



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

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Approved

MEETING MINUTES

May 18, 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 7:01 PM.
2. **Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was present.
Members present included: T. Cutter, B. Flavin, A. Heidenreich, R. Horst, D. Howard, D. Katz, L. Rudiger, A. Soutar, S. Sutherland, B. Zimmerman.
Members absent included: D. Doe, G. Hart, G. Johnson, D. O'Shea J. Rosales, P. Skomsky.
Staff: J. Montan, J. Tenbusch. Guests: Donald Hassig, Sue Rau. Press: None.
3. **Hearings, Comments from the Public:** D. Katz introduced Patricia McKeown, Executive Director of the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce. McKeown reported that the Chamber is promoting "the three W's: woods, water, wildlife". The Chamber is part of the group developing a multi-use trail system; this trail system might become part of a multi-state regional system of trails. McKeown also noted that the Chamber is promoting birding, stargazing and other tourism opportunities related to the environment. She stated that the Chamber is in the peddling business, saying "We sell what we have."

McKeown then discussed the Chamber's current program, "FishCap", which promotes the St. Lawrence River Valley as the "World's Fishing Capital". She said that this idea was first proposed when people were trying to deal with the loss of industrial jobs across the County.

Using the guideline to "Sell what we have", a proposal was developed to "Focus on Our Fish". Over 30 people came to an organizing meeting held in May 2010; even more turned out to a subsequent meeting. Principal organizers have included McKeown, Joe Gray, Supervisor in the Town of Massena, and Don Meissner, a famous fishing guide and TV personality. This organizing effort has evolved into the "FishCap" program. Examples of the activities to be accomplished as part of the "FishCap" program include development of a Web site; travel to and attendance at fishing/recreational-industry shows; and sponsoring a "Wounded Warrior" fishing day in Ogdensburg on June 4th.

EMC: Everybody Must Care!

In one year of planning, the organizers have developed a public/private partnership that includes a three-year plan of activities. Over \$300,000 has been pledged as a budget to promote the “FishCap” program. Students at Clarkson University have developed metrics to help determine how successful the “FishCap” program is; McKeown said that she would know it was a success if an Applebee’s restaurant or a BassPro Shop opened in our region.

In response to questions, McKeown reported that:

- Waddington won the first round of the “Ultimate fishing Town” contest; a second round of voting will be held. The Chamber sees a regional benefit to this type of activity.
- The Chamber is working on a series of new brochures, including the Travel Guide, the Waterfalls Guide, and an Angler’s Guide. The Chamber would like to support an update of the “Map For All Seasons”.
- The Chamber would be interested to see if the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) project, formerly proposed for the Coles Creek area, could be revived.
- The Chamber is willing to help with current fish stocking programs, and rebuild the “Mighty Muskie” sign in Morristown.

Chairman Katz thanked Ms. McKeown for her presentation. He then declared a recess for five minutes. The meeting resumed at 8:00 PM.

Donald Hassig spoke about recent activity related to Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). He thanked Scott Sutherland for sponsoring a resolution before the Board of Legislators that would have authorized additional cancer education for County residents (the resolution was not approved). Hassig reported that the Town of Norfolk had recently endorsed the resolution for additional cancer education. He noted the need for open discussion about issues related to POPs. Hassig sees evidence of grass-roots efforts to provide information on POPs.

- 4. Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:** S. Sutherland will have an item for Unfinished Business. Discussion of several proposed EMC resolutions will be discussed during New Business. The Order of Business was accepted by consensus.
- 5. Approval of the Minutes of the April 2011 Meeting:** The minutes of the April meeting were approved (L. Rudiger; T. Cutter).
- 6. Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (BOL):** No report.
- 7. Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:**
 - R. Horst reported speaking with Jim Bunstone about the proposed County Climate Action Plan. Horst reported that Bunstone is planning to attend an upcoming EMC meeting.
 - B. Zimmerman reported sending an e-mail message to Steve Putman; he received an acknowledgement of the information he provided.
 - A. Heidenreich reported sending an e-mail to Kevin Acres; she received no reply.

