



**St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council**

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*Approved*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**October 19, 2011 7:00 PM**

**Room 226, Courthouse, 48 Court Street**

**Canton, New York**

*Action items in bold italics*

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair David Katz called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.
- 2. Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was NOT present.  
Members present included: T. Cutter, D. Doe, A. Heidenreich, D. Howard, R. Horst, D. Katz, S. Sutherland, B. Zimmerman.  
Members absent included: B. Flavin, G. Hart, G. Johnson, D. O'Shea, J. Rosales, L. Rudiger, P. Skomsky, A. Soutar.  
Staff: J. Montan, J. Tenbusch.  
Guests: None.  
Press: None.
- 3. Hearings, Comments from the Public:** John Tenbusch and Jon Montan provided an overview of the North Country Regional Economic Council.

Tenbusch reported that Gov. Cuomo had announced the Regional Economic Development Councils in July 2011; there are ten such councils statewide, based on regions created by NYS Empire State Development. These Councils are tasked with development of regional economic development strategies; strategies are to be submitted to the Governor by November 14<sup>th</sup>. At stake are shares of \$200 million per year in economic development funds, including funds from 20 different sources in 11 separate NYS agencies.

According to Tenbusch, the North Country region is the largest in the state by land area, smallest by population, with the lowest per capita incomes. The region includes seven counties (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence) and includes three cities, 132 towns, 57 villages, 55 Census Designated Places ( $\approx$  hamlets), and 73% of the Adirondack Park. The North Country Regional Economic Development Council (NCREDC) includes 35 members, has access to 19 staff provided by various state agencies (e.g., ESD; SUNY Potsdam; SUNY Plattsburgh; DOL; etc.), and over 170 volunteers working in eight Working Groups and ten Strategic Clusters.

**EMC: Everybody Must Care!**

Tenbusch described the Vision Statement that the NCREDC has approved; the Consolidated Funding Application; the Endorsement Standards that the Regional Council will use to score 20% of every application's final score; opportunities for public participation; and ways to provide input (<http://nyworks.ny.gov/>).

Montan reviewed the work from one of the Strategic Clusters, the Clean Energy Cluster. This Cluster considered the following energy areas: solar (PV and thermal), wind, biomass, hydro, conservation, transmission upgrades; the subcommittee consciously excluded transportation fuels from their considerations. For each of these, the subcommittee examined existing constraints to development, strategies to remedy those constraints, potential costs, and estimated job impacts.

Among the findings of the Clean Energy Cluster subcommittee were:

- Extending Solar Renewable Energy Credits to investors hydropower might add up to 250 - 500 FTE jobs, with no net cost to NYS;
- Adding additional small and micro-hydropower might add up to 500 FTE jobs, with no net cost to NYS;
- Increased use of biomass for heating or for electricity production would take some levels of investment, but might provide hundreds of jobs, and use locally-produced fuel stocks;
- Conservation measures (energy retrofits) would benefit existing housing stock.

D. Doe asked if these recommendations by this subcommittee of the Regional Council might influence the St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators to adopt the draft Climate Action Plan. Montan noted that the impetus of both (Climate Action Plan; Clean Energy Cluster recommendations) is to reduce energy costs in the short term, and to increase energy efficiency to reduce costs over the long term.

- 4. Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:** Montan proposed several items for New Business; the Order of Business was accepted by consensus.
- 5. Approval of the Minutes of the July, September 2011 Meetings:** Not acted on due to lack of quorum.
- 6. Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (BOL):** Scott Sutherland reported on recent BOL activities.
- 7. Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:** No conversations reported.
- 8. Report of the Committees:**
  - a. Executive – None.**

- b. Education** – Tenbusch reported that the committee had discussed:
- Planning staff have been informed by the Planning Director and the County Administrator that Donald Hassig is not permitted to attend EMC meetings, or to have contact with staff.
  - Before being barred from contact Hassig had submitted information about a publication "Persistent Organic Pollutants: Impact on Child Health"; this was written by the World Health Organization in 2010. Committee members will review this study for discussion at next month's committee meeting. The study is available at [http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/persistent\\_organic\\_pollutant/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/ceh/publications/persistent_organic_pollutant/en/index.html)
  - B. Zimmerman offered to talk with Susan Hathaway, Director of Public Health, about her Department's programs regarding cancer prevention.
  - The Committee reviewed a draft letter of support for the proposed biomass CHP project for Ogdensburg; the Committee recommended sending the letter of support.
  - The Committee began to review the EMC Work Plan.
- c. Natural Resources** – Montan reported that the committee had discussed:
- Following up on a request for US EPA to report on the five-year review process at the GM Powertrain site.
  - The Corps of Engineers study plan on the Seaway is on hold.
  - The Committee reviewed a draft letter of support for the proposed biomass CHP project for Ogdensburg; the Committee recommended sending the letter of support.
  - Montan had reviewed the EIS for the Northern Border plan; he noted that it was a general review of alternative options.
- d. NYSAEMC** – Tenbusch reminded the group that the NYSAEMC Conference on the Environment, will be held at the Rensselaerville Meeting Center in Rensselaerville, NY on October 21-23.

**9. Report of the Staff:** None.

**10. Unfinished Business:** None.

**11. New Business:** None.

*D. Doe asked if there might be able to be provisions for electronic meetings (EMC members to attend via computer / conference call, etc.)? Staff will investigate.*

**12. Announcements:**

- J. Montan announced he has received information about a chunk-wood boiler system; he has information available.
- Chair David Katz announced that he will be resigning from the EMC at the end of the year.
- In response to a question, Tenbusch reported that other EMC members leaving the EMC (their terms will be up at the end of the year, and they have asked not to be reappointed) include Bob Flavin, Glenn Johnson, Jon Rosales.

13. **Message to Board of Legislators:** EMC members were asked to talk to their assigned legislators about North