



Onondaga County Legislature

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE MINUTES – AUGUST 10, 2021 JOHN D. MCBRIDE, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Tassone, Dr. Chase, Dr. Kelly

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mrs. Abbott-Kenan

ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Knapp; also see attached

Chair McBride called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. *A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Mrs. Tassone to waive the reading and approve the minutes of the previous committee meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED. A motion was made by Dr. Kelly, seconded by Dr. Chase to approve the previous committee meeting minutes. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.*

1. WATER ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: Shannon Harty, Commissioner
a. Authorizing the Execution of Agreements with the City of Syracuse for Incorporation of Green Infrastructure within Specific Road Reconstruction Projects (\$625,000)

- Part of Green “Save the Rain” CSO Abatement efforts happening throughout the city of Syracuse
- WEP partnering with local municipalities on construction projects, significant savings; partnership with city of Syracuse
- Partner with them on road reconstruction; they dig up road, while dug up, WEP designs and pays them to install rain gardens, brick pavers, trees, all kinds of infrastructure
- 2018 program was similar dollar amount; \$625,000, next part of it, Water Street to Almond (Corner of 81 to 690), about six blocks, working on this fall; city will build it, WEP will inspect it

Dr. Chase asked where this is in relation to the plans for taking down 81. Is the County putting in the \$625,000, and then the city digs it all up again? Ms. Harty said no; it is a couple blocks south of that. Water Street is out of the area impacted by I81. This is definitely not something that they are going to put in, then dig up in two years.

Chair McBride asked what the timeframe for all of this is? Ms. Harty stated that it will take two to three months. Chair McBride asked if WEP inspects it when it is done, and asked if there has been any previous issues in the past. Ms. Harty answered yes; WEP inspects it and pays for it, and there were no previous issues.

Mrs. Tassone said the county agrees to increase the maximum reimbursement to the city by \$625,000, not to exceed amount of \$1,260,000, and she asked if this includes other projects. Ms. Harty responded:

- With the \$620,000, WEP already spent \$625,000 on the 2018 project; agreement thoroughly reviewed, good contract
- Approach to amend contract and increase limit allowing WEP to pay city an additional \$625,000 to cover this project
- Money in 2018 was for a different project

Chair McBride said it will not exceed \$625,000, and asked if it ever exceeded \$625,000 in the past. What if it does? Ms. Harty replied that WEP would come back to the Legislature. This contract sets the authorization of the limit of what can be spent. Chair McBride said it is nice getting the construction projects done now, and it is enormously more expensive. Ms. Harty commented that it is, and they are seeing more on the equipment side of things. Plumbing is not seeing the same increases on the pipeline yet.

A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Mrs. Tassone, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

**2. SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT: Mark Burger, Executive Director
a. **INFORMATIONAL: Budget Update****

The Conservation Quarterly Newsletter is on file with the Clerk of the Legislature.



Onondaga County Soil & Water Conservation District

6680 Onondaga Lake Parkway, Liverpool, New York 13088
phone: 315-457-0325 · fax: 315-457-0410 · e-mail: info@ocswcd.org
website: www.ocswcd.org

2021 – Where Were At

- As of June 30, we are 50% thru our fiscal year. On track with our budget income & expenditures
- Have ~ 20 farm BMP implementation projects in various stages of completion
 - Fence posts, if you can get them, cost 5X last year's prices
 - Costs of all goods & services higher than last year
 - Construction companies facing labor challenges
- Many EPF round 26 contracts for ag work coming thru from NYS
- Staff have authored 14 grants requesting \$2.39 Million in funding; waiting on results
- Injecting Ash trees on County Parks property that provide high functions & values
 - mark-outs for winter cutting started
- Treating Hemlock trees in Otisco & Skaneateles Lake watersheds is our newest project
- Final week of Water Chestnut hand pulling season
 - ~ 23,840 pounds pulled by our crew, to date
 - ~ 6,000 pounds pulled by Seneca Estates volunteers
 - ~ 30,000 pounds pulled by Eno Point Campers Association
 - ~ 100+ trailer loads (~270 cu. Ft/load) removed from north of Belgium Bridge
- Hydroseeded ~ 30 miles of municipally cleaned road ditches
- Approximately 300 stormwater outfalls have been inspected for County, to date, as part of MS4 permit compliance
- Approx. 7,283 tires recycled this year on farms / 38,262 tires total since 2019

