

Watershed Agricultural Council

Agriculture ♦ Forestry ♦ Conservation Easements ♦ Economic Viability

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MINUTES OF THE WATERSHED AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL MEETING

December 17, 2024

I. Meeting called to order at 10:07 a.m.

Directors Present:

Dwight Bruno
James Darling
Wayland 'Bud' Gladstone, *Chair*
Karl Gockel, *Treasurer*
Jennifer Grossman, *Secretary*
Barb Hanselman
Jason Helmbold
Fred Huneke
Tom Hutson, *Vice Chair*
Steve Reed
John Verhoeven
Marilyn Wyman
Shilo Williams, *NYC DEP*

Directors Absent:

Paul Gallay
Jeff Wilson

Others Present:

Ryan Naatz, *Executive Director*
Amy Faulkner, *Director of Operations*
Carol Bishop, *Finance Director*
Connor Young, *WOH Agricultural Program Manager*
Nate Townsend, *Whole Farm Planning Coordinator*
Serena Orleski, *Easement Program Manager*
Kayla Atanasoff, *Easement Program Executive Assistant*
Heather Magnan, *Communications Manager*
Michael Vander Werff, *NYC DEP*
Sara Storrer, *NYC DEP*
Lee Harris, *NYC DOI*
Patrick Palmer, *NYS DOH*
Morgan Tarbell, *NYS DOH*
Bruce Dolph, *DC SWCD Board*
Mary Crisafulli, *The Mountain Eagle*
Colm Ryan, *WAC Whole Farm Plan Participant*

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the November 26, 2024 minutes, as presented.

Motion: John Verhoeven

Second: Steve Reed

Approved

III. Executive Director's Report – Ryan Naatz

TDD 1-800-662-1220

Watershed protection through partnership.

A. Operational and Programmatic Updates

Ryan indicated that the bulk of his updates would take place during the Executive Session.

B. Giving Tuesday Update

Ryan reported that just over \$1,000 was received from WAC Directors and members of the public as part of the Giving Tuesday campaign. Some additional monies may be incoming, so he will present a final update in January.

C. Spotlight: Agricultural Program – *BMP Prioritization: Process Overview and Annual Workload Development presented by Connor Young*

Connor presented an overview of the Agricultural Program's considerations and procedures involved in prioritizing, designing and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality for its program participants. Following the presentation, Connor and Nate answered subsequent questions.

IV. Chair's Report – Wayland 'Bud' Gladstone

A. Padilla Audit Closeout Letter

Bud reported that the Council received a letter from the NYC DEP's Chief Financial Officer in October regarding an audit performed in 2021 - by Padilla and Company, LLP - of WAC's financial operations and DEP funded contracts. The letter expressed that WAC had satisfactorily complied with the NYC DOI's Monitor Agreement and accounted for and corrected the weaknesses and deficiencies outlined in the audit report.

With that said, Bud also reported that he recently signed for the SWP-117 and SWP-106 contracts, as well as the Form 990s following the FY24 Audit.

V. Executive Committee – Wayland 'Bud' Gladstone

Bud reported that there was no meeting for the month of December, and therefore nothing to report at his time. He noted, as a reminder to the Council of Directors, that the next Director's Only meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 13th.

VI. Finance Committee – Karl Gockel & Carol Bishop

Karl explained that there were no materials included in the packet because the Committee had met the week prior. He reported that the audit was completed; the financial statements were finalized and the Form 990s were signed. The delinquent Form 5500s have also been filed, as per the findings of the audit. Finally, he reported that NBT Bank will be giving a presentation on the Stewardship Endowment at an upcoming meeting.

VII. Agricultural Committee – Steve Reed & Connor Young

Steve reported that the Committee met last week as well and therefore did not have any packet materials to include. During the meeting, staff presented program updates and a farm issue that was settled through program guideline processes. There were no Whole Farm Plan renewals or approvals.

VIII. Economic Viability Committee – Jennifer Grossman & Kristan Morley

Jennifer explained that the December Committee meeting was rescheduled for early January. She will have updates from the recent grant round and other programmatic updates to share at the January Council meeting.

IX. Easement Committee – Tom Hutson & Serena Orleski

Tom explained that the Committee will not be meeting in January. He presented Stewardship and Acquisition updates and explained that staff are currently in the process of revising existing program guidelines.

X. Forestry Committee – Marilyn Wyman & Tom Pavlesich

Marilyn reported that staff successfully submitted the Landscape Scale Restoration Grant to the Forest Service and completed modifications to the 2025 Program Handbook. During the Committee meeting, Tom Pavlesich gave a presentation on Logger Training (as previously presented to Council members) and Heather Hilson gave a presentation on a potential collaboration with the Master Logger Program that could serve as a valuable resource for loggers in the area.

XI. East of Hudson Committee – Fred Huneke & Amy Faulkner

Fred indicated that there was nothing to report until the next meeting.

XII. Building Committee – Karl Gockel

Karl reported that the Review Group met to review submitted proposals, and selected Keystone Associates as the vendor for site-scoping and design of the new West-of-Hudson office building. The Committee will be meeting soon to discuss the next steps.

XIII. Governance Committee – John Verhoeven

A. Attendance Waiver – Motion

Upon the recommendation of the Governance Committee, motion to approve an attendance waiver for Barb Hanselman regarding her attendance of Economic Viability Committee meetings specifically.

Motion: Karl Gockel

Second: Dwight Bruno

Note: Barb Hanselman left the meeting ahead of the vote

Approved

B. Slate of Directors – Motion

Motion to recommend James Darling to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Steve Reed

Second: Tom Hutson

Abstained: James Darling

Approved

Motion to recommend Karl Gockel to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Tom Hutson

Second: Dwight Bruno

Abstained: Karl Gockel

Approved

Motion to recommend Jennifer Grossman to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Marilyn Wyman

Second: Dwight Bruno

Abstained: Jennifer Grossman

Approved

Motion to recommend Barb Hanselman to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Dwight Bruno

Second: Bud Gladstone

Note: Barb Hanselman left the meeting ahead of the vote

Approved

Motion to recommend Tom Hutson to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: James Darling

Second: Steve Reed

Abstained: Tom Hutson

Approved

Motion to recommend Steve Reed to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Dwight Bruno
Second: Bud Gladstone
Abstained: Steve Reed
Approved

Motion to recommend John Verhoeven to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Tom Hutson
Second: James Darling
Abstained: John Verhoeven
Approved

Motion to recommend Marilyn Wyman to the slate of directors for the term of January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026.

Motion: Dwight Bruno
Second: Tom Hutson
Abstained: Marilyn Wyman
Approved

XIV. NYC DEP Report – Shilo Williams

Shilo had nothing to report at this time.

XV. NYS DOH, US EPA Reports – Patrick Palmer & Katie Lynch

Patrick reported that the final stakeholder meeting was held last month; the group discussed the water withdrawal permit and moving into the next FAD agreement.

XVI. Other

XVII. Executive Session

Motion to enter Executive Session at 11:23 a.m.

Motion: Fred Huneke
Second: Tom Hutson
Approved

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 11:46 a.m.

Motion: Marilyn Wyman
Second: Steve Reed
Approved

XVIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m. by common consent.

The next meeting will be held on January 28, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.