

*Stormwater Coalition of Albany County
Board of Directors*

**Friday, June 11, 2021
Microsoft Teams Videoconference
8:31am to 10:05am**

MINUTES

Board of Directors Attending:

Lucas Rogers, Albany County (Liaison to County Executive's Office and Board alternate)
Neil O'Connor, City of Albany (Board alternate)
Paul Penman, Town of Bethlehem
Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes (Note Taker)
Maggie Alix, Village of Green Island
Tod Ward, Village of Green Island (Board alternate)
Ken d'Arpino, Town of Guilderland (Board alternate)
Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
Doug LaGrange, Town of New Scotland (Chairperson)
Rich Straut, Village of Voorheesville
Joe LaCivita, City of Watervliet
Brad Bunzey, University at Albany – SUNY

Also Present:

Nancy Heinzen, Coalition Stormwater Program Director
Sameer Madrasa, Albany County (Department of Management & Budget)
Adam Wands, Town of Colonie
Katelyn Reepmeyer, Town of Colonie

Absent:

Dennis Feeney, Albany County

I. Chairperson – dilemma, assignments

Nancy Heinzen explained that since the last Board meeting, no one had expressed an interest in the chairperson position. Garry Nathan was willing, however to review the Board agenda and Doug LaGrange agreed to facilitate this meeting. Meeting facilitation was turned over to Doug LaGrange.

II. Approval of March 19, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

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

III. Reports

A. Coalition Administration

1. Chairperson & Notetaker (Who? Mtgs-where? Video conf?)

For remaining Board meetings scheduled for 2021 (September meeting), the Board discussed options. After some discussion, Paul Reuss made a motion to have Doug LaGrange serve as chairperson, Maggie Alix as alternate chair, and Garry Nathan as notetaker. The motion was seconded by Doug LaGrange, there were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. 2020 Budget Report (Medical Ins charge-follow up; 2020 Reserve-\$173,337.57, 2021 TXRs-4MS4s? Web/Duda?)

Nancy Heinzen explained how the reserve balance for 2020 was calculated, pointing out that both the County Department of Management and Budget and Controller's office spent considerable time trying to understand the overall methodology and reserve calculation history.

At issue for the Comptroller's office is the add-back of the Local Share to the reserve calculation where Local Share is the amount of funds left over after budgeted expenditures are subtracted from budgeted revenues. The addback historically has been a pro-forma step dating back to 2010, no discussion and for the 2020 budget the amount is \$88,454.

Given recent amendments to the Coalition IMA effective 2019 where there is language regarding a staff support supplement provided by the County, that supplement now matches the Local Share amount. For 2020, that add-back of \$88,454 would increase the Coalition reserve balance significantly.

The comptroller's office pointed out that conceptually any funds added back in the Local Share column need to have actual matching expenditures. For 2020, only one Coalition employee was on staff, funded exclusively from member fees, and due to a hiring freeze no others were hired. Consequently, there is no matching staffing expenditure associated with the Local Share amount of \$88,454.

For this reason, the Comptroller's office decided to break with tradition and not add-back the Local Share/Staff Support Supplement amount. Rather than a reserve balance of \$261,791.57 (with the addback); the reserve balance is instead \$173,337.57 (no addback).

Nancy Heinzen explained that she followed the Comptroller's office logic and pointed out that she could otherwise match all of the other dollar amounts regarding actual expenditures, actual revenue, and carry over encumbrances used to calculate the reserve balance. Consequently she was confident that the reserve balance was fair and accurate.

She did however mention that the Comptroller's office has ongoing concerns regarding how the Coalition reserve balance is calculated and would like to circle back in the near term to discuss the current process. During the course of the reserve discussion, Nancy Heinzen

mentioned the anticipated Coalition IMA-MOU update to the Comptroller's office suggesting to staff there that the IMA-MOU process might be a good opportunity to review and clarify how the reserve is calculated and possibly considered other ways to track Coalition finances.

As a follow up to a previous Board discussion regarding health insurance charges, Nancy Heinzen explained that the County as a self-insured entity assigns charge backs to Departments based on the amount budgeted in the health insurance line which is based on the number of full time salary lines and their base salaries. Actual charges typically differ somewhat from the budgeted amount.

While the Coalition might prefer to be billed for insurance based strictly on who is receiving health insurance and for how many months, that is complicated for the County to administer. For this reason, while the health insurance charges for 2020 seem high this is how the County administers their health insurance program, such that all costs are spread out equitability across all departments for the benefit of all County employees.

