

NEWS from the Catskill Watershed Corp

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CWC Annual Meeting, Election of Officers, and 2020 Report

ARKVILLE, April 16, 2021: The Catskill Watershed Corporation held its Annual Meeting on April 6, 2021. A large crowd of Watershed officials, state and federal agency representatives and regional partners attended the Catskill Watershed Corporation's (CWC) Annual Meeting of CWC Member Towns on April 6 via ZOOM due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Attendees included Michael Maloney from New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Water Supply Protection, and other colleagues from NYSDOH, Paul Rush, Deputy Commissioner and colleagues from the NYC Department of Environmental Protection, Representatives from NYS Department of State, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and many local Town Supervisors attended the meeting remotely. Also, on the video conference was Marilyn Gelber, former Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner, who was instrumental in bringing together City representatives and local watershed officials during the Watershed MOA negotiations.

Alicia Terry, Supervisor of the Town of Gilboa was welcomed to the Board of Directors. Anthony Van Glad, outgoing Schoharie County representative, was lauded for his service. Mr. Van Glad was a member of the Board of Directors since 2017 and served as Board Secretary and Chair of CWC's Septic Committee. James Sofranko, Supervisor of the Town of Olive in Ulster County was re-elected to the Board.

The 2020 Annual Report was released at the meeting. It can be viewed at cwconline.org (Documents). A link to a video summary of the CWC's 2020 accomplishments can be found on the Resources page of the CWC website www.cwconline.org. To get a paper copy of the annual report, call 845-586-1400, or email scosta@cwconline.org.

Among the highlights of 2020 CWC accomplishments:

- 269 failed residential septic systems were repaired or replaced through grants to homeowners by the CWC Septic Program. Primary residents were reimbursed 100 percent of eligible costs, second homeowners were reimbursed 60 percent.
- 504 septic systems installed since 1995 were pumped out and inspected in 2020; CWC reimbursed half the cost for each maintenance visit.
- Three wastewater projects were completed in the Towns of Denning and Shandaken in Ulster County and the Town of Neversink in Sullivan County. Septic upgrades for the Shandaken Septic Maintenance District were completed in October. Septic system upgrades for the Claryville Septic Maintenance District were completed in the Towns of Denning and Neversink. Construction began on the West Conesville Community Septic System in the spring of 2020. Designs neared completion for both the New Kingston Community Septic System and the Halcottsville Collection System which will be connected to the existing Margaretville Wastewater Treatment Plant.

- CWC Board approved funding for numerous feasibility studies from the Flood Hazard Mitigation Implementation Program to investigate options for flood proofing, designs and construction for homes, municipal buildings, businesses, and institutions throughout the West of Hudson watershed.
- 17 property owners in Delaware, Greene, and Ulster Counties were approved for reimbursement for costs of NYCDEP required stormwater controls. Some of these projects included Delaware County Electric Cooperative, Clark Companies, Hunter Peaks, LLC, Village of Tannersville and a residential project in West Shokan.
- Five low-interest loans were approved for businesses in Watershed Towns through the CWC's Catskill Fund for the Future. These included Maeve's Pretty Face, LLC in Shandaken, Thomas E. Miner, Jr. and Donald E. VanEtten in Stamford, and Starlite Motel, LLC in the Town of Rochester. Loans approved in 2020 but not yet closed are McKenley Hollow LLC in Shandaken and Windham Ventures LLC in Windham. Other economic development initiatives included administering and completing the Catskill Master Plan Stewardship and Planning Project and the Greater Catskill Park Recreation Plan and the Wayfinding Signage. Despite the pandemic, tourism and outdoor recreation in the Catskills supported by CWC, including the Reservoir Boating Program, which drew 1,354 kayaks and canoes to four NYC reservoirs in 2020.
- The Board awarded 24 Watershed Education Grants to schools and non-profit organizations in the Catskill-Delaware Watershed and in New York City, for such projects as Trout in the Classroom and public performances of Arm of the Sea Theater. Due to the pandemic, some projects were postponed until in-school teaching resumed, and pandemic attendance restrictions were lifted.

A special tribute was paid to Alan Rosa, outgoing Executive Director of CWC, who will be retiring at the end of April. While serving as supervisor of the Town of Middletown (Delaware County) Alan was one of the lead negotiators for the watershed towns in the Catskills in discussions that led to the 1997 Watershed Agreement with the Watershed Towns and Counties, New York City, New York State, and EPA. Following the 1997 agreement signing, Alan immediately came to CWC first as President of the Corporation from 1996-1999 and later as Executive Director from 1999 to 2021.

During this tribute, a few important people to the CWC who have worked with Alan for many years had some nice comments.

Tina Molé, Supervisor of the Town of Bovina, Chairman for Delaware County Board of Supervisors and President of the CWC Board of Directors said "For the past 25 years Alan has led the CWC as programs developed, funding was negotiated, and projects were implanted to serve in the best interest of water quality and community sustainability. The CWC is committed to continuing Alan's vision and efforts to make the West of Hudson watershed an international example of how a living watershed can be both a clean source of water and home to vibrant and sustainable communities."

Paul Rush, Deputy Commissioner of New York City Department of Environmental Protection said "In his nearly 25 years at CWC, Alan has been a steadfast partner with New York City in protecting water quality while preserving the character and viability of watershed

communities. Through his hard work and unwavering dedication, Alan has strengthened the resiliency of the region. I also applaud Alan's work to build an excellent team at CWC, to ensure that the organization continues to be a valuable resource to local towns and NYCDEP alike."

Marilyn Gelber, Former DEP commissioner said "It is rare to find a leader like Alan Rosa - he is strong and smart and yet has a humility about himself and his work. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to him for turning an agreement on paper into a living legacy that continues to bring great benefit to watershed communities and the people of New York City. As New York City's DEP Commissioner, it was a great and unique privilege to sit across the negotiating table from Alan and Perry Shelton and other leaders of the Coalition of Watershed Towns and begin to shape an agreement to address the historic animosities and misunderstandings between upstate and downstate. Alan carried the work forward with grace and patience and I wish him a happy trout filled retirement!"

Jason Merwin, Executive Director of CWC said "What he has done to make CWC what it is today is incredible. The structure, the transparency, the programming, and efficiency are just some of the attributes that highlight CWC's effectiveness. It has been a mission of Alan's to make CWC the model agency in the watershed."

Alan Rosa, Former Executive Director said "The credit cannot be given to one individual; it takes a family and community to get to where we are today. I hopes everyone never forgets what has been accomplished and I hope everyone keeps moving forward in working together."

CWC is a not-for-profit local development corporation responsible for several environmental protection, economic development, and education programs in the New York City Watershed West of the Hudson River. All thirty-nine towns within the New York City Watershed West of the Hudson River are members of CWC.