant Support Letter (City of Cohoes)

2. American Public Works Association - NY Chapter (Nomination Form/Letter – J. Dzialo)

Since the last Board meeting, Nancy Heinzen wrote a letter of support for a City of Cohoes NYS EFC GIGP grant application and submitted paperwork to nominate John Dzialo for an American Public Works Association award which he received. Nancy shared these documents with the Coalition Board

3. NYSDEC MS4 Permit Update

Other than an EPA request for MS4 Permit Annual Report information from the City of Watervliet, a request Dave Dressel explained to the Board, there are no MS4 Permit updates.

C. Coalition 2021 Workplan

1. Content (Jan-March-Hiring/Adjustments; April-June/Joint AR & Hiring; Public Participation/GIS Tasks)

2. Joint Annual Report & Annual Evaluation (Sessions; Due Dates; Content; AR2020 Comments)

Nancy Heinzen reviewed the 2021 Workplan adopted by the Coalition Board and explained that the focus for the first quarter (January – March) has been hiring staff for the two vacant Coalition positions, GIS Coordinator and Coalition Stormwater Program Technician.

While the GIS Coordinator position is likely to be filled, despite interviewing several candidates the Coalition Stormwater Program Tech position remains vacant. Filling that position will continue to be a priority.

The Coalition will again submit a Joint MS4 Permit Annual Report and as part of that process, Nancy Heinzen will meet individually with each Coalition municipal representative to update their Stormwater Management Program Plan. This involves tracking progress meeting past goals and creating goals for the upcoming year. This information is typically incorporated into individual MS4 Annual Reports and the overall Joint Annual Report submitted to NYSDEC by June 1.

III. Discussions/Decisions

A. Hiring Update

1. GIS Coordinator – Freiman Job Offer & Acceptance

a. Final Salary & Start Date (April 30)

b. Immediate Tasks

Nancy Heinzen reviewed emails circulated to the Board regarding resumes, interviews, and the job offer to Elijah Freiman for the position of GIS Coordinator.

Due to his current residency status, the GIS candidate will need to relocate to Albany County and the mutually agreed upon start date is April 30. Given their fiduciary responsibilities the Board needs to settle on salary. The job posting included a range of \$55,000 to \$65,000 and whatever salary is offered needs to be within that range.

Nancy Heinzen explained the anticipated GIS related work responsibilities and Board members considered various factors, such as the candidate's GIS/stormwater work experience, GIS related salaries in general, job references, academic work, retention over time, and salary ranges internal to the Coalition.

Doug LaGrange made a motion to offer the candidate \$57,000 to start, then after 6 months (October 30) and depending on performance, increase the salary to \$59,000. Assuming all non-union County employees receive a cost of living increase of 2% for 2022, the salary of \$59,000 would increase to \$60,180 starting January, 2022.

Garry Nathen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Coalition Stormwater Program Technician

a. Civil Service Job Spec revisions

b. What next?

Four municipalities participated in interviewing candidates for the Stormwater Program Technician position (Village of Menands, City of Cohoes, Town of New Scotland, and City of Watervliet). All four municipalities contribute additional dues to cover salary and fringe.

Difficulties recruiting and hiring a part time Coalition Stormwater Program Technician were discussed. Several attractive applications were received from non-County residents. They were not interviewed. The three who were residents took other jobs or turned down the job offer.

Nancy Heinzen explained that the County Civil Service job specification used to recruit for this position, in retrospect given the hourly rate and lack of benefits requires too much experience. While described as an entry-level position, minimal thresholds were perhaps too demanding. The interview team thought that targeting students early in their academic experience and likely to stay in the position for two years should be a priority.

For this reason the job specification was revised. While candidates would still need some academic work related to stormwater management, work requirements were reduced. Instead of offering \$15/hr (24 hours per week); the hourly would be \$18/hr (20 hours per week), with flex time.

The recruitment effort will be reignited later in the year.

B. 2022 Coalition Workplan & Budget - Annual Evaluation (2021) Goals

1. Administrative (2022 Budget-Dues-Staffing-Reserve Amt: IMA End Date 12/2022; Transitions; Signals; Other)

2. MS4 Permit Compliance

Nancy Heinzen reminded the Board that the June Board meeting will focus on the 2022 Coalition 2022 Workplan and Budget and that the Coalition IMA will need to be updated in 2022. She shared with them her own list of future Coalition administrative and stormwater permit concerns and assumptions. A short discussion followed.

Doug LaGrange made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Dennis Feeney. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT BOARD MTG: Friday, June 11, 2021, 8:30am – 10:00am.

These minutes were approved at the June 11, 2021 Board of Director's meeting.