3. 2021 Budget Report (Meticulosity 2021 invoice delay/website recommendation)

Nancy Heinzen reviewed the 2021 budget report pointing out that:

- a) The GIS Coordinator was hired April 30 and we were now spending down in that budget line (\$4,384 so far):
- b) We have yet to hire a Stormwater Program Technician, therefore no charges in this line. To launch a second hiring effort, the County Committee To Fill needed to approve using 2021 funds for this purpose (they did). Affirmative Action has initiated their recruitment effort and interviewing our own candidates is on hold until June 11.
- c) There are currently unspent funds in the Miscellaneous Contractual line, specifically \$16,767 for GIS related services from the consultant VHB. This contract ends December 31, 2021 and given the GIS Coordinator hire, it's unclear if these services will be needed. By September, the status of the VHB contract will need to be addressed, potentially extended or terminated.

There is \$2290 allocated for website hosting and support from Meticulosity. The Coalition has yet to receive an invoice for 2021; instead Meticulosity sent an email explaining their plan to move all clients from WordPress as a content management system to DUDA, a conversion which includes a website redesign. This would change the billing structure from an annual fee to a monthly charge of \$400/month or \$4800/year and require a new contract.

Given the proposed cost, according to County Purchasing the Coalition needs to get three quotes from website vendors for similar work. Switching to DUDA could take place this year or next. Meanwhile, unspent 'website' funds remain in the Miscellaneous Contractual line.

The Coalition, having dropped the ORI Kit management contract with the Albany County Water Purification District (\$1000) is instead using some of these funds (\$880) to purchase lab services from ADK Environmental. There is an open purchase order to be tapped as lab work is needed to test for industrial discharges or sanitary waste.

4. VHB/GIS Contract No 5719 of 2020 (End date: 12/31/2021 \$18,480 spent \$1713, left \$16,767)

Nancy Heinzen will research options for extending the contract beyond December 31, 2021, perhaps on a monthly basis.

5. Coalition Contact List (Updates)

Nancy Heinzen reviewed the most recent contact list, pointing out changes due to retirements (Village of Green Island, University at Albany, and Town of Colonie).

6. Hudson River Watershed Alliance

(WaveMaker-Institution Award-Video for 6/22 event)

The Stormwater Coalition received the WaveMaker-Institution award from the Hudson River Watershed Alliance. The awards ceremony is a virtual event scheduled for June 22 and filming of the Coalition accepting the award will take place June 15, 2021 at 2pm at the Village of Menands near a trib of the Krommakill watershed. County DPW will be at the filming with a truck labeled MS4 Enforcement and several MS4 reps will hopefully attend.

B. Other

1. New York Sea Grant

(Support Letter Request – U Albany, Yaoze Liu, Ph.D)

On behalf of the Stormwater Coalition, after reviewing the request with Garry Nathan, Nancy Heinzen wrote a letter of support for a grant application submitted by the University at Albany for New York Sea Grant funds. Nancy Heinzen explained the content of the support letter.

2. Albany County Resiliency Plan

(Data request/info sharing/possible 6/24 WG mtg presentation)

Albany County received funds to develop an Albany County Resiliency Plan. To help develop the plan there is some interest in GIS data now posted on the Coalition Stormwater Interactive Mapper “SwIM”. The plan is in the early stages; details forthcoming.

C. Coalition 2021 Workplan

- 1. March to June** – Hiring update; FINAL Joint Annual Report/Annual Evaluation
- 2. GIS Coordinator** – Gantt chart – tasks & priorities
- 3. July to September and October to December** – focus

March to June focused on hiring the new GIS Coordinator; preparing the April, 2021 SWMP Plan Evaluation; and filing the Joint MS4 Permit Annual Report.

Since April 30, the GIS Coordinator has been learning about the stormwater permits; setting up his workstation; activating long dormant mapping equipment; and learning the specifics of how the Coalition maps storm system infrastructure. Learning tasks and GIS goals have been itemized in a rough Gantt chart; helpful when establishing priorities and benchmarks.

For the upcoming quarter (July to October), the focus will turn to hiring the part time Coalition Stormwater Program Technician and GIS Coordinator training and tasks, along with routine administrative tasks.

IV. Discussion/Decisions

A. 2020 SW Program Tech-4 MS4s reimbursement (Amount; Budget Approval/RLA; Payments)

Nancy Heinzen explained that in 2020, four Coalition member communities contributed extra dues to pay for a part-time Stormwater Program Technician, however due to the County Covid-related hiring freeze no one was hired. Instead, Nancy Heinzen completed some of the Stormwater Program Tech tasks, as they could be completed outdoors. At a previous Board meeting, these 4 Coalition members expressed an interest in getting reimbursed for these dues, less the dollar amount in services provided by Nancy Heinzen.

