

# Orange County Commission for the Environment

## Meeting Summary March 14, 2022; 7:30 pm *Virtual Zoom Meeting*

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**Present:** Kim Piracci, Kim Livingston, Frank Binkowski, Bill Ward, Kristie Mather, Carrie Fletcher, Veronica Penn Beattie, Jessie Birckhead, Jane Harris, Elizabeth McWhorter

**Absent:** Jaya Nair (excused)

**Staff:** Wesley Poole, Chris Hirni, Amy Eckberg, Kalani Allen

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**I. Call to Order**

Kim Piracci called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

**II. Additions or Changes to Agenda**

None.

**III. Approval of DRAFT Meeting Summaries – January 10<sup>th</sup> & February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

Motion by Frank Binkowski; seconded by Kristie Mather; all in favor; none opposed; motion passed.

**IV. New Member and New Sustainability Project Manager Introductions**

There are currently (4) vacancies on the CFE and the Chair has made a recommendation to the BOCC to appoint (2) new members. They will not be voted on by the BOCC until the April 5<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting, so the new members will not be introduced until the next meeting, assuming they are voted in. Chris Hirni then introduced Amy Eckberg, the new Sustainability Project Manager and replacement for Brennan Bouma. She informed the CFE of her background, interests, and how she ended up in Orange County.

**V. CFE Officer Nominations and Elections – Action Item**

The Vice Chair position within the CFE was currently open, following the recent departure by Eric Scheier. Kristie Mather nominated Veronica Penn Beattie and she accepted. Frank Binkowski seconded the nomination. Vote for Veronica Penn Beattie as Vice Chair; all in favor; none opposed; Veronica Penn Beattie shall serve as Vice Chair of CFE for the remainder of 2022.

**VI. OWASA Long-Range Water Supply Planning Update**

OWASA staff, Mary Tiger and Ruth Rouse, presented materials regarding OWASA's Long-Range Water Supply Plan update. OWASA is committed to providing high quality drinking water to the community, and the planning, permitting, and partnerships required for new supply development can take decades to develop and secure. This is why they are planning for the community's water needs two generations ahead. After completing a

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methodical, inclusive analysis of alternatives, the OWASA Board of Directors has determined that augmenting local water supplies (Cane Creek Reservoir, University Lake, and the Quarry Reservoir) with treated Jordan Lake water is the most viable alternative for providing resilient, high quality, and cost-effective drinking water for years to come. They considered other alternatives, but they did not perform as well against a multi-factor suite of guiding principles that considered drinking water quality, the ability to improve the resilience and reliability of the water supply, cost, environmental impacts, and social impacts. There is a Partnership of local water utilities that are moving forward to design and build a new intake and water treatment plant on the western side of Jordan Lake and OWASA currently faces a near-term decision on if and how they want to engage with them to access their allocation of water in Jordan Lake. Following an informative presentation, OWASA staff answered questions from CFE members. Concern over treatment of emerging contaminants recently found in Jordan Lake was present and OWASA staff reassured that the water treatment plant would be state of the art and specifically designed for these specific contaminants.

### **VII. Committee Breakouts**

The CFE broke out into committee assignments to discuss goals / projects for the year.

### **VIII. Updates and Information Items**

- Chris Hirni informed the CFE that due to Orange County lifting the emergency declaration in response to COVID, April would be the last meeting that the CFE could hold virtually. Concern present by a few members over whether or not they could attend the in-person meetings virtually and Chris Hirni stated that the new DEAPR facility should have zoom room capabilities by May. Kim Piracci stated that they could talk more about it at the next meeting.
- Kim Piracci informed CFE members that the April CFE meeting would be dedicated to Earth Day discussion and planning, so be thinking about it. Kim Piracci asked how many tables would be available and Wesley Poole verified that the CFE could have more than one table but may need to bring the extra tables with them. Kim Livingston stated that the Eno River Association had plenty tables available for use.

### **IX. Adjournment**

Veronica Penn Beattie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 pm; seconded by Kristie Mather; all in favor: none opposed; motion passed.