

New York Citizens Advisory Committee (NYCAC) on Lake Champlain's Future

**Monday April 26th, 2021
1:00 pm – 3:15 pm**

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY

Attendance: Vic Putman (Chair), Jackie Bowen, James Dawson, Laura Generous, Jane Gregware, Peter Hagar, Hannah Jacques, Steve Kramer, Rick Laurin, Walt Lender, Charlotte Staats, Fred Woodward

LCBP Staff: Katie Darr, Colleen Hickey, Eric Howe, Lauren Jenness, Erin Vennie-Vollrath, Myra Lawyer

Presenter: Peter Hagar

Meeting summary by Katie Darr, Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)

1:00 – 1:10 pm

- 1. Welcome and Introductions** – Vic Putman
- 2. Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

1:10 – 1:55 pm

- 3. Overview of the Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of New York (CWICNY)** – Pete Hagar

Pete Hagar, Clinton County Soil & Water Conservation District Manager, provided an overview of CWICNY's structure, mission, and work to support more water quality improvement initiatives on the New York side of Lake Champlain. He highlighted several Lake Champlain Basin Program-funded projects. A brief summary of his presentation is below, his presentation slides can be found in the meeting materials.

CWICNY is a 501-c-3 nonprofit conservation organization that was established in 2001 to provide a coordinated effort to improve water quality and other natural resources within New York Lake Champlain counties through the implementation of cost-effective conservation projects. CWICNY works with its member organizations and cooperating partners to achieve its objective to reduce phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain. CWICNY includes representation from the five Lake Champlain counties Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Water Quality Coordinating Committees, and the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board.

CWICNY has received many grants from LCBP and other sources including agricultural nonpoint source pollution grants from New York State. Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Town of Plattsburgh partnered to purchase a vacuum trailer to improve the county's stormwater infrastructure maintenance. Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District has used funds from the Rural Roads Active Management Program (RRAMP) and LCBP to implement stormwater, erosion, and agricultural projects, including the purchase of a no-till drill and new hydroseeders for Essex and Clinton County. Franklin County has used RRAMP funding to implement a streambank stabilization project and is currently partnering with Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District on an LCBP education and outreach grant to improve forestry practices. With

funding from LCBP, Warren County has implemented stormwater projects for phosphorus reduction, generated stormwater reports, and conducted a green infrastructure feasibility study. Washington County has 3 farms involved in the LCBP funded no-till corn planter conversion project.

- Rick Laurin asked if the RRAMP program considers salt going into ditches? Pete clarified that CWICNY focuses on phosphorus issues.
- Colleen Hickey expressed appreciation for the outreach that the Soil and Water Conservation Districts do, noting the ability of CWICNY to leverage boots on the ground projects and get information out to the public.
- Jackie Bowen asked how the real estate training program is going. Pete noted that was a one-time program conducted in partnership with Sea Grant several years ago. It was well attended, realtors received continuing education credit for attending. The training program helped realtors understand and communicate to landowners what can and cannot be done on different properties. Among other presenters, the Health Department spoke about septic system permits and the Adirondack Park Agency presented about wetlands.
- Vic Putman inquired about the annual stormwater trade show. Pete shared that for the last 15 years, CWICNY has hosted an annual stormwater trade show which includes training to help engineers and others earn continuing education credits towards stormwater planning. It is usually held in Lake George in October; this year's show might be a combination of in-person and virtual.

1:55 – 2:45 pm

4. NYCAC Membership & Governance

Vic Putman and Katie Darr led the group through a discussion about the current state of membership and guiding documents for committee membership. According to the bylaws, the NYCAC can have 14 members and 8 members constitutes a quorum. Member terms are two years with no term limits. In the future, the NYCAC will consider an amendment to the bylaws to stagger terms and extend them to three years. Current members are operating under expired terms. Broadly, the process for appointing members will require current and prospective members to submit a resume and brief cover letter that outlines their areas of expertise and why they are interested in being a member of the NYCAC; Katie will use this information to create a matrix that visualizes the diversity of experience and perspectives of prospective members; the resumes, cover letters, and matrix will be sent to NYDEC for member selection and appointment by the Commissioner.

Katie led the group through a review of the draft member manual. The group was supportive of the member manual and its intent to clarify expectations for members. Suggested changes to the document included:

- Flowchart to illustrate how the committees interact.
- Non-discrimination, DEI statement in the criteria section.
- Remove gendered language to be more inclusive.
- Language to reflect NYCAC's desire to have full geographic representation.
- Commitment to hold at least half of the meetings virtually.

Several members expressed interest in improving engagement with state and local government and suggested it would be a good idea to engage Mayor Rosenquest, the new mayor of Plattsburgh.

Members mentioned that economic development could be promoted more in LCBP management decisions and expressed interest in better representation from marina owners/operators.

2:45 – 3:15 pm

5. NYCAC Discussion “Where Do We Go from Here?” – Vic Putman, Katie Darr, and Erin Vennie-Vollrath

Reappointing members and filling vacancies on the committee remains a priority. The group discussed how to approach the recruitment of new members. Jackie Bowen suggested that everyone invite someone to attend the next meeting. Katie will send out an invitation template to use to invite prospective members to the meeting. Following the May meeting, we can begin the membership application and appointment process. Katie will develop a template for resume and cover letter submissions.

The group brainstormed potential presentation topics for upcoming meetings including:

- LCBP Education and Outreach update
- Miner Institute’s program on water drainage from farms
- Timing of manure applications
- Phosphorus pollution
- Lawn seeding
- Birds and Bees Protection Act
- Dam removal
- Lake level
- International Joint Committee update
- Clean water infrastructure needs

Erin Vennie-Vollrath provided an update on the request for an NYDEC presentation on their work on pesticide/herbicide monitoring. Until 2016, the Rotating Integrated Basin Studies (RIBS) program had been monitoring pesticide and herbicide concentrations in fish tissue samples. She has not yet found a good speaker for the topic but continues to look.

Eric Howe invited the members to attend the June Summit. The Summit provides a valuable opportunity for committee members to influence LCBP priorities and high-level management themes for the next budget cycle.

Vic suggested a joint meeting with the Quebec CAC in the Fall.

The next NYCAC will be held on May 24th from 1-3:30 pm.