

WQCC Virtual Meeting Notes for September 5, 2024

DRAFT

Attendance: John Abbatangelo, Elizabeth Aranguiz, Tolly Beck, Adam Bradford, Matt Ceplo (Chair WQCC), James Elling, Ron Farr, Michael Kezner, Michelle Kleinman, Jesse Lanna, Nicole Laible, Marisa Marrone, Bob Milone, Beth Roessler, Brianna Rosamilia (RCDER), Laurie Seeman, Margie Turrin, Larry Vail, Jen Zunino-Smith (CCE,Speaker)

1.Call to Order: Matt Ceplo, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

2. Speaker: Matt introduced the speaker, Jennifer Zunino-Smith an Environmental Resource Educator from Rockland CCE, who presented a program on the impacts of phosphorous in fertilizers on water quality in Rockland County.

Program Summary:

Phosphorous is the leading cause of water pollution from stormwater runoff. Phosphorous is present in pet waste, droppings from geese, fertilizers, detergents and waste water.

Phosphorous helps to feed the algae in water just as it promotes growth in grass when it is applied as a fertilizer. As algae dies it produces bacteria that eats up oxygen. The absence of oxygen in the water causes the death of fish and aquatic life.

To prevent phosphorous from being used in fertilizers a NYS and a Rockland County Fertilizer Act was passed. Rockland's law is a bit more stringent and states that no fertilizer can be sold in Rockland unless the middle number in the fertilizer analysis (representing phosphorous) is zero. There are exceptions for shrub fertilizer and other specifics. Phosphorous cannot be used if a soil test indicates phosphorus already exists in the soil. This makes it difficult to regulate and enforce this law.

A waterwise initiative has been launched to "If you see something, say something" applying to witnessing someone dumping something down a storm drain. Wash cars on the grass rather than on the driveway. Municipalities must use a wash pad when washing municipal trucks not on concrete where water and grease go to a storm drain. Do not flush wipes down a toilet which causes sanitary overflow when it rains heavily and causes nutrients to get into the water.

The program was followed by an active question and answer period where other suggestions were made such as to getting young people involved in environmental science and volunteering to place storm water markers on storm drains.

3. Treasurers Report: Matt reported that the WQCC balance is the same at \$1,144.23.

4. Old Business: Brianna reported that there was no quorum today, so business could not be voted on. Matt said we will try at the next meeting to get a vote on updated voting members.

5. New Business: Matt announced that Nicole Laible has been appointed as the new Rockland County Water Task Force Coordinator.

Marissa Marrone from Keep Rockland Beautiful announced that KRB will be continuing their fall cleanup with an emphasis on waterways on September 21 and September 29. Jennifer said a link to a brochure about wipes is available at rocklandcce.org.

6. Next Meeting: Matt announced that the next virtual meeting will be held on a Wednesday, October 23. The topic will be Pollinator Pathway Gardens.

7. Adjournment: Matt adjourned the meeting at 11:40 am.

Submitted by Tolly Beck.