

**ONEONTA, NEW YORK - FEBRUARY 8, 2012 - 7:00 P.M.**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD PG. 1**

**PRESENT:** Chair David Hutchison  
Commissioner Dan Rorick  
Commissioner Richard Denicore  
Commissioner Dale Burrington  
Commissioner George Palladino  
Commissioner Lucille Wiggin  
Council Member Larry Malone  
**ABSENT:** Commissioner Tracy Allen

[Due to a tape malfunction the meeting did not record. Chair Hutchison submitted a written summary of the meeting as follows:]

Chair Hutchison called the regular meeting to order and called the roll.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Without benefit of a motion, the board approved the minutes of the regular meeting held January 11, 2012

**ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE YEAR 2012**

Without benefit of a motion the board selected Chair Hutchison to continue as Chair of the board for the year 2012.

**PETITIONERS (limited to comment)**

The Chair indicated there were no petitioners who wanted to be recognized for comments and that Mr. Jonathan Gell would discuss his comments under Old Business.

**CORRESPONDENSE**

The Chair indicated there was no correspondence.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Creek Program [Allen-spring -odd years only]**

The Chair indicated there was no report.

**Tree Program /Tree Lottery Report included) [Hutchison]**

Chair Hutchison reported that Mayor Miller, City Attorney Merzig, Senior Engineering Technician Hawver, Commissioners Palladino and Denicore and he had met to discuss the tree planting program. There will not be a lottery. The Mayor and the City Attorney agreed that trees can be planted on private property with the agreement of the property owner, consequently, this will allow the Environmental Board to plant on private property (with owners written approval) as well as on City property.

Chair Hutchison indicated trees would be planted with approximately a 2" diameter (caliper) using the "ball and burlap" method. These will be planted professionally. Approximately 24 trees would be planted in both the Spring and Fall of 2012 and hopefully for the next three years. The Mayor asked the Environmental Board to be the final arbitrator on where the trees are planted keeping in mind "Dig NY" restrictions, and sight line visibility for auto and pedestrian traffic. Request For Proposals for purchasing and planting the trees will be sent out soon. Using the SWAT Team report from Cornell, Commissioner Denicore and he have been selecting what appear to be appropriate sites for planting trees.

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**(Tree Program /Tree Lottery Report included)** continued

Chair Hutchison stated the City Clerk had sent out letters to property owners seeking their interest in having a tree(s) planted on their property.

**Watershed Protection District [Hutchison]**

Chair Hutchison reported that Paul Neske, Code Enforcement Officer for the Town of Oneonta has completed a report and is waiting for detailed maps showing the City of Oneonta Watershed and maps showing the location of water wells in the Town of Oneonta. He hopes these maps will be forthcoming in the next few weeks and will become part of his report which will be presented to the Town Board for its review. It will be presented to town residents at an informational meeting, then in two weeks be presented to the town residents in a final form and ultimately to the Town Board for its approval. This will then serve as a legal document and guideline for any construction or any land use which might pose potential harmful activity in the City of Oneonta Watershed. The document will also apply to areas in the town not in the city watershed.

Chair Hutchison stated the city has no legal standing in these regulations, as the city watershed is in the Town of Oneonta. But the town has been cooperating in this and should be complemented for any action they might take to protect the city watershed.

**Sustainability Working Group [Allen]**

The Chair indicated there was no report.

**UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS**

**Agenda Format**

After a brief discussion on the new agenda format the board indicated it liked the new format and should continue with it.

**Treelawns and curbs**

Mr. Jonathan Gell, Oneonta, suggested that when the City Engineering Department plans new streets and curbing that they consider making the treelawn (or median) between the curb and sidewalk wide enough to accommodate sizable tree planting in the future. He said he will discuss this with Council members.

Council Member Malone said he will do the same.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Inquiries about disposal of green waste and kitchen waste into mulch compost from SUCO, Hartwick, Fox, etc**

Commissioner Rorick offered to get information about this from a friend who studied this.

**Contract for solar electric leases**

Chair Hutchison indicated other committees in the City and the Mayor are working on this.

**New Items**

Commissioner Rorick suggested we consider planting a few trees and perhaps try to get gratis one or two picnic tables for the green space along Chestnut Street (sort of across from the shoe repair shop).

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**(New Business)** continued

This part of Chestnut Street is sometimes referred to as "The China Wall." He also suggested that perhaps the fence could be moved back a few feet to make more room in the green space.

The commission had some concern that the high volume of traffic makes this a rather undesirable spot for relaxation and certainly not a good place to encourage children to play. No action was taken but Chair Hutchison said perhaps it would be a good place to plant 2 or 3 trees, however, if this area was back filled years ago to make room to widen Chestnut Street this might be a concern.

Commissioner Rorick gave an interesting presentation to the Board about the use and growing of industrial hemp. He noted it is currently illegal by state and federal law to grow any hemp.

Several board members agreed that these laws should be reviewed as there are many good uses of hemp such as use as a fiber and as an energy fuel.

Commissioner Rorick pointed out that there is a very, small amount of the hallucinogen THC in hemp. Apparently the fact that it is difficult to distinguish between industrial hemp (especially from aircraft) and marijuana is one of the reasons it is illegal. Interested persons can get a fact sheet titled "Hemp Facts" from Commissioner Rorick.

**ENDURING ISSUES OF THE RECENT PAST:**

Southside corridor  
Industrial noise  
Delaware Recycling Program  
Rose Avenue Brownfield Study  
Gas drilling in city  
Manufactured Gas Plant remediation

Chair Hutchison stated he would look up information about Industrial Noise.

The board expressed interest in looking at the Delaware Recycling Program.

Chair Hutchison stated there was no new information about the Rose Avenue Brownfield Study.

Chair Hutchison stated the other items not discussed should remain in this section of the agenda.

There being no further business to come before the board, Chair Hutchison adjourned the regular meeting at approximately 8:20 p.m.

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JAMES R. KOURY, City Clerk

JRK/pab