

*Stormwater Coalition of Albany County  
Board of Directors*

**Friday, June 16, 2023  
Village of Green Island  
8:32am to 10:38am**

**MINUTES**

**Board of Directors Attending:**

Sameer Modasra, Albany County (Board alternate)  
Neil O'Connor, City of Albany (Board alternate)  
Eric Johnson, Town of Bethlehem  
Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes (Board alternate, note taker)  
Zach Harrison, Town of Colonie (Board alternate)  
Tim McIntyre, Jr, Town of Guilderland (Board alternate)  
Maggie Alix, Village of Green Island  
Nicole Ognan, Village of Menands  
Doug LaGrange, Town of New Scotland (Chairperson)  
Frank Fazio, Village of Voorheesville (Board alternate)

**Also Present:**

Nancy Heinzen, Coalition Stormwater Program Director

**Absent:**

Vacant, Village of Altamont  
Dave Dressel, City of Watervliet  
Brad Bunzey, University at Albany - SUNY

**I. Approval of March 17, 2023 and May 12, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the March 17, 2023 and May 12, 2023 Board Meeting minutes was made by Frank Fazio and seconded by Neil O'Connor. The motion passed unanimously.

**II. Reports**

**A. Coalition Administration**

**1. Coalition 2022 Budget** (Reserve, if available)

The County Comptroller's office provided Nancy Heinzen with the Coalition's fund balance ('reserve') for 2022. The amount is \$151,772.45. It reflects revenues and expenditures specific to 2022 and does not include encumbered funds from previous years, funds appropriated for the current year budget, or add backs associated with County in-kind services.

To estimate funds potentially available for budgeting purposes, encumbered funds

from previous years (\$23,145.62) and budget appropriations applied to the current budget (\$43,964) need to be subtracted from the fund balance. This conceptually reduces the fund balance to \$84,662.83.

The fund balance provided by the Comptroller's office represents a change in how the balance is calculated. It now aligns with accounting practices acceptable to the Comptroller's office and provides some predictability. Previous methods were often hard to decipher.

Going forward the reserve can only be used for one off expenditures, not ongoing expenditures such as personnel costs.

## **2. 2023 Budget Report** (Expenditures, Encumbrances)

Nancy Heinzen identified salary lines currently filled or vacant, pointing out that the budgeted Stormwater Program Coordinator line, pending approval by the County legislature would increase from \$71,051 to \$90,000 as approved by the Board at their May 12 meeting. To do this, \$18,949 will be transferred from the GIS Specialist budget line, with \$43,051 remaining. There is also \$26,415 in the Temp Help line.

Given the ongoing effort to recruit a new Coalition Director, Nancy Heinzen explained that if and when a new Director is hired, she will need to first resign from her position effective the day before the new person starts. Then she needs to be re-hired or re-assigned to another personnel line the following day.

While there are funds to cover her salary in either the Temp Help line or GIS Specialist line, there are differences between the two personnel lines which affect her health insurance coverage and retirement benefits. Funds are also limited, which may affect how long she's available to train a new hire. While the topic was mentioned, it was not discussed further.

Funds remaining in the Printing and Advertising line are earmarked for advertising the Coalition Director position on INDEED. Funds encumbered in the Misc Contractual line (\$23,145.62) are dedicated to GIS related mapping services, with one vendor VHB, the other London Environmental. VHB as a vendor can be replaced once with a second vendor and those funds could be used to pay London Environmental provided all billing is completed by December 1, 2023.

## **3. London Environmental – Update** (V/GI, T/NS, Albany County DPW Field Mapping and Mapper Updates)

Field mapping has been completed in all three communities and 'as built' have been requested for certain areas to better understand the storm infrastructure. Field checks may be necessary. The next phase will involve post processing and correcting the data. This will involve configuring Esri and Trimble software licenses owned by the Coalition for access by the consultants. From there the corrected data will be posted

on stormwater mappers. The contract end date is October 30, 2023.

## **B. EPA**

### **1. Town of Guilderland MS4 Permit Audit** (May 23-25, 2023 virtual; June 6 in person)

Tim McIntyre, Jr, the Town of Guilderland Stormwater Program Coordinator described the EPA audit experience, in particular who was there, what they looked at, the questions asked, and how he prepared for the audit. EPA mentioned a few key items to address, to be completed relatively soon, to be followed by a formal audit report from EPA.

### **C. Coalition 2023 Work Plan** (March to June: SWMP Annual Evaluation; Joint Annual Report, Coalition Director Hiring, Working Group meetings; EPA audit support; Coalition Stormwater Mapper Datasets – County GIS Coordinator Update)

Since the last Board meeting in March, the Joint MS4 Permit Annual Report was submitted to NYSDEC; the SWMP Annual Evaluation was posted on the Coalition website; recruitment tasks related to hiring a new Director were completed; and there have been meetings with the new County GIS Coordinator regarding Coalition infrastructure datasets and our GIS/mapping effort.

## **III. Coalition Stormwater Program Director**

### **A. May 12, 2023 Board Meeting decisions**

### **B. Budget RLA (\$90,000 salary & personnel lines), Civil Service Job Description**

### **C. Hiring Sub-Committee – Next Steps, Procedures, Changes, and Decisions**

Nancy Heinzen explained that since the May 12, 2023 Board meeting decision which resulted in a Coalition Director salary increase, along with modifications to the Civil Service Job Description, actions have been taken.

A Request for Legislative Action to amend the Coalition budget was submitted to the County Management and Budget Committee and a revised Civil Service Job Description was approved by County Civil Service. The job description now includes more expansive degree requirements intended to entice candidates with administrative or teaching experience and work experience focuses more generally on environmental programs. It is not limited to stormwater management and the Clean Water Act.

