

Long Range Planning Committee Plots NYRWA's Future

by Doug Smorol,
Circuit Rider II



On January 15, 2008, the New York Rural Water Association Long Range Planning Committee met at the offices of Koester Associates to begin the process of laying the foundation for the NYRWA Long Range Plan. The NYRWA Long Range Plan is, as always, a complex set of guidelines that the NYRWA Board of Directors will adopt and our staff will implement to meet the future needs of this association. Present at the committee meeting were the following individuals whom make up a diverse cross-section of our membership and staff:

John O'Connell – Chairman and National Director for NYRWA, also representing our Associate Members, the Town of Throop, and Shady Brook Estates
Pat Scalera – CEO, NYRWA
Mike Simon – Wayne County Water & Sewer Authority
Doug Smorol – Circuit Rider, NYRWA
Steve Giarrusso – Village of Minoa
Jamie Herman – Trainer, NYRWA
Robert June – Village of Cornwall
Steve Grimm – Wastewater Technician, NYRWA

Absent were:

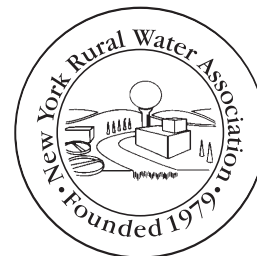
Tim Shudt – Asst. Director, NYRWA
Barry Walters – Village of Cato
Morris Coolidge – State Circuit Rider, NYRWA

This meeting, and subsequent meetings, will be held to discuss the needs and focus of NYRWA now and in the future. Over the past few years, it has become apparent that the NYRWA may not always have access to the State and Federal funding that makes our successful programs available to our membership. In the event that one, or all, of these funding opportunities were lost, would the NYRWA be able to operate as it does today? What programs, if any, could we afford to continue? These were just a couple of the tough questions that were put on the table for discussion. It was encouraging to be present as a committee member to hear the variety of comments and ideas discussed by such a diverse group. It quickly became apparent that some, if not all, of the communities present would be willing to pay for several of the services we now offer at no cost, although there are many systems across our state that struggle with their existing budgets and will

continue to rely on our free services to meet the needs of their communities to comply with the regulations on water and wastewater services.

Another topic that spawned a good deal of discussion was the need for our staff to specifically engage members of your community's local government. Whether it be Mayors, Supervisors, Board Members, and/or Clerks. There is a need to include this group in our activities, training, and conferences. This will hopefully press home the value of the New York Rural Water Association and the ideals and issues that we as utilities need to address.

The January 15th meeting was only the first of several planned meetings of the Long Range Planning Committee. I am looking to our membership (YOU GUYS!) to help us by contacting either a committee member you know or any of our staff as soon as possible with your ideas and comments. Feel free to tell us what your needs are and what services you feel will be needed in the future. The NYRWA has been a great resource for New York State's rural communities for almost 30 years. By supporting the efforts of this committee, you may be instrumental in keeping the NYRWA viable for the future. You can contact me with your ideas and comments via e-mail Smorol@nyruralwater.org or leave a message at 888-697-8725 ext.11. ♠



Mark Your Calendar!!!

**NYRWA Annual
Technical Conference**

May 19-22, 2008

**Hudson Valley Resort
Kerhonkson, NY**