



New York Chapter, Western Branch American Public Works Association

WEBSITE: <http://www.nyapwa.com>

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LaBella Associates

Daniel Seider, P.E.
Erie County Water Authority

Chelsea Spahr, P.E.
City of North Tonawanda

STATE DELAGATES

Deborah Izatt
GPI

Ken Kostowniak
Town of Orchard Park

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING – MINUTES

May 6, 2026, 3:30 PM
The Grill at the Dome, 175 Brompton Rd, Tonawanda

ROLL CALL:

- A. Present – Cati Knab, John Story, Jennifer Michniewicz, Taylor Brown, Jason LaMonaco, Garret Meal, Joe Nemmer, Jill Sawyer, Chelsea Spahr, and Ken Kostowniak
- B. Absent – Dave Britton, Karen Hoak, Dan Seider, and Deb Izatt

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

- A. Approval of Agenda
 1. Motion to approve agenda made by Chelsea, seconded by Garret, unanimously approved by the Board.
- B. Approval of April 9, 2026 Minutes
 1. Minutes modified to correct spelling error in Ken's last name.
 2. Motion to approve minutes made by Taylor, seconded by Joe, unanimously approved by the Board.
 3. Review of Action Items – the following items remain **outstanding**:
 - a. COMMITTEE REPORTS, membership/Email/Public Relations, Branch Bugle – **Jill** to issue next edition of the Branch Bugle after BIBO and before golf. Topics include:
 - April meeting recap – photos and write up from **Joe**
 - ECC meeting recap – photos and write up from **Jason**
 - Scholarship recipients – write up from **Jason**
 - BIBO recap – photos (including presentation of scholarships) and write up from **Taylor**
 - Save the date for Golf Tournament – writeup from **Jill**
 - DPW spotlight – writeups to be prepared and sent to Jill to draw from as needed from:
 - **Taylor** – Bufalo Sewer Authority
 - **Joe** – Mark Burr from Cattaraugus Co
 - **Ken** – Orchard Park
 - **Jason** – City of Tonawanda (to be done at a later date since Jason is already slated to do two writeups for the next Bugle)
 - b. COMMITTEE REPORTS, LinkedIn/Social Media/Branch Webpage, **Cati** to send email to membership with 2026-2027 Western Branch Roster thanking those who voted
 - c. OLB BUSINESS, Western Branch Logo – **Jennifer** to update letterhead, etc. with new Branch logo.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- A. \$3,000 was transferred from the Vanguard account to cover college scholarships. The Board had approved \$3,500, but this was done after the initial amount had already been transferred. John said that Vanguard is now charging \$25 per transaction, so he decided not to transfer the additional \$500 unless it was necessary. Checks to the scholarship recipients will be issued after BIBO.
- B. The deposit for the BIBO tent rental is due April 13. Other BIBO payments are also due soon. To help offset costs, Jill will do a 50/50 raffle at BIBO for the scholarship fund.
- C. The Branch owes the State money for the 2026 conference attendee scholarships.
- D. The Branch will eventually get a portion of the Southern Tier's fund balance due to their dissolution, as well as the \$15/member refund from the State.
- E. Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report made by Chelsea, seconded by Jill, unanimously approved by the Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (Refer to Committee List at the end of these minutes):