Using a spreadsheet from the meeting packet, Nancy Heinzen explained the total reimbursement amount of \$17,552, where \$5489 would go to the City of Cohoes; \$3744 to the Village of Menands; \$2315 to the Town of New Scotland; and \$6004 to the City of Watervliet.

Procedurally, the Coalition needs to appropriate funds from the Coalition reserve (\$17,552) and assign the same amount to a revenue line (A8021 02885 Transfer from Reserve) and expenditure line (A8021 44999 Misc Contractual). From there, using a County Claim Form checks can be cut to the individual municipalities. This requires a budget amendment.

Paul Reuss made a motion to transfer \$17,552 from the Coalition reserve to reimburse these four Coalition members as detailed in the spreadsheet. The motion was seconded by Maggie Alix, there were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Meticulosity – Duda website recommendation (Why; Cost; 3 Quotes; RLA-2021? Budget-2022?)

Nancy Heinzen explained some of the reason for Meticulosity's interest in switching the Coalition website from Wordpress to DUDA (security, ease of use). Unclear is whether or not to initiate the process in 2021; if so there may be a need to transfer funds from the reserve in 2021 to cover the

extra monthly costs assuming we continue with Meticulosity and there's a new contract by the end of 2021.

After some discussion, the Board advised including the estimated total cost of \$4800 in the 2022 budget and to not move any funds in 2021. There is limited time available to organize the quotes and finalize a contract in 2021.

C. Proposed 2022 Coalition Workplan

1. Working Group Sub-Committee Mtg – 2022 Workplan/Budget Input (5/10/2021)

Nancy Heinzen reviewed notes taken from a May 10, 2021 session where a small group of Coalition Working Group representatives discussed their impressions now of the Stormwater Regulations; the Coalition Value and Purpose; and Coalition Administration. These same topics were considered looking into the future.

Of note was the split internally where some Coalition members have an active GIS municipal presence which addresses stormwater requirements and those who don't. Also, some members are more dependent on overall Coalition services than others and the current dues structure may not accurately address these different levels of need.

Coalition staffing concerns focused on the need to recruit and retain employees, along with the Coalition Director expressing an interest in handing off her work to another person and need to prepare for that process and transition. All affirmed the value and purpose of the Coalition, stating clearly that documents such as the Joint Annual Report and Joint SWMP 'Annual Evaluation' update were still highly valued, along with routine meetings which support the ongoing sharing of stormwater permit concerns and strategies.

These and other comments were used to develop the proposed Coalition Work Plan for 2022, a document which Nancy Heinzen then reviewed in some detail pointing out High Priority activities and key activities which need to take place at a certain time throughout 2022.

They are: transition to a new Director (civil service spec/recruitment/interviews/selection/training); updated IMA-MOU; comments and/or implementation of a 'new' MS4 Permit; hiring/training/retention of the Coalition Stormwater Program Technician; continued and specific GIS/mapping/Swim support for members and related support for the GIS Coordinator. Researching long term stormwater financing was called out as a special project of interest of Medium Priority and applying for grant funds a Low Priority.

Garry Nathan made a motion to approve the proposed 2022 Coalition Work Plan which was seconded by Maggie Alix. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Proposed 2022 Coalition Budget (County Exec-2022 budgets due 7/2; Statement of Intent-2022 Dues)

The 2022 Coalition Work Plan framed the content of the proposed 2022 Coalition budget. Nancy Heinzen explained some budget lines in detail, in particular those related to staffing and the ongoing support of GIS technologies related to stormwater management.

Two sets of dues were presented, one matched 2021 dues, the other showed a 2% increase for each community and the extra revenue generated. After some discussion, there seemed to be little resistance to a 2% increase. Nancy Heinzen explained that the 2% increase as presented was for discussion and that the actual calculation would need to conform with the wording of the IMA-MOU. How to do that was a little unclear given the formula, but thought to be possible.

Paul Reuss made a motion to approve the 2022 Coalition budget lines as presented with the understanding that dues would increase by 2%, subject to a final amount matched to the IMA-MOU Member Fee methodology. Neil O'Connor seconded the motion, there were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

Paul Reuss made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Maggie Alix. There were no objections and the motion passed unanimously.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Friday, September 17, 2021, 8:30am – 10:00am, Village of Green Island, 19 George Street.

These minutes were approved by the Board of Directors at the September 17, 2021 Board meeting.