

CATSKILL WATERSHED CORPORATION

Annual Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES

April 2, 2024 @ 1:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance lead by Tina Molé

III. Roll Call of Directors

Members Present:

Tina Molé, Alicia Terry, Richard Parete, Innes Kasanof, Jim Sofranko, Christopher Mathews, Thomas Hoyt, Allen Hinkley, Arthur Merrill, Mark Tuthill, Joseph Cetta, David Warne (DEP), and Thomas Snow (DOH)

Members Excused: Jeff Senterman

Staff Members Present: Samantha Costa, Timothy Cox, Jason Merwin, Sonia Martinez, Jessica Fiedler, Barbara Puglisi, James Martin, James Martin II, Mitchell Hull, John Jacobson, Kyle Faraci, Todd Henderson, Skyliie Roberts, John Mathiesen, Racheal Burger, David Lane, Eric Lane, Renee Antonette-Anfimovas, Lynn Kavanagh, and Donald Brown.

Others Present: Matt Gianetta (NYCDEP), Nick Sadler (NYCDEP), Gerson Tavaréz (NYCDEP), Michael Myers (NYCDEP), Heidi Haynes (NYCDEP), Heidi Emrich (Ulster County Department of Environment), Patrick Palmer (NYSDOH), Michael Maloney (NYSDOH), Pauline Wanjugi (NYSDOH), Ed Snow (Mayor Village of Walton), Paul Rush (NYCDEP), John Vickers (NYCDEP), Graydon Dutcher (DCSW), Larry Underwood (DCSW), Sam Kandel (Regional Director SUNY Ulster), Jeffrey Baker (Jeffrey Baker Law), John Weidman (DEC Region 4 Regional Engineer), Charles Schafer (Former CWC staff member), Rohit Aggarwala (DEP Commissioner), Carol O'Beirne (Catskill Water Discovery Center), Sally Fairbairn (Catskill Water Discovery Center), Alan Rosa (Former CWC Executive Director), Mike Giuliano (Sporting Advisory Committee), David Brooks (Supervisor Town of Denning), Clayton Brooks (Former CWC Board Member Town of Denning), Wayland Gladstone (Supervisor Town of Andes), George Haynes Jr. (Supervisor Town of Kortright), Nick Carbone (DCWA), Shelly Johnson-Bennett (DCP), Rex Sanford (PE), Dave Estes (Estes Contracting), Abigail Estes (Estes Contracting), Nick Warner (Lamont Engineering), Michelle Yost (GCSW), Jessica Vecchione (NYCDEP), Kristen Artz (Rendler) (NYCDEP)

Others Present via Zoom: Harris Weiss (Governor Hochul's office), Emma Cohen (Senator Hinchey's office), Dan Ruzow (Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna), Peter Brandt (EPA), Maya Boukai (Town of Delhi Supervisor), Morgan Tarbell (NYSDOH), Amanda LaValle (Deputy County Executive - Ulster County), Linda Geary (NYS Law Department), Allyson Phillips (Young/Sommer, LLC), Lisa Melville (DOS), Jacinta Chen (Senator Gillibrand's office), Dmitriy Ostapshyn (NYCDEP)

IV. Staff Presentation of 2023 Accomplishments

Jason Merwin greeted and thanked everyone for attending the CWC Annual Meeting. Jason highlighted that every CWC program benefits upstate communities as well as residents of NYC. He also emphasized the local accountability with elections for board of director seats every year, ensuring oversight of CWC is run properly.

Jason noted when CWC was created in 1997, their first payment from NYCDEP totaled approximately \$4 million for the year's operations. In 2023, across all CWC's programs, CWC's total operating expenses were just over \$30 million.

Referencing the Shokan project, Jason said this will be the largest wastewater treatment plant in the watershed, with a design flow of 166,000 gallons per day across 525 properties.

The Shokan project is in its design phase and is 95% complete. The \$50 million block grant awarded for the project was done so before the Covid-19 pandemic and the funding contract with DEP will be amended to reflect costs closer to \$70 million.

Jason said of the septic repair and replacement program –a record 312 systems were replaced in 2023 and staff completed 681 site visits between only five staff members.

Jason noted in 2023, payments were made to 24 different engineers for projects completed through the septic program and two engineers earned over \$200,000 from CWC projects alone. CWC made payments to 98 individual contractors as well for septic repairs and replacements, four of which earned over \$500,000.

Jason praised the Catskill Fund for the Future program stating that in February 2023 the program hit a milestone by exceeding over \$100 million in loan disbursements.

Jason also noted that in 2023 CWC awarded 31 education grants totaling \$200,000 to schools and nonprofit organizations throughout the watershed and five boroughs of New York City.

Commissioner Aggarwala spoke next and stressed how the water coming from the watershed is shared by both those who live in New York City but also those north of the city and an increasing amount of those west of the Hudson.

