

**Stormwater Coalition of Albany County
Board of Directors Meeting**

**MINUTES
Village of Green Island
19 George Street
Thursday, Sept 17, 2009
8:30-9:45 am**

Board of Directors Attending:

Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
James Bulmer, City of Watervliet
John McDonald, City of Cohoes
Erik Deyoe, Town of Bethlehem
Carl Fleshman, Village of Colonie
Sean Ward, Village of Green Island
Alexander Gordon, Albany County
Thomas Dolin, Town of New Scotland
Gerald Gordinier, Village of Voorheesville
John Dzialo, Town of Colonie

Absent:

Bradford Burns, City of Albany
Ken Runion, Town of Guilderland

Also Present:

Nancy Heinzen, Stormwater Coalition Program Coordinator
Melissa Ashline-Heil, City of Cohoes (Minutes)
Garry Nathan, City of Cohoes
Nick Ostapovich, City of Watervliet

I. Approval of June 11, 2009 Minutes

Chairman Sean Ward called the meeting to order at 8:40. The first matter of review was the minutes from the June 11th, 2009 meeting. Paul Reuss moved to approve the minutes. Jim Bulmer seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

II. Reports

A. Budget Reports

1. Coalition Account

Nancy highlighted key information related to various budget lines. Regarding the Temp Help line, as of September, 2009 she has hired a SUNY Albany intern, who works 20 hrs per week. Given that the actual hiring took place in September, rather than the first of the year, this means that a significant amount money allocated for Temp Help will go unspent. Unless transferred to a non-personnel budget line, this unspent money automatically rolls into the County General Fund.

To prevent this from happening, she submitted a Request for Legislation Action (RLA) to the County Conservation and Improvements Committee to amend the Coalition budget such that \$15,067 from the Temp Help line and \$1,153 from the Social Security line, for a total \$16,220 is transferred to the Miscellaneous Contractual line. While this RLA is required as part of County procedures, the Coalition Board also needs to approve this proposal.

Given that hiring an additional intern within fiscal year 2009 is unlikely, before the year ends a second RLA may need to be submitted to transfer \$7200 from the Temp Help line to the Computer Supplies line.

2. Stormwater Grant (\$258,000 NYSDEC C303129)

Nancy distributed a spreadsheet detailing progress with the NYSDEC Stormwater Implementation grant, noting which tasks have been completed and whether or not the completed work had come in over or under budget. She also mentioned that the grant contract end date was extended to October 31, 2010. Erik Deyoe of Bethlehem asked how the Coalition planned to spend the grant money.

The grant contract includes several remaining deliverables. They are the creation of Stormwater Management Practices General Maintenance Cards; the possible creation of an educational piece about downspout disconnects, and printing of educational material, specifically the General Maintenance Cards, the downspout disconnect brochure, septic system brochures; and Homeowners Septic System Informational Package. Nancy anticipates that the brochures will be ordered and received by the end of the year. The General Maintenance Cards will be developed and designed by Hazen and Sawyer and should be finished by February.

Nancy also needs to close the grant by sending in a Final Report to NYSDEC. Nancy estimates that there is ~\$22,000 to spend on additional grant funded activities. Gerald Gordinier asked how the Coalition would spend that money and who would decide how the money is spent. Nancy indicated that it is a gray area. It appears that she should decide how to spend the remainder of the grant money. Chairman Sean Ward added that the grant was awarded to Albany County. Nancy emphasized that the grant is, however earmarked for those municipalities who are now part of the Stormwater Coalition, therefore it should be spent evenly among the participating municipalities.

Erik Deyoe asked if there is flexibility in spending the money. Nancy referred to a handout titled, Coalition Money Options, which describes possible scenarios for spending the grant money and noted that NYSDEC has already approved using the grant money to enhance AIMS and create a coalition website. Erik then asked about the quotes at the top of the Money Questions handout and what they referred to. Nancy explained that the Fountain Spatial quotes cover the creation of a button within AIMS for entering water survey information which is geo-referenced to X and Y coordinates, making it possible to map the data and display it on the web-accessible Albany Internet Mapping System (AIMS).

Alexander Gordon asked if the deliverables would be compatible with ESRI. Nancy indicated the deliverables would be compatible with ESRI. Gerald asked if the county will put in information once the ORI is input. Nancy indicated that would be the case. The field sheet is matched to the AIMS system. The system allows for a shared look at all outfalls.

Nancy wants to determine if the quotes are fair pricing and if the deliverables will be compatible with other municipal GIS systems. The minimum quote indicates the core package, whereas the maximum caps the range. On the far right the table lists how much grant money would be left over after paying for the AIMS enhancement.

