



MINUTES
May 27, 2009

ATTENDANCE:

Roger Burlew, Town of Erin; Andy Fagan, CCE; Jennifer Fais, STCRPDB; Diane Fiorentino, CC Stormwater Coalition; Richard Gunderman, Chemung County Legislator; Al Janowski, Town of Catlin; Joseph Leonardi, Town Baldwin, Ashland, Wellsburg; Dennis Rathbun, Jr., CCHD; Sarita Upadhyay, CC SWCD; Jessica Verrigni, Rural Stormwater Coalition; Jabe Warren, CCE; Mark Watts, CC SWCD

1. Call to order and Communications –Diane Fiorentino called the meeting to order at 9 am, the group introduced themselves.
2. Approval of the March 18, 2009 minutes – On a motion by Dick Gunderman, seconded by Roger Burlew the minutes of the March 18 were approved as written. April 15th was the tour of Green Diamond Tires and therefore no minutes. The group described their trip and noted that the company produces zero waste as it remakes vehicle tires from old tires with new molds. People who own the tires are happy with their wear. The plant is located on Grand Central Avenue in Elmira Heights.
3. Report from Diane on:
 - a) NYS pharmaceutical disposal program – Diane noted that Dennis Rathbun made a previous presentation. She is updating the group. Experience with the “take back” program has shown that it is very complicated, full of paperwork and time wasting. If the county has law enforcement that will say that used drugs are “controlled substances” there is no need for a chemist at the take back site. Experience has also shown in Monroe County and North Hempstead that people do not hold on to old drugs as long as they hold on to pesticides. It is just as easy to throw them away or flush than save them for a recycling day. The main push now is for DEC to get the message across that drugs should be thrown away, not flushed. Current policy in nursing homes requires disposal via the sewers system. DEC needs to fix that policy. They are also working with pharmaceutical companies and insurance companies to add that notation, please dispose of via garbage, do not flush as part of their informational materials that are included with prescriptions. Another suggestion is to allow doctors to prescribe 5 days of a

drug so that a person can tell if they are allergic before they purchase their 90 day supply, otherwise there is a great amount of waste that is being flushed down the toilet.

DEC is also creating posters to distribute to doctors and pharmacies. The product Stewardship Institute is working with pharmacies to have small highly visible locked boxes as return for old medication, just as they have for needles.

Jennifer Trimber noted that the Tioga County Environmental Stewardship Program chose pharmaceuticals as a project. The CCEMC brought a speaker in (Tom Sinclair) as part of their familiarization process on what needs may exist in terms of our local environment. (The Chemung, Steuben, Schuyler group has chosen a campaign on how to dispose of different types of batteries.)

- b. Stream monitoring program – Diane said that the equipment is up again and the flow meter and other testing devices are working. Greg Burrows is the new volunteer. He is a high school chemistry teacher. Because of his knowledge he has recalibrated the equipment and is undertaking the testing with a great amount of skill. Diane Fiorentino and Gene Stow are the other two volunteers. They have tested the water in Sing Sing Creek, Catharine Creek, at Pine Valley and Smith Road and at Millport. They have tested Newtown Creek, Jackson Creek, Baldwin Creek. These samples took place in mid May. The samples have gone to Mary Rose at the Elmira Water Board and the data will establish the baseline data in case there is a problem in the future. Because nitrogen is a limited pollutant under the TMDL program a question was asked whether the water monitoring equipment could test for nitrogen. Diane will check.

It was also asked if water testing could be undertaken near the shale drilling. It was noted that well testing takes place every two months as a standard practice.

- c. Summer Intern program update – the intern Sarita Updahyay is working on the composting issue as part of the state environmental excellence award program. She will be researching the matrix of options for rural homeowners as they decide on composting solutions. She will be interviewing all community composting systems to understand techniques and then will share her findings with the communities so that they can benefit from each others processes. Based on her work, communities may then take the best of the programs and improve their systems on behalf of their residents.

At this moment it is understood that the salt plant at Watkins Glen is paying for wood chips for fuel and this may affect the availability of wood chips for free for community residents if the municipality can make money.

It was also noted that the Part 360 regulations are being rewritten and landfills will also start looking at refusing organic materials as well as paper, metal, and plastic that get to the landfill since trees, grass, etc. can be chipped and mulched.

Mark Watts office has a tub grinder which can be used for chip production which could be sold to the salt company and make money for the communities.

4. Report from Jennifer on: Chemung River Trail group changes – Jennifer distributed a 2 page summary of the Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership and described the history. She said that with the creation of the not-for-profit Friends of the Chemung River Watershed she was very happy that this new group with staff dedicated to the river could pick up the public education pieces and public involvement pieces and do an excellent job. The Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership will now consist of agencies and organizations while residents are encouraged dues paying members of the Friends. The group agreed that they would enjoy hearing from Jim Pffifer on the projects underway by the Friends of the Chemung River Watershed. Jim will be invited to attend the next meeting.
5. Report from Andy Fagan, Chemung County Cooperative Extension, on: TING (Tioga Investigating Natural Gas) – Andy noted that in Tioga County there are a number of land owners groups, outreach groups, farm bureau, etc. who are all concerned about the Marcellus Shale impacts. The county legislators are taking a hands off approach, however, there will be a long term public impact. Ron Doherty a former Tioga County Legislator invited representatives from all of these groups to meet to chart a course for a cooperative effort. The formal group Tioga Investigating Natural Gas was formed with representatives from the legislators, council of government, Tioga County Gas Lease Coalition, Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) and others. The group meets twice a week to monthly as they are pulling together all information available. Bill Ostrander is helping with the maps. The group is putting together working groups on the following topics:
 - Road Preservation - this group is working on a template for a municipal road maintenance requirement agreement so that there is consistency among communities. They are documenting existing maintenance agreements.
 - Water Quality Sub Committee – this group is involved in well testing and is hoping to establish a baseline around the county. What to test for, who pays for it, are questions that they are considering.
 - Workforce Trainings Sub Committee – Cornell University is putting a meeting together at the end of June on this topic and
 - Public Safety Workgroup – Andy asked if there is interest from Chemung County to form a similar group since also education opportunities are piece meal in Chemung County.

Roger Burlew noted that each community is going into individually at this time. LaBerge Group is studying Chemung County shared services on road impacts.

Roger feels that it would be appropriate if representatives of the water quality committee attended upcoming TING meetings to see if there is an opportunity that we could work together.

Diane Fiorentino was asked to find out the list of the next TING meetings so that WQCC members could attend.

6. Because of the lateness of the hour, there are no member reports or new business.
7. Next meeting June 17, 2009 at the Conservation Cabin. The meeting adjourned at 10:10 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Fais