With both changes in place (salary and job description), the job will be posted next week on INDEED, to include supported advertising for two weeks at a cost of \$200. Nancy Heinzen and Lisa Ramundo will screen the resumes and make recommendations to the Hiring Committee regarding a follow up interview. The intent is to move quickly so that qualified and interested candidates can be hired before they accept another position. If this next job posting generates interest, the

Coalition Hiring Committee needs to be poised to follow up quickly with an interview and preliminary offer.

To increase the number of Board members available to interview candidates, Doug LaGrange made a motion to add Maggie Alix and Neil O'Connor to the Hiring Subcommittee. The motion was seconded by Garry Nathan and passed unanimously.

To minimize delays in making a job offer, Nicole Ogdan made a motion to allow the Coalition Hiring Committee to make a preliminary offer, such that the terms of the offer would be incorporated into a formal job offer approved a public Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Neil O'Connor and passed unanimously.

## **IV. Coalition 2024 Budget and Work Plan**

### **A. 2024 Budget & Dues Scenarios**

- 1. History June/July 2022** (IMA-MOU, 2023 Budget-Dues-Work Plan Decisions, Assumptions, Map'g Requirements)
- 2. August 2022 to June 2023** (Where are we now?)
- 3. Budget and Dues Scenarios**
- 4. Decisions** (Which 2024 budget? Individual member 2024 dues? Considerations?)

Nancy Heinzen provided a short overview of events since the 2022 June meeting of the Board of Directors. Since then, the Coalition updated their Agreement (IMA-MOU) to include a way for members to request and receive Additional Services – GIS. The adopted 2023 Coalition Work Plan itemized these services, all matched to a Coalition GIS Specialist responsible for providing the services.

Soon after both were completed, Coalition GIS Specialist resigned in August, 2022, thus pointing out difficulties in recruiting and retaining GIS staff. The long awaited new “MS4” Permit presumably packed with mapping requirement failed to materialize, thus dampening our pro-active approach to providing GIS services. The Coalition Director also decided to move forward with retirement plans. In response the Coalition Board decided to prioritize recruiting and hiring a new Director, rather than a GIS Specialist.

With this as context, Nancy Heinzen presented 5 budget scenarios for 2024, all of which included a base salary of \$90,000 for the Coalition Stormwater Program Director. The position and salary represents a Coalition wide commitment to support the delivery of Basic Services. Some funds were budgeted to support Additional Services – GIS, while others support general operating expenses across both types of services, Basic and Additional Services – GIS.

Changing variables included the presence/absence of ‘reserve’ funds transferred into the Coalition 2024 budget and variations in how Additional Services- GIS might be

provided (part time or full time GIS specialist; no GIS Specialist, consultant services). Dues generated for Basic Services remained the same for all scenarios; while dues generated for Additional Services – GIS varied depending on the scenario.

After some discussion, a consensus emerged. In addition to budgeting for Basic Services, budgeting for some Additional Services – GIS was important. Of the various ways to support Additional Services- GIS, providing funds for GIS consulting services appeared to be a more likely and affordable option than budgeting for a part time GIS Specialist.

Although the Board typically approves a budget and dues for the upcoming year at the June meeting, none of the 5 scenarios represented a ‘sweet spot’ for everyone and by the end of the Board meeting it was clear that more time was needed to consider and rework budget and itemize dues.

## **B. 2024 Work Plans**

**1. Three Scenarios** (Basic Services; Additional Services-GIS)

**2. Decisions** (Which Budget, which Work Plan?)

Using the adopted 2023 Coalition Work Plan, Nancy Heinzen briefly described a possible 2024 Work Plan. First, Basic Services noted in 2023 would be repeated and continued in 2024. Additional Services – GIS would however be scaled back and some eliminated for communities who requested Additional Services- GIS in 2023. GIS tasks likely to be within the skill set of the new Director or easily provided by a GIS consultant might be retained for 2024.

While not discussed in detail, there seemed to be consensus around this approach.

## **C. Next Steps**

**1. Coalition 2024 Budget** (Submitted to County Exec by July 7, 2023)

**2. Statement of Intent 2024** (Form sent to MS4s, returned by Aug 15 – In/Out? Dues?)

Nancy Heinzen explained that she needed to submitted a 2024 budget to the County Executive’s office by July 7, 2023 and that Statement of Intent Forms for the upcoming year are typically distributed to members after the June Board meeting and returned by mid- August. She mentioned that signed Statement of Intent forms serve to lock in the member dues for the upcoming budget year providing certainty regarding Coalition revenue and overall operations, important for all involved.

Next steps were evaluated by all with Zach Harrison making a motion to have Nancy Heinzen distribute by email a Preliminary 2024 Budget which itemized Dues, along with a revised 2024 Work Plan. Members would then respond by email to these Preliminary documents, providing guidance regarding their commitment to the Coalition in general for 2024 and their support for the Preliminary Budget, Dues, and

Work Plan.

A Special Board meeting would be used to finalize the 2024 Budget, Dues, and Work Plan and potentially make a Job Offer to a new Director, with August 25, 2023 the meeting date. Meanwhile, Nancy Heinzen would submit a place-holder Preliminary 2024 budget to the County Executive by July 7, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Frank Fazio and passed unanimously.

Doug LaGrange made a motion to adjourn the Board meeting which was seconded by Garry Nathan. It passed unanimously.

*These minutes were approved at the August 25, 2023 Coalition Board of Director's Meeting.*