- A. Audit – No Report.
- B. Awards – No Report.
- C. Student Liaison – The “Day in the Life of an Inspector” presentation to the ECC Student Chapter by Chris Freese from Nussbaumer & Clarke won't happen this year due to a scheduling issue.
- D. Membership/Email/Public Relations
 1. Member list – No recent changes.
 2. APWA Western Branch Bugle (Newsletter) – Refer to outstanding Action Items above.
 3. LinkedIn/Social Media/Branch Webpage – Cati and Deb are continuing to coordinate.
- E. Nominating – No Report.
- F. Scholarship
 1. Scholarship Committee recipient recommendations sent to Board by email. Board agreed with the Committee.
 2. John will mail out letters to the scholarship recipients with a flyer for BIBO this week. Recipients will be formally presented with their award at BIBO. The checks will follow at a later time, once John is confident there are sufficient funds to do so.
- G. State & National
 1. 2027 Conference will be in the Rochester area. The RIT Conference Center is a possible venue. Jill is staying at the Strath Allen next week and Jill will look into that as a possible venue as well.
 2. The Conference continues to be a lot of work. Dave continuing to work with Jolie on how she can mentor someone (or several someones) to help.
 3. Jacob Bower from LaBella, recipient of an Individual Award at this year's Branch and Chapter Award Ceremonies, is being sent to PWX by the Chapter.
- H. Young Professionals
 1. Taylor is continuing to work on a YP development training classes with a happy hour to follow. It is hoped that if there is a YP event that is more than just a social activity, there will be more of an appetite for YPs to attend as well as their supervisors to approve their attendance. The classes would be monthly presentations on a series of topics. Jill will send Taylor a sample syllabus. Jill said the training could be held at LaBella's Buffalo office.
- I. Golf – The Board would like to have an APWA team. At a cost of \$500, John will see if we have enough money to fund the team after the receipts for BIBO have been tallied.
- J. BIBO

1. Taylor said that they are still underwater by about \$600, but she expects more attendees and late registrants.
2. The Board brainstormed on ways to boost attendance, and LinkedIn posts seemed to be a good option. Cati and Taylor will coordinate on posts with Taylor providing content for Cati to post.

OLD BUSINESS: None

MEMBERSHIP MEETING SCHEDULE:

- A. NFTA Retaining Wall – McMahan and Mann (MMCE) will be presenting on the topic of the meeting, which will be held at the Construction Exchange (ConEx) in Kenmore. Cati gave a shoutout to Jill for suggesting the venue. MMCE will pick up the cost for renting the space. Lunch will be provided by the catering company ConEx typically uses at a cost of around \$16 per person.
- B. Twin Cites Memorial Highway Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) Study
 - a. Chelsea to continue to coordinate with C&S on a presentation for the meeting, including if it would be at lunchtime or in the afternoon. Cati noted that an afternoon meeting would work better for the Branch financially.
 - b. The Carousel Museum is a suggested venue. Garret recently went to a meeting there and said it was spacious and a good location. He was unsure if the museum had audio-visual equipment, or if we will need to bring our own. C&S's downtown Buffalo office was dismissed since it is too far away from the location of the project being discussed. The Carnegie Museum in North Tonawanda was also discussed, but it was unclear if food would be allowed. Chelsea to research the location.
- C. Refer to table on next page

NEW BUSINESS: None

NEXT MEETING:

- A. Board to have a non-business meeting during the summer. Karen to organize a Tiki Bar cruise, or similar event.
- B. Next Board business meeting will be in early-to-mid September.

ADJOURN: Motion to adjourn made by Garret, seconded by Jason.

Date & Time	Venue	Event	Organizer	Comments
May 21, 2026	Beaver Island	Beaver Island Breakout (BIBO)	Taylor Brown	
June 3, 2026, lunchtime	Construction Exchange, Kenmore	NFTA Retaining Wall	Cati Knab	McMahon & Mann to present
August 4, 2026	Chestnut Hill 1330 Broadway, Darien Ctr	BEAM/APWA Golf Tournament	Jill Sawyer/Dave Britton	
September 2026	TBD / possibly Carrousel Museum	Twin Cities / PEL	Chelsea Spahr	C&S to present
Early fall 2026	Niagara Falls Park Pavilion	Niagara Falls State Park Welcome Center	Jill Sawyer/Dave Britton	Event to include a cookout
Early fall 2026	North Tonawanda Trails	Bike Tour	Taylor Brown/Chelsea Spahr	Could be made to be PDH eligible
TBD	TBD	Presentation(s) from past Branch/State Award winners	Dan Seider	
TBD	TBD	Other presentations/tours of DL&W projects	TBD	November 2025 tour went over 5 projects at the terminal in various stages that could be future events