

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**JOINT MEETING OF THE STORMWATER COMMISSION AND**  
**THE PUBLIC WAYS COMMITTEE**  
**Wadsworth City Council**  
**May 11, 2016, 5:30 P.M.**  
**City Council Chambers**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dave Williams, presiding  
Bruce Darlington, Patty Haskins,

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Park, Tom Stugmyer, Jim Sickels,  
Chris Randles, and Ward 1 Council  
Member Ralph Copley

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** *None*

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Public Service Director Robert Patrick,  
Asst. Public Service Director Harry Stark,  
City Engineer Tom Tucker  
Engineering Josh Wolf, Larry Jenkins

**OTHERS PRESENT:** *None*

**PRESS REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** *None*

**Mr. Williams** called the **May 11, 2016** joint meeting of the Public Ways Committee and the Stormwater Commission to order at 5:30 p.m.

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. Darlington** made a motion to approve the minutes of the **April 19, 2016** meeting as presented. **Ms. Haskins** seconded. All were in favor. **MINUTES APPROVED.**

**II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

*None*

**III. Stormwater Utility**

**A. Orchard Creek Study Presentation**

**Mr. Wolf** thought they were all aware of the study going on over the last six to eight months and a presentation online. Some had the opportunity to look at it and respond, while others had not had the opportunity to see it. He would go over some of the results of the questionnaire that was part of that study and then go through the presentation quickly for those who had not seen it. After that, they would adjourn and break into three groups for property owners who might have questions, with members of Ways, Stormwater, or the Commission to address those.

Nineteen questionnaires were sent out and ten were returned. In answer to a question, three of the ten respondents had been there less than ten years; four owned the property between 10-20 years; three people had been there more than 21 years. Another question regarded flood insurance. Only one of the ten had it. It was not considered a flood zone, Mr. Wolf said. He would cover that later. The property owners were asked if they were aware of flooding in the area when they purchased the property. Only one was aware of it.

They were asked if, after watching the February presentation of flooding in the area, they had a better understanding of the flooding in the area. Three said yes. Two said no. Five hadn't watched it. Property owners were asked which of the suggested options they felt would address the flooding and water through storm sewers. Many people chose multiple options. Larger storm sewers and stream restoration had nine votes. Eliminating homes in the flood prone area had seven votes. No one did not have an opinion or wanted to leave the area alone.

The area between Simcox and Euclid was the main area studied, and also some areas on the south side of Franks. The purpose of the meeting was to look at the next step for Orchard Stream. They did culverts south of the area. Obviously, the area had flooded for many years. They used modeling software to cover the area. It was probably the most persistent flooding areas of the City. Property damage typically only occurred in the flash flood events. The study provided different ways to alleviate the situation. Mr. Wolf showed some maps of the area.

The watershed, Mr. Wolf said, hadn't really changed since the 1970s. The study began when they replaced the existing culverts, as had been done on College Street and Baldwin. That was not going to solve the problem there. It would eliminate the flooding on the roadway, but not on the rear lots. A misconception that was often brought up was that the City owned the stream. The City did not own the stream. The stream was private property. Neither did the City control the storm sewers outside the public right of way, without recorded easements. To his knowledge, there was just one recorded easement, in the area between Simcox and Tolbert. Other than that, the City didn't control any of those pipes other than what was in the public right of way.

Another line of thinking was about the new developments to the north, such as Walmart, Home Depot and those areas. They did not contribute to that Orchard stream area. That all stayed north of the interstate, going down to Holmesbrook Park. The flooding in the area was not more common than it was before. There were records showing flooding back into the 1960s and 1970s. There were, however, some larger storms in recent years. There was no evidence of flooding being more common.

Mr. Wolf knew some of them had lived there at the time of the 2007 storm. There was a large impact. It was one of the bigger storms in the last 50 years in Wadsworth. There was a big storm in July of 1969 and some others in the 1980s and 1990s. For a period of roughly 15 years, there were no big storms. A lot of properties changed hands in that time. That would explain why a lot of them didn't know of the flooding situation.

Mr. Wolf continued through a brief explanation of the study and conclusions they reached. Properties were advised to purchase flood insurance. A lot of people thought they needed to be in a flood zone to purchase flood insurance and they were not, but they were eligible for FEMA flood insurance even if they were not in a FEMA floodplain. A flyer on that was sent out with the questionnaire. There was an opportunity for the City to submit its study to FEMA and have that area designated as a flood zone. Representatives at another meeting said that if the engineers of FEMA accepted the study, they could do that, but Mr. Wolf said they weren't sure they wanted to declare Wadsworth a flood zone. It was something that could be done, but at that point, property owners would be forced to have flood insurance.

Also, grant petitions could be submitted on the short-term. As a body, the City would have to select an alternative to base their grant applications on, and that was part of the purpose for that meeting – to get some short-term feedback from all of them. That would help if they had any specific questions that could be answered at the meeting.

FEMA/ODNR had a flier with a number to call if someone did want to get flood insurance, and Mr. Wolf could explain everything to them, too. Many insurance agents said they could not insure them if they were not in a flood zone, but that was not true.

Long-term, the City could consider the use of more public funds or could choose to leave it alone, because the area had been in its current state since the 1970s. It was a costly endeavor, so it would take time to find the money. Or, the City could proceed as they had with College Street and Baldwin, and just keep moving up the hill replacing the culverts to reduce some of the road flooding there. It would help in some situations, but would not alleviate the flooding and that was not necessarily the way they desired to go.

Their presentation was to notify residents of flood insurance availability, to notify them of the study that had been performed and to hold public meetings. Mr. Wolf had just given the quick results. After the meeting, when they broke into groups, they could get into more specific information. Public Ways, Storm Water Commission, Administration, and Engineering would all get together, and at some point, they would have to choose a direction to go. When that happened, that information would be relayed to everyone.

They would then move into grant applications and funding sources, and, if the need were there, they would look at other alternatives. Mr. Williams announced that they would break into smaller groups with residents, staff, Public Ways and Stormwater Commission members. They split the groups by streets.

**Joint Meeting Adjourned at approximately 5:50 p.m. as the group broke into small groups (no motion).**

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Chairperson

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Date approved