

Warren County Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. 381 OF 2019

RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY SUPERVISORS BRAYMER, SIMPSON, STROUGH, DICKINSON, McDEVITT, MERLINO, LOEB, HOGAN AND HYDE

AUTHORIZING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO ESTABLISH A CLEAN LAKES COLLABORATION DEDICATED TO PROTECTING NEW YORK STATE'S MOST VITAL AND THREATENED ASSET

RESOLUTION TABLED

WHEREAS, the unparalleled array of fresh water lakes and watersheds of New York State constitute the State's most valuable asset for drinking water, recreation, tourism, agriculture, flood control, fishing and community health, as well as essential habitat for plant and animal life, and

WHEREAS, the enormous economic value of fresh waters in the State only appreciates as the needs for and pressures on these resources increase, and

WHEREAS, growing scientific documentation presents incontrovertible evidence of mounting threats and impacts on the State's fresh water lakes and watersheds, and

WHEREAS, sources of these threats and impacts commonly include inadequate wastewater and stormwater controls, introduction and spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, excessive use of road salt and climate change, and

WHEREAS, these sources are contributing to measurable declines in the quality of New York's fresh water resources and their natural resilience to change, and

WHEREAS, such declines in water quality are evidenced by the escalating number and frequency of fresh water lakes, including public drinking water supplies, experiencing Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) with substantial economic, environmental, public health and community costs, and

WHEREAS, successful programs for stopping and reversing water quality declines are being developed and implemented across the State, and

WHEREAS, the effectiveness of programs to stem the decline of fresh waters has been shown to be substantially strengthened through their application by watershed rather than political boundaries, and

WHEREAS, natural watersheds encompass comprehensive inputs to and influences on a waterbody, including streams and seepages, stormwater runoff, leaching from municipal and onsite wastewater treatment, weather and more, and

WHEREAS, the value of accelerating coordinated understanding of effective programs for reducing water quality declines can ensure their growing application statewide, and

WHEREAS, across sectors and regions of New York State there is growing interest in and support for active collaboration, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the parties representing diverse sectors and regions of New York State are establishing the Clean Lakes Collaboration to advocate for protection and/or restoration of their waters, and be it further

RESOLVED, that this new collaboration is dedicated to solving the problems threatening water quality with particular emphasis on improving wastewater and stormwater controls, stopping the introduction and spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, reducing the use of excessive road salt, and thus increasing resilience to climate change, and be it further

RESOLVED, that effective solutions to identified problems threatening water quality will be generated by coordinated exchange of information and initiatives among and beyond the waters represented in the memorandum of understanding, and be it further

RESOLVED, that development and implementation of solutions will be guided by best available science, technology and analytics as being applied at and beyond the waters represented in the memorandum of understanding, and be it further

RESOLVED, that natural watershed boundaries will frame the execution of measures to be

implemented to ensure maximum effectiveness in protecting and/or restoring waters of the Clean Lakes Collaboration, and be it further

RESOLVED, that adoption of a Watershed Protection District will serve as a funding district for the express purpose of accessing State funds and resources dedicated to supporting implementation of measures to solve specified water quality problems, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clean Lakes Collaboration will work with appropriate State agencies and officials to develop the standards and criteria by which Watershed Protection Districts will be formed and funding will be granted, and be it further

RESOLVED, that implementation of funded measures will be monitored by best available technologies and practices to assess their effectiveness in reducing sources of water quality declines, and be it further

RESOLVED, that requisite to accessing State funding, a Watershed Protection District will commit to financial participation, the percentage of which will be determined by a watershed's funding capacity based on a range of financial metrics (to be determined), and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a memorandum of understanding to establish a Clean Lakes Collaboration dedicated to protecting New York State's most vital and threatened asset, in a form approved by the County Attorney.