

OSWEGO LAKE WATERSHED COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Friday, January 13, 2017

The *vision* of the Oswego Lake Watershed Council is a healthy properly functioning watershed. This vision is of streams, wetlands, riparian forests, upland forests/trees, Oswego Lake, and other natural resources working together as a sustainable ecological system that supports good water quality, productive habitat for native plant and animal communities, and enhanced quality of life.

The *mission* of the Oswego Lake Watershed Council is to foster stewardship, education, participation, and financial support for the purpose of the conservation, restoration, enhancement, and maintenance of watershed functions that achieve and sustain a healthy watershed.

1. Welcome and Introductions: Directors present were Chair Stephanie Wagner, Mark Rosenkranz, Rob Ambsberry, Dwight Sangrey, Mary Ratcliff, Mike Buck. Staff present was Adra Lobdell, OLWC Project Coordinator. Guests were Jim and Barbara Fisher with Friends of Hallinan Park.

2. Operations

- **Resolution: Minutes for November 18, 2016 were unanimously approved.**
- **Financial Report:** Tom being absent, no financial report was given.

3. Reports

• **Staff Report:** Adra mentioned that OLWC was awarded a \$6500 unrestricted grant from CCSWD for expenses that could be used apart from work projects for purposes of administrative support. She will be sending in an application to Anne MacDonald for Habitat Enhancement Funds which will be used on targeted projects. Adra is mindfully considering maintenance phasing procedures. She also mentioned the Green Communities grant program offered by Rockwell Collins for funding environmental projects in communities where the company operates. Adra will see what the criteria and stipulations are regarding this funding possibility.

About a half dozen residents with riparian natural resource areas who received a postcard from OLWC have responded requesting more information and in some cases a site visit for initial assessment. The strongest new candidate for project affirmation would be the Park Academy. Stephanie and Adra will be meeting with the Principal this month. They see a hands-on, project based opportunity where some in-service training for teachers could also occur. Barb Fisher would like to collaborate with the Hallinan School faculty in a similar fashion. HOA's were also mentioned since word has been received about needed functional enhancement of the open spaces preserved under development codes but left with little maintenance and upkeep post residential occupation. Stephanie will be talking with Noah Herlocker regarding guidance over HOA and commercial open spaces in regard to permitting processes for remedial projects. Adra gave work party schedule updates: January 21st at Springbrook from 9:00-11:30am; Boutwell on January 28th from 9:00-11:30am; Hallinan on February 11th from 9:00-11:30am. The Brighton HOA project continues to show progress since they have made it through the permit process and participation by residents is optimistic. They are moving forward with Henderson who will return in April for

further resource enhancement work.

4. Old Business

- **Permitting:** Stephanie said that Noah Herlocher wants to understand what projects we were doing. OLWC spurred the need to take a careful look at the permitting process. In-channel work on tributary projects constitutes more specialized planning especially in light of headwater pressures from infill. The Fishers talked about their own experience with surface waters in Freepons Park and their collaboration with Megan Bigjohn. Rob is our point lead on natural resources and he commented on the contemporary challenges with urbanized drainage in incised creeks with increased velocities. He reviewed the corrective process of managing flows with check dams, armored outfalls, and step pools. Mike wondered whether the OLWC could get more attention by giving an award to the best tributary restoration on the part of property owner initiative. Stephanie thought just a verbal commendation would be a good incentive. Another member thought a gift certificate for native plants could be given as a reward. Have this discussion with Noah on what we actually are allowed to do in streams. We will definitely support a process we can use with all entities facing potential permits. Stephanie said that we will be applying for OWEB grants in September. She also is looking at statewide watershed conferences which she and Jim Fisher have found helpful in terms of topics covered. Thanks to Mark and the LOC sponsorship, Adra will be attending the Urban Ecosystem Research Consortium in February. OWEB is going to get funded again and OLWC will apply in September. Two \$10,000 grants are possible if criteria are met and evaluated positively by OWEB.
- **Community and School outreach:** Stephanie mentioned contacts with Larry Zucker, teacher on assignment for STEM education, and with the Head of School at Park Academy, Craig Lowery.
- **Strategic Plan Review:** Admittedly, the OLWC's Strategic Plan needs updating. Members wanted to keep the three main goals defined with specific objectives. Staffing seems sufficient at present, but Adra sees potential for an increase if we have more funding and accept more project opportunities. Stephanie sees next year for reviewing staff needs, envisioning a fund raising plan, and energizing community involvement. Stephanie and Adra will review and assess our goals and objectives over the intervening three year period. Stephanie said questions like how big we want our Board to be and the makeup of our Board structure should be addressed. Jim Fisher had a question regarding the geographical parameters of our project interests. Members briefly focused on our Oswego Lake watershed boundaries but also mentioned how we venture into proximate drainages where no watershed council operates. Stephanie said she will reformat Goal 1 and bring back a draft to the Council. Goal 2, when selected by Council for the Strategic Plan, manifested an interest in mapping. Everything that we wanted delineated has been mapped, and invertebrate studies conducted need to be linked. Rob gave a brief summation on outfalls and generally how, with current unavailable funding for most CIP outfall facilities, crises tend to dictate appropriate response. He explained that the highest erodible soils are where there are landslide problems. Our City's inventory is not complete and assessments need to be done but that requires robust staffing. Members felt the need to support solutions and funding for stormwater problems. One

suggestion that could be done forthwith would be to have a direct link from our website to the City's stormwater map. Another idea would be to form a project advocacy group for supporting watershed activities. Such a group would have at their disposal the factual knowledge to share with a public audience. Mark and Rob said they would work on this. The former role of STAC needs to be changed. Mark would want to look at our Strategic Plan holistically to determine what comes off and what gets retained. Mary also said that our Plan needs to list our projects and detail what is actually happening. Some ideas focused on outreach particularly to new members of the community that would entail watershed education, ecological respect and volunteer activities.

Board meeting time expired before our agenda items were all vetted.

5. New Business: None

6. Public Comments and Announcements: None

7. Meeting Adjourns at 9:30am.

Next Meeting: Friday, February 10, 2017 at 8:00am.