Nancy explained that the remainder cannot be used for administrative or salary costs. Instead, it has to be program money. She thought about using it to purchase an existing stormwater software package (MS4 CBI Software) but DEC created its own package that meets the annual reporting requirements. Mayor John McDonald asked how much the DEC package would cost upfront and for maintenance. Nancy indicated it is free, but she does not know if there are any maintenance expenses. John Dzialo added that the DEC plans to hold informational sessions about this package (Digital Towpath)

Next Nancy considered spending the remainder on a website. It would cost \$7-8,000 with a content management system. Alexander Gordon asked who would use the website. Nancy answered everyone: municipalities for communication, volunteers for upcoming events, developers for information, planners, etc. She would like to upload how-to videos on installing rain gardens and link to municipal websites.

John McDonald pointed out that it would reduce the number of e-mails. A working group member suggested linking to CDRPC's website. Nancy described the downside which is an additional level of management in that web activities would need to be coordinated with CDRPC. Erik Deyoe asked if the website would incur an annual cost, which Nancy did not know.

John McDonald expressed concerns about backing up the website and annual maintenance fees. According to Fountain Spatial the AIMS server could accommodate a website. However, would the server crash as the Coalition adds more information to the AIMS system and website? Most importantly, Nancy would like a website designed to give the Coalition a vision. Erik Deyoe and Sean Ward agreed that the website is more important than the AIMS system.

Sean Ward asked if the Coalition has enough money for the match. Nancy replied that the match has already been met

Alexander Gordon asked what the agenda item encompasses. Nancy clarified that the Board of Directors would need to authorize the Working Group to determine whether to hire a designer, Fountain Spatial or a website developer to create a Coalition website She also averred that the Board would need to approve the budget. Sean suggested taking up the website and Fountain Spatial questions with the Working Group

Alexander Gordon moved to approve the SW Coalition budget item which involves transferring \$ from the Temp Help and Social Security line to Miscellaneous Contractual Expenses Paul Reuss seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. Work Plan

1. Sub-Committee Reports

Nancy delivered the brochure racks to the municipalities. Next she will work on filling the racks.

The IDDE program reconnaissance kits were given to the municipalities. Nancy will compile a list of who completed the test and results.

Paul Reuss moved to approve the sub-committee report section of the Work Plan. John McDonald seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Staffing Update

Nancy developed two job postings: one for a graduate school intern and the other for a water quality educator. Both were approved by the Civil Service. The postings would start as competitive positions until converted to noncompetitive positions. After hiring, the Coalition will send papers to the State requesting conversion of the positions to noncompetitive. The State will hold public hearings to consider the application.

Nancy has hired an intern, Christina Ciappetta. Christina is a graduate student in the master's program at SUNY Albany for the next two years. She has field experience in biology and student teaching experience. Since hired a week ago, she has been organizing the office and consolidating files. She will be responsible for disseminating brochures to municipalities and working on the website.

Sean Ward asked if the Board could receive a copy of her resume and her hourly salary. Nancy agreed to send a copy out. The intern is paid \$13/hour for 20 hours of work per week. It is the lower end of the range offered. Christina works a full day on Monday and Wednesday and a half day on either Thursday or Friday.

Alexander Gordon asked when the Coalition planned to hire an educator. Nancy does not have a set timeline for the educator position. Sean Ward asked about background checks for the educator. John Dzialo will check with the Colonie PD who performs the checks for personnel.

Erik Deyoe moved to approve the staffing portion of the Work Plan. Paul Reuss seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. General Updates

1) Copies of the MS4 Annual Report were sent out to the municipalities. Erik Deyoe suggested the Coalition purchase ADOBE PRO for \$180 so the reports can be scanned and e-mailed using less space than the documents.

Gerald Gordinier mentioned that EPA audited Castleton this past month. The municipality was assured that it was a fact finding exercise only. However, at the end of the audit the municipality was fined \$158,000. The EPA settled for \$5,000, which is how John Dzialo knew it had to be the EPA. DEC can only settle for half the fine at most. Nancy will try to obtain information about the audit and fine, and will share the information with Coalition members.

Guilderland received a DEC audit and earned a marginal rating. Erik Deyoe added that the satisfactory rating is the highest they will bestow on an MS4. Nancy instructed the group that some of the outstanding issues seem to involve communication between departments regarding MS4 permit requirements. Erik Deyoe indicated that his office has quarterly meetings with the other departments.

2) Nancy pointed out that the University of Albany has joined the Coalition, as a paying participant and representatives attend Working Group meetings. She also provided a listing of next year's Board of Director's meetings: January 21st, March 18th, June 17th and September 18th of 2010.

John McDonald moved to approve the general updates. John Dzialo seconded the motion which the Board approved unanimously.

III. Discussion

A. Proposed Budget Amendments

Nancy described a Homeland Security Grant for a LIDAR project. The project creates a digital topography with two foot contours. The images would be in high resolution ERSI mapping file suitable for the AIMS system. The cost is \$34,800 for the LIDAR and conversion; and \$15,000 for training payable to Fountain Spatial. The proposal is to create a budget line with the Stormwater Coalition Account to pay for LiDAR project expenditures. The budget line would be Misc Contractual Expense for a total of \$16,220.

