



November 18, 2009

MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: **Tom Brown** (Citizen); **Roger Burlew** (Town of Erin); **Andy Fagan** (CCE); **Jennifer Fais** (STCRPDB); **Diane Fiorentino** (Stormwater Coalition); **Richard Gunderman** (Chemung County Legislator); **R.B. Howland** (Motor Components); **Dick Kankus** (Citizen); **Kevin Keeley**, (Chemung County Chamber of Commerce); **Paul Kingsbury** (Town of Elmira); **Jim Pfiffer**, (Chemung River Friends); **Dennis Rathbun, Jr.** (CCHD); **Scott Rodabaugh**, (NYSDEC); **Jennifer Trimber**, (CC EMC); **Jabe Warren** (CCE)

1. Call to order and Communications. Diane Fiorentino called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM at the Big Flats Community Center. The group introduced themselves. Communications included a notice of the December 8 Planning and Zoning Training Session from 5:30 – 9:30 PM at the Big Flats Community Center. A handout was distributed. Also, a notice of a workshop on roadkill and Christmas Tree composting to be held December 17 at the Plant Materials Center, Big Flats for highway and DPW staff. A handout was circulated.
2. Approval of the October 21, 2009 minutes. On a motion by Dick Gunderman, seconded by Jennifer Trimber, the committee approved the minutes as written.
3. Tioga Investigates Natural Gas Update. Jennifer Trimber distributed two handouts, 1) “Tioga Investigating Natural Gas Potential Impacts and Opportunities Faced by the Public Sector from Natural Gas Development and Production,” 2) “Tioga Investigates Natural Gas Steering Committee Operating Guidelines.” Diane Fiorentino also distributed a third handout entitled “Marcellus Shale Exploration and Development, Organizing a Community Task Force.” This was a Penn State Marcellus Education Fact Sheet.

Jennifer Trimber described the TING group as a representative group that was established by the Tioga County Legislature as an advisory group to the county legislature to look comprehensively at positive and negative issues surrounding Marcellus Shale. Andy Fagan thinks that there should be a group in Chemung County. Marcellus Shale drilling is probably going to happen and we need to stress the positive and mitigate the negative impacts. It was noted that the attorney in Tioga asked the government to take sides, but this did not come to a vote because the county government understood that it is not a “yes” or “no” proposition.

The TING group will be making recommendations which may be of value to Chemung County. For example, they are issuing standardized permitting recommendations for roads.

It was asked who would move this task force recommendation to the Chemung County Legislature. It was suggested that Mark Watts could be the messenger.

Over the past two years the Water Quality Committee has reviewed the Marcellus Shale issue. It was asked if the WQCC would be the main organization to make up the task force. It was felt that the task force would be broader than the Water Quality Committee and that a representative or two from the WQSC would be suggested to the task force.

Jennifer Trimmer offered to be the point person to move the Chemung County Task Force forward. The Environment Management Council has approved the use of Jennifer Trimmer's time to date, but she feels that she would need more funding to pursue the formation of a task force. Cooperative Extension is doing their work currently without extra money. It was suggested that perhaps Mark's budget for water quality could be used to support this effort.

On a motion by Roger Burlew, seconded by Dick Kankus, the Water Quality Committee supported the creation of a Chemung Task Force. Diane Fiorentino suggested that if you would like a role in the new task force to contact Jennifer Trimmer. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Member Reports

There were no specific member reports.

5. Old Business

Draft Supplemental GEIS WQC Comments Period Extended to 12/31/2009.

The group then discussed the following Marcellus Shale issues:

What is the cumulative impact of the 34,000+ wells? Are we taking fresh water out of the ecosystem and putting it into deep injection wells? What are the impacts of this?

Who is doing reliable research? Diane Fiorentino said that four Cornell University professors had received three years of research funding through the Museum of Earth as the outreach vehicle.

What can each regulatory agency do concerning Marcellus Shale and what would be for the best? What is fact and fiction? Rod Howard is the point person at Cornell University even though there are differences of opinions at Cornell. Recommendation is to go to the TING website and review recommendations to municipal leaders. Brett Chedzoy with the Schuyler County Energy Development Task Force is also working with TING so there is good cooperation. The Cornell University Water Resources Institute (WRI) has been

testing frack fluids and has found tumor-inducing chemicals not disclosed in the list of fluids. They have testified to Albany.

There was a question, why not use CO² or air to use as a vehicle for opening the pores in the rock?

We understand that Janet Thigpen is asking about the long-term costs of operation and maintenance of the proposed SRBC water quality monitoring equipment at \$20,000 per unit. SRBC is looking for real-time information. Mike Brownell, Janet Thigpen, and Diane Fiorentino had a discussion about this proposal. Each monitoring station needs solar power and an internet link to relay the data. Diane said that Chemung County does stream monitoring every two months which provides good baseline data but the data would not hold up in court. The monitoring system would be placed on tributaries not on the Chemung River directly. The group generally supported the idea, but suggested looking to the industry for funding to support this monitoring system.

Dennis Rathbun asked why not use the SRBC consumptive use funds within the watershed instead of paying for COE reservoir space outside of the watershed. Jennifer Fais noted that an alternative could be Mark Watts' suggestion to require the drilling companies to install fresh water ponds as a water source. These ponds would remain after the drilling was done to create more water recharge in the basin.

There was a November 18 public hearing at East High School as well a November 30 Education Summit at the Owego Treadway Inn.

Diane Fiorentino asked that everyone send any comments to her so she can put them in a letter for consideration at the December Water Quality Strategy meeting.

6. New Business

There was a notice of a Federation of Fly Fishers meeting on December 7 at Big Flats Community Center at 7 PM. Dr. Anthony Ingraffea would be the guest speaker. He would discuss the pros and cons of hydro-fracturing and the potential effects on infrastructure and the economy of the southern tier. The meeting will be open to the public.

7. Next Meeting - The next meeting was set for December 7, at 1:00 PM at the Big Flats American Legion (after the SWCD luncheon.) This replaces the December 16 meeting.

8. Adjourn – There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Fais