



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

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Approved

MEETING MINUTES

March 16, 2011 7:00 PM

Room 226, County Courthouse, 48 Court Street

Canton, New York

Action items in bold italics

1. **Call to Order:** David Katz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.
2. **Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was present.
Members present included: T. Cutter, B. Flavin, G. Hart, R. Horst, D. Katz, D. O'Shea, J. Rosales, L. Rudiger, P. Skomsky, Scott Sutherland.
Members absent included: D. Doe, A. Heidenreich, D. Howard, G. Johnson, A. Soutar, B. Zimmerman.
Staff: J. Montan, J. Tenbusch. Guests: None. Press: None.

All present introduced themselves. Scott Sutherland is the new BOL representative on the EMC.

3. **Hearings, Comments from the Public:** D. Katz introduced Jon Montan, Planner III, who wrote the draft St. Lawrence County Climate Action Plan (available at <http://www.co.st-lawrence.ny.us/data/files/departments/Planning/SLC-Draft-Climate-Action-Plan.pdf>). Montan reported that, at the request of the County Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Legislators authorized the development of a climate action plan (Resolution 111-2009). The BOL directed the County Planning Office to develop this Plan; CPO used a methodology available from ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives).

The draft Plan is purposely limited to County operations; these are the activities over which the County has direct control. The goal of the Plan is to institutionalize reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into County decision-making and give such reductions equal weight with other considerations. The Plan employs a strategy of "no regrets", taking measures that save money while reducing emission of GHG, and developing the local capacity that puts the County into a good position to attract funding from state or federal sources for future projects.

EMC: Everybody Must Care!

Montan also reported that the Plan would incorporate several questions into the SEQR process that the County would need to ask when analyzing changes to its operations. These questions include: “Will the proposed action affect net energy use?” and “Will the proposed action affect net greenhouse gas emissions?”

During discussion about the draft County Climate Action Plan, J. Rosales reported that one of his students has conducted research to estimate the carbon value of County-owned forests. This research is being peer-reviewed; the data will be available soon.

4. **Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:** B. Flavin will have an item for New Business. The Order of Business was accepted by consensus.
5. **Approval of the Minutes of the February 2011 Meeting:** The minutes of the February meeting were approved (B. Flavin, P. Skomsky) with one abstention (Sutherland).
6. **Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (BOL):** Scott Sutherland reported on his background:
 - He had a 33-year career in the Sheriff’s office;
 - He has a great interest in geology;
 - He is looking to help with Board of Legislators and Environmental Management Council transitions.
7. **Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:** None.
8. **Report of the Committees:**
 - a. **Executive** – None.
 - b. **Education** – J. Tenbusch reported that the Committee had discussed the following:
 - The Committee reviewed the speakers and events scheduled for the **Climate: CHANGE** event at SLU (March 21-24).
 - The Committee reviewed the development of the Earth Day Poster contest. The theme of this year’s contest is: "**Climate Change: What Does It Mean to You? What Would You Do About It?**" The deadline for submission of posters will be Friday March 18th. Posters will be displayed at the SLU Climate Change conference.
 - D. O’Shea reported that a presentation will be made in Ogdensburg on April 6th on the topic of Emerald Ash Borers; the presentation will be made by Cornell Cooperative Extension staff. Planning staff will send information to towns and villages throughout the County.
 - In response to comments from members of the Board of Legislators that the EMC should become involved with redevelopment of the J&L site, the Education Committee has asked Planning staff to develop a resolution supporting that redevelopment.

- L. Rudiger proposed that the EMC hold a meeting at/near Black Lake (June? July?), and hear a presentation on fishing issues.
 - *The Education Committee proposed that the EMC consider a resolution supporting the adoption of the St. Lawrence County Climate Action Plan. This resolution was approved unanimously.*
- c. **Nominating Committee:** J. Tenbusch reported that the Education Committee had been asked by the Chair to serve as a nominating committee. Tenbusch polled the current officers (D. Katz, Chair; P. Skomsky, Vice Chair; A. Soutar, Secretary); each expressed willingness to serve another one-year term. Members of the Education Committee expressed opinions that turnover among officers was considered a good idea.
- D. Katz called for any nominations from the floor:
- Peter Skomsky was nominated for Chair (Rudiger, Katz).
 - Lance Rudiger was nominated for Vice Chair (O’Shea, Rudiger).
 - Tom Cutter was nominated for Secretary (Rosales, Rudiger).
- After a secret-ballot vote for Chair, Katz and Skomsky were tied with five votes each. Skomsky then withdrew his nomination; Katz will be forwarded to the Board of Legislators for appointment as Chair.
- Rudiger withdrew his nomination for Vice-Chair; Skomsky was elected Vice Chair unanimously.
- After a secret ballot vote for Secretary, T. Cutter was elected Secretary by a vote of 9-1.
- d. **Natural Resources** – P. Skomsky reported that the Committee had discussed:
- The Development Authority of the North Country has put out Request for Proposals to conduct a Household Hazardous Waste Collection program.
 - The County’s Solid Waste Dept. will begin to collect waste electronics at County-owned transfer stations.
 - The SLU Climate Change conference.
 - The Army Corps of Engineers has funds available to study weed control.
 - Clarkson University has applied for funding to develop Public Service Announcements about high-efficiency boilers; this application has been delayed.
 - A bill has been introduced in the NYS Assembly to regulate groundwater withdrawal.
 - The Committee would like to hear a presentation on underwater generators.
- e. **NYSAEMC** – No report.

9. Report of the Staff:

- Tenbusch reported on the Planning Office progress in writing three CDBG applications.

Rudiger reported that Matilda Larson of the Planning Office has written two grant applications to benefit a Canton tree planting program. Rudiger made a motion (T. Cutter) that the EMC recognize Larson and thank her for her efforts; the motion was approved. Rudiger asked if the EMC and/or the County Planning Office are doing any work with communities about management of their trees resource. Some discussion occurred.

10. **Unfinished Business:** None.

11. **New Business:**

- B. Flavin expressed concerns about the relicensing process for hydro projects on the Oswegatchie River. He noted that fishermen are required to buy certified bait, in order to not spread Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS). At the same time, Brookfield Power is being asked to install fish ladders, which would allow fish that might be infected with VHS to move upstream into previously-uninfected water. Flavin was also concerned that the Board of Legislators had voted to support this relicensing process without considering this issue. J. Montan described how such concerns might be addressed at several points in the relicensing process. **Flavin will report on actions taken by the Fish Advisory Board on this issue.**
- B. Flavin reported that the proposed reconstruction of SH 56 in the Town of Colton (the "S" curve) will result in the loss of a parking area at a fishing access site.

12. **Announcements:**

- J. Tenbusch reported that Donald Hassig will hold a presentation on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) on April 26th at 7:00 PM at the Human Services Center on SH 310 in Canton.
- J. Montan reported on a project to develop wood pellets as an export to Europe.
- J. Montan reported that a meeting will be held on March 17th concerning remediation of the Waste Stream site in Potsdam.
- J. Rosales announced that he will have an article published in the Adirondack Journal of Environmental Science.

13. **Message to Board of Legislators:** EMC members were asked to talk to their assigned legislators about the EMC resolution supporting adoption of the St. Lawrence County Climate Action Plan.

14. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Thomas Cutter
Secretary

Minutes prepared by J. Tenbusch.

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