Sean Ward added that the grant won't allow spending on anything else so it doesn't matter that the money appears in a vague category (Misc Contractual) Therefore, Sean Ward moved to approve the spending proposal. Carl Fleshman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Next Sean Ward explained that the County Furlough affected Nancy. The County plans to require employees to take five Fridays (once a month) off without pay as a mechanism to save money. Nancy took the first Friday off. However, Sean Ward notified the County that the Board makes decisions on her employment and had not approved the furlough. As a result, Nancy will no longer need to take the days off and the County will reimburse the day's pay.

B. Grant Approvals

Nancy found two grant opportunities that would require submitting applications in the near future: One is a NYSDOS Watershed Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grant and the second is a NYSDEC Water Quality Improvement Project grant. The NYSDOS grant provides funding to develop Watershed Assessments and address Climate Change issues. Initially the Working Group considered a variety of sub-watersheds, then after analyzing the time and cost involved decided to limit the number of sub-watershed assessment to one and to use that sub-watershed as a training opportunity for Coalition members.

The training would focus on how to use assessment tools to evaluate pollution hotspots, opportunities for stormwater retrofits, water quality, and various stream corridor characteristics, such as erosion and vegetative buffers. At the same time, a comprehensive sub-watershed

assessment would be completed. In addition to the sub-watershed assessment, the same sub-watershed would be used to model the impact of climate change.

Two sub-watersheds were particularly interesting, the Salt Kill which has significant flooding issues and a tributary to the Normanskill, located in Delmar. Given the smaller size and therefore smaller project scope, the group chose the Delmar tributaries and submitted the grant yesterday.

Paul Reuss asked about the timeframe for the grant project. Nancy indicated a December of 2010 start date, as listed in the grant.

John McDonald moved to approve the grant application. John Dzialo seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The second grant would be through NYSDEC to develop a model local law or laws related to green infrastructure (rain gardens, rain barrels, green roofs, better site design) and to fund stormwater infrastructure mapping (convert paper maps of storm sewer system to GIS). Rough estimates for project cost, including the State Funds requested and local match is \$220,000.

Regarding the model law project, several municipal planners expressed interest in participating: Colonie, Cohoes, Bethlehem, the County and City of Albany. Such a model law creates consistency, fosters awareness and provides an opportunity for planners to implement green practices. Gerald Gordinier asked if Portland has done it. Nancy indicated that Portland, Oregon is very innovative and that the group would review Portland's and other area's ideas. The Department of State has a Code Conference in Lake Placid that has touched on the issue.

Sean Ward asked if the model law would be mandated or a recommendation. Nancy sees the potential model law as a template for municipalities. She discussed with Leslie Lombardo, Senior Planner for the County, how such a model law might worded, and there are different options.

Gerald Gordinier pointed out that the Cluster Law works because municipalities get the last word in as to what the project will accomplish. Sean Ward added that it is a contract between the developer and municipality. Erik Deyoe also pointed out that cluster development is permitted in floating zones.

Nancy emphasized the need to compare what the Coalition's municipalities have as opposed to what is available. She asked if that is something the Coalition should pursue. Alexander Gordon confirmed that the Coalition should pursue developing a model law because the area should stay ahead of the curve.

Sean Ward countered that the Coalition has a variety of types of municipalities: rural, urban and suburban. Each might need its own model code. Nancy suggested the subcommittee could create a menu. Gerald Gordinier added that the Planning Boards can do and request more than any other board. Nancy agreed that surveying the planning boards' members is important because boards vary in terms of experience, knowledge base and focus.

Alexander Gordon moved to approve pursuing the second NYSDEC grant application and that the Working Group should continue to develop the application. Paul Reuss seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Note from SW Program Coordinator:

Both grant submissions required authorization from the Albany County Legislature. The Legislature approved the NYSDOS grant application on September 14, 2009 (Resolution #338) and the NYSDEC application on October 13, 2009 (Resolution #383).

C. Coalition 2010 Budget and Work Plan

Lastly, Nancy reviewed the Work Plan and Budget for 2010. She will not be given a raise because she would be making more than her coworkers at the County. The 2010 Work Plan is substantively the same as the 2009 Work Plan, as is the Budget. Membership Fees are basically the same, however, given the participation of SUNY Albany will be slightly less than 2009.

The municipalities will need to request the 2010 membership fee payment from their Common Councils or Town/Village Boards.

Paul Reuss moved to approve the 2010 budget. John Dzailo seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Sean Ward moved to adjourn at 10:30am. Carl Fleshman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

IV. Close of Meeting

Next meeting scheduled for January 21, 2010 at 8:30am, in the Village of Green Island facility at 19 George Street.

Minutes approved by the Board of Directors on January 21, 2010.