He spoke of DEP's strategic plan and how their long-term goal will be to become an "esteemed presence" rather than an "occupying force" or "tolerated participant." Commissioner Aggarwala said DEP is one of the largest employees here, employing over 1,000 people in the watershed and one of the highest tax payers of the area.

He also emphasized how much climate change will affect the FAD and it should be understood that what worked for the FAD in 1997 will not work in years to come. Therefore renewable power is imperative to get on board with as it will help keep NYS powered as well as help the local economy and job creation. All of this will require us to be collaborative, creative, and science-based. He concluded by encouraging that participants to continue to work together as partners.

V. Board of Directors Election Results

Alicia Terry, CWC Board Secretary, announced the election results, "Pursuant to Catskill Watershed Corporation By-Laws Article 7, a regular election was held for four director seats – one director in Greene County, and three for Delaware County. Nominations and ballots were received from Watershed Town supervisors in each of those counties. The four nominees elected to the CWC Board are:

For Greene County – Thomas Hoyt, Supervisor, Town of Windham

For Delaware County – Joseph Cetta, Supervisor, Town of Walton

George Haynes, Jr., Supervisor, Town of Kortright

Tina Molé, Supervisor, Town of Bovina and Chairwoman of the Delaware County Board of Supervisors

Congratulations"

VI. Election of Officers:

A motion to approve Resolution No. 5204 was made by Christopher Mathews and seconded by Joseph Cetta.

April 2, 2024

RESOLUTION NO. 5204

**ELECT OFFICERS OF THE CATSKILL WATERSHED CORPORATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 1 of the by-laws of the Catskill Watershed Corporation (“CWC”) provide for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CWC Resolution Number 2, the Board of Directors found it was in the interests of the CWC to establish the office of First Vice President and Second Vice President in order to provide for orderly conduct of the business of the Corporation; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution 3186, the CWC Board of Directors established the office of Third Vice-President to provide for the orderly conduct of business of the Corporation; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee recommends the Board elect the following officers: Tina Molé, President; Rich Parete, First Vice President; Innes Kasanof, Second Vice-President; Christopher Mathews, Third Vice-President; Arthur Merrill, Treasurer; and Alicia Terry, Secretary.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors elect the following officers: Tina Molé, President; Rich Parete, First Vice President; Innes Kasanof, Second Vice-President; Christopher Mathews, Third Vice-President; Arthur Merrill, Treasurer; and Alicia Terry, Secretary.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Officers shall serve and carry over until the 2025 Annual Meeting of Member Towns.

Voice Vote, carried unanimously



CWC Board President Tina Molé briefly reflected on the role of CWC as part of the overall protection of New York City water supply. She pointed to the dedication of CWC staff and board members to the watershed community and the continued protection and support of the community and its resources. She noted the importance of Alan Rosa’s vision for the CWC and Jason Merwin’s continued professionalism, hard work, and strive for excellence in watershed management.

Tina talked about the long-term commitment to the watershed and the 2024 community vitality study which is imperative to understanding the long-term needs of the watershed communities. She emphasized the need to complete this study as it will guide the development of the next FAD.

Tina spoke about the land acquisition negotiations going on between the CWC and the city and how important these negotiations are for the continued support of the watershed communities.

VII. Open Floor: Questions and Comments from Member Towns and participants:

Carol O'Beirne, President of the Water Discovery Center (WDC), spoke about how appreciative the WDC is of being a tenant of the building. She remarked how amazing the CWC program is and remembers when the agreement was signed and is amazed where the CWC has come from and is today. She talked about the goals of the WDC and what the organization has been working on. This includes the creation of the nature preserve located behind the CWC building along the railroad tracks. The project has gone out to bid and a contractor has been selected with work will be commencing very soon. She posited that at the next annual meeting, everyone could take a walk along the nature preserve and see the signage. She thanked Graydon and staff at DCSWCD for their support in the creation of the nature preserve.

Sally Fairbairn, board member of the Water Discovery Center, talked about Camp H2O and the desire for upstate schools to participate in the program. She noted that three teachers at Margaretville Central School have applied for public education grants and the WDC applied for one as well. She also talked about a program in February that was between Roxbury Central School and Manhattan Country School that resulted in a great cultural exchange between the two groups. She mentioned the SUNY Delhi Sustainability Group was looking for student internship opportunities and encouraged anyone who would be interested in hosting a student internship to contact her. Lastly, Sally spoke of the WDC hosting a groundwater conference planned for June 7th, 2024, from 10am-2pm at the CWC. She said surface water is very important, but if you live in the watershed, you're probably drinking groundwater and some of it isn't very good so there will be a lot of scientific and academic discussions scheduled throughout the event along with a discussion panel. She thanked Patrick Palmer of the Department of Health for helping to organize the event.

Tina closed the meeting and expressed her appreciation to those who attended.

VIII. Adjournment at 2:16 pm