



MEETING MINUTES

November 21, 2024, 4:30 PM

Westmoreland Town Offices, 100 Station Rd., Westmoreland

Present

Jamie Bechy (V. of Waterville) *
Chris Burtch (V. of Oriskany) *
Elizabeth Tantillo (V. of Clinton) *
Roger Potenski (T. of Westmoreland) *
Chuck Hebbard (T. of Westmoreland) *
Alyssa Flint (Ramboll)

Jake Voelker (NYSDOT)
Paul Hoole (FEMA)
Liseli Haines (Clinton/Kirkland Climate Smart)
Kristin Campbell (HOCCPP staff)
Jeff Rehler (HOCCPP staff)

*Authorized or alternate voting representative

Jamie Bechy opened the meeting at 4:34 pm.

Meeting Minutes

Approval of meeting minutes from September 19, 2024 and October 17, 2024 were tabled due to lack of quorum.

FEMA BRIC DTA Program

P. Hoole, Hazard Mitigation Planner from the Albany Field Office of FEMA, discussed recent FEMA activities and indicated he is being deployed to other regions of the US experiencing natural hazard impacts this winter. He will temporarily be unable to attend OCWC meetings in person. He mentioned the BRIC application has been delayed but might be available in December.

FEMA will continue to provide BRIC DTA expertise to OCWC, including capabilities of program consultants CDM Smith. They have devised a methodology to prioritize projects identified by OCWC activities and existing studies (such as the recently completed Oriskany Creek Watershed Study: Sediment & Debris Management Plan). The current goal is to create a short list of projects prioritized by OCWC Members. These projects will undergo further refinement, including a cost-benefit analysis to be conducted by CDM Smith.

A request to Members to complete a brief project prioritization task was distributed by J. Rehler. This consisted of an email invite and series of reminders. So far 3 of 8 Members have provided feedback. P. Hoole and/or J. Rehler are happy to provide guidance and/or meet with local officials as needed to help them complete the online prioritization exercise.

Treasurer's Report

The balance in the Commission's bank account as of October 31, 2024 was \$29,431.95. Approval of the Treasurer's Report was tabled due to lack of quorum.

2025 Meeting Schedule

Members decided to continue holding OCWC meetings at 4:30pm on the third Thursday of each month. The schedule will again rotate between host locations at Waterville and Westmoreland, beginning with a January meeting in Waterville. The schedule will be provided via email and posted publicly on the OCWC website. Print copies will be available at future meetings.

Member Reports

Oriskany – C. Burtch mentioned that he has been fielding requests from local officials in the Village about the activities and benefits of participating in OCWC.

Westmoreland – R. Potenski mentioned a Town and School issue requiring drainage solutions for the sports fields and surrounding areas. The issue is recurring/expanding since diversion pipes have collapsed. The Town is working to address this and preserve its assets while mitigating impacts to Dean's Creek.

Waterville – J. Bechy reported NYSDOT finalized stream work near Stewart's. The Village is exploring options for next projects including having discussions with Fish & Wildlife and Trout Unlimited about continuing work towards NYS 12. The Village is also considering creating a flood bench at the site of a new community center.

Clinton – E. Tantillo mentioned efforts to complete a lead pipe inventory.

Other Business

The December meeting of the Oriskany Creek Watershed Commission has been moved to Westmoreland Town Offices. Members who wish to bring holiday snacks to share are encouraged to do so.

Members discussed struggles to achieve quorum in recent months. Several improvements were suggested to spur active participation. The suggestions focused on enhancing communications to Members and getting alternates appointed to attend meetings. Members discussed how active meeting participation by Voting Representatives of Member Municipalities is critical to the success of OCWC. Without quorum, OCWC cannot vote on important matters, pay invoices, approve treasurer's reports, approve meeting minutes, or take on initiatives to improve the watershed. A goal of ensuring at least one voting Member from each municipality can attend meetings was shared by those in attendance. Members discussed possibilities of hosting a speaker series and writing letters to municipalities that are not participating.

K. Campbell mentioned resiliency implementation funding expected to be announced soon as part of the BOND ACT and discussed the Oneida County Flood Mitigation program.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held December 19, 2024 at the Westmoreland Town Offices at 4:30 pm.
The meeting adjourned at 5:28 pm.