8. Report of the Committees:

- a. **Executive** – No meeting was held during the month. D. Katz took this opportunity to read a letter addressed to him regarding the need for additional regulations concerning genetically-modified corn. This was one of eleven similar letters; they appeared to have been written as part of a class or other organized group. The letter had been discussed during the Natural Resources Committee meeting; the letters will be passed along to the County's Ag & Farmland Protection Board for their consideration.
- b. **Education** – J. Tenbusch reported that the Committee had discussed the following:
 - General discussion had occurred about various fish-stocking efforts, and trail development programs. *The Education Committee proposed that the EMC authorize staff to prepare resolutions for the BOL to consider stating support for fish-stocking efforts and multi-purpose trail development; it was agreed by consensus to consider this request under New Business.*
 - Upcoming speakers will include: in June (6/15), a presentation on the development of the county's multi-use trail system; in July (7/20) the EMC will visit Black Lake, and hear a presentation on fish-stocking efforts there; in August (8/17), the EMC annual picnic will be held at the Waddington Town Beach.
- c. **Natural Resources** – J. Montan reported that the Committee had discussed:
 - A response to the letters cited above under the "Executive Committee" report.
 - A report on the Household Hazardous Waste Collection program held in Gouverneur on May 14th. Only 44 cars brought hazardous waste; 26 cars brought electronic waste; several brought pharmaceuticals. It was felt that the poor attendance was due mostly to poor publicity. Montan reported that the Development Authority of the North Country, which had been responsible for publicity, will do more publicity in advance of the August event.
 - Montan reported that he had sent a letter to Verdant Power, the developer of the underwater generator project near Cornwall, Ont. He has not yet received a response.
 - Montan reported that there will be a student intern from SUNY Potsdam this summer; he will work on the groundwater removal initiative.
- d. **NYSAEMC** – Tenbusch reported that the "DEC Update" will be held on June 6th.

9. Report of the Staff:

- J. Montan reported that he had met with Ruth MacWilliams of the Raquette River Blueway Corridor (RRBC) program. She told him that RRBC had received funds from NYS Dept. of State – Coastal Resources in order to develop a Stewardship Plan for the Blueway Corridor. Development of this plan would require a series of public meetings; MacWilliams asked if the EMC help to coordinate these meetings? D. Howard and S. Sutherland moved that the EMC help coordinate these meetings. During discussion, T. Cutter reported that the St. Lawrence Land Trust is working on a similar plan for the Grasse River; Howard amended her motion to allow the EMC to help coordinate plans on both rivers. The motion was approved, with 1 abstention.

- Tenbusch distributed one e-mail communication from Donald Hassig; this requested the EMC to “encourage the Legislature to seek to motivate the New York State Department of Health to come to St. Lawrence County for the purpose of participating in a full public discussion of POPs exposure cancer risk and exposure reduction education.”
- 10. Unfinished Business:** S. Sutherland reported that he had had a series of informal conversations with other members of the BOL concerning the draft Climate Action Plan. He reported that there seemed to be considerable confusion about what the Plan includes, and misunderstandings about possible negative consequences of adopting the Plan.
- 11. New Business:**
- A motion by L. Rudiger (Cutter) to empower staff to prepare a resolution for consideration by the BOL supporting responsible fish stocking programs around the County was approved.
 - A motion by L. Rudiger (Howard) to empower staff to prepare a resolution for consideration by the BOL supporting responsible development of a multi-use trail system in the County was approved.
- 12. Announcements:**
- D. Howard announced that the Potsdam and Parishville schools had tied for the overall winner of the Envirothon held at Paul Smiths College on May 12th.
- 13. Message to Board of Legislators:** EMC members were asked to discuss with their assigned legislators the resolutions that will be prepared by staff supporting fish stocking efforts, and the development of a multi-use trail system.
- 14. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Thomas Cutter
Secretary

Minutes prepared by J. Montan, J. Tenbusch.

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