2022 – Looking Ahead

- Working on 2022 budget right now. Expecting slightly lower budget due to COVID & economy fluctuations
- Reports that high material prices and labor shortages will affect us for next 3 to 4 years c/o farm BMP projects
- May be able to run 2 Water Chestnut pulling crews next year, if funding is available
- Anticipate getting 50% of the grants we applied for in 2021
- Will hear from DEC if we received a grant to replace hydroseeder & funding for 3 more years of reduced-cost service to municipalities

Dr. Kelly asked if the grants they are applying for are keeping up with rising costs of equipment and labor. Mr. Burger said in June they wrote the round 27 applications to the Environmental Protection Fund. Mr. Burger explained that they were afraid if they cut fence posts five times what they costs are, they would take themselves out of the cost-benefit analysis. The hope is the projection with that and time, they will be okay. Mr. Burger said

they reached out to Ag and Markets to say to be aware that when the grants come in, they will be higher than traditionally have been; should know in October or November.

Chairman Knapp:

- Soil and Water (SWCD) one of the best kept secrets in County; trying to get word out for how well they do
- SWCD stretches out dollar and leverages it
- Ag Council been able to help over the years with seed money for grants; great partnership
- Water chestnuts have taken over this year; visual below

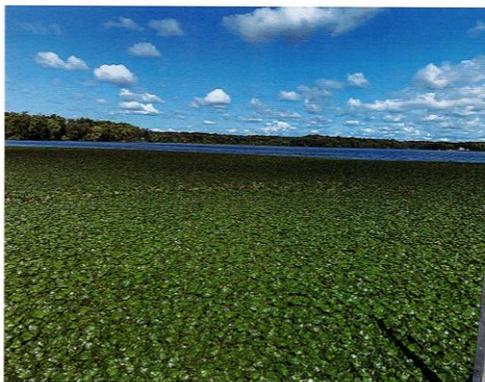
What Makes the Water Chestnuts so Invasive?



Each plant can produce up to 15-20 seeds



Each seed can produce up to 15 stems



- This means one single plant left behind has the potential to produce up to 300 plants the following year.
- One acre is equal to ~66,667 plants



- Praise Mr. Burger & his team for their efforts to keep large spill from entering Skaneateles Lake
- Mr. Burger personally is head of large animal rescue team – saved a horse from “quick sand”

Mrs. Tassone asked why the DEC is backing off from this project. Mr. Burger responded no; the DEC says their resources are being stretched in multiple directions. They are also trying to do more with less overall people and financials. Mr. Burger said they were at Cross Lake over the weekend, and they hauled over 15,000 pounds of water chestnuts out. They recycle the chestnuts onto an agricultural field.

Chairman McBride said he attended a meeting in Cayuga County on the Owasco Lake water issues, and he asked what issues would be applicable in Onondaga County in regards to Cayuga County from an agricultural standpoint. Mr. Burger answered:

- Onondaga County has SWCD, city of Syracuse, Skaneateles Lake Watershed Ag Program, and Congressman Walsh’s funding in the past; millions of dollars into ag farm planning
- Farms worked with staff at SWCD for decades to be able to put best management practices on their farms
- Tremendous numbers of conservation projects to keep soil on the land, nutrients in soil, and water clean
- Onondaga County is a leader in NYS in regards to agricultural conservation; now county in maintenance phase to keep things going; glad to see other areas in the state are stepping up

A motion was made by Dr. Chase, seconded by Dr. Kelly, to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

ATTENDANCE

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 a.m.

COMMITTEE: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE
DATE: AUGUST 10, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Kaminski

DEBBIE KAMINSKI, Assistant Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
<i>MARK Burger</i>	<i>on city SWCD</i>
<i>Shannon Harper</i>	<i>WEP</i>
<i>Tenasha Murphy</i>	<i>County Executive</i>
<i>Yvette Velesco</i>	<i>LAW</i>