



Onondaga County Legislature

HASSINA K. ADAMS
Clerk

NICOLE WATTS
Chairwoman

SPENCER BERG
Deputy Clerk

MICHAEL CUSANO – CHAIRMAN **MEETING MINUTES OF THE** **FISHERIES ADVISORY BOARD – MAY 28, 2026**

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING: Michael Cusano, Les Monostory, William ‘Tim’ Brooks, Ken Crane, Eric Stanczyk,

ABSENT: Brian Kelley, Jason Howard,

GUESTS: Gary Lopez

Chairman Michael Cusano called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM

Old Business:

Cusano went over the minutes from our previous meeting on April 16, 2026. Motion to accept the April, 2026 minutes. by Eric, seconded by Les, and passed. Mike said that he will contact our County Clerk to find out if our Fisheries Advisory Board minutes are going out regularly to the County legislators.

New Business:

Carpenter’s Brook Fish Hatchery

Eric said that there will be a fishing program conducted at Carpenter’s Brook on June 6 in partnership with NYSDEC. The former Time Out to Fish program has been replaced by a Weekday Summer Fishing program, open from May 27 to July 10, from 9-11:30 AM at a cost of \$5 per person. Advanced registration is required. This program is sold out for 2026.

Trout stocking has been completed for this season with assistance in May from Trout Unlimited and Nine Mile Creek Conservation Council members.

New Fisheries Advisory Board Member

New FAB member William ‘Tim,’ Brooks was introduced and provided information on his experience and interest in fisheries both past and present. Mike explained to Tim that important issues for our Fisheries Advisory Board members include fishing access, learn to fish programs, and serving as advisers on fisheries related issues to the County legislators.

County Parks operations

Gary Lopez said that the Oneida Shores beach will be open for Memorial Day. Work on the Onondaga Lake Marina renovation was delayed due to high waters, but the project is moving ahead with dredging operations to begin by Monday. There is a temporary hold on installation of the SW shore deep water fishing dock due to potential conflict with access for NYS Canal traffic to the Inner Harbor.

Cormorant Management

Mike brought up a bill introduced in Congress for development of a nationwide Cormorant Management program. Cormorant populations have grown substantially across the nation in recent decades and pose a potential hazard to game fish populations in lakes and water bodies across New York and many other states.

Based on his personal observations in Oneida Lake, Mike Cusano said that large flocks of cormorants still inhabit the lake’s surface waters.

Since a federal ruling in 2016, DEC’s Division of Fish and Wildlife can no longer manage cormorants to protect

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sport fish, but can initiate limited actions to protect rare birds (such as common terns) and their habitat. A spring and fall hazing program has been carried out on Oneida Lake.

Cormorants are protected under migratory bird regulations overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In 2020, the Fish & Wildlife Service proposed to establish a new permit for State and federally recognized tribal agencies for the management of double-crested cormorants. The new bill in Congress invites states to join in a nationwide Cormorant Management program. Whether New York State will participate is uncertain at this time.

Impact of NYSDEC's recently adopted Trout Management Plan

DEC's new Statewide Trout Management Plan, whereby anglers may need permission from riparian streamside landowners in order to access trout streams, has resulted in a decline in available 'open' waters for trout anglers, according to Ken Crane, a Trout Unlimited member.

Updated NYS Department of Health fish consumption advisories

In April, the NYS Department of Health issued updated and more protective advisories for the consumption of fish caught in waterbodies statewide. The new Statewide Advice applies to most New York State fresh waters and has changed from eating up to four meals a month of any fish to different advice for each fish species. Anglers can check for waterbody-specific advice at www.health.ny.gov/fish. Overall, anglers are advised to eat less freshwater drum, white perch, larger walleye, and smallmouth bass.

Adjournment

The FAB meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM. Next FAB meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 16, 2026 at 5:30 PM at the Onondaga County Parks office in Liverpool. Minutes by Les Monostory, July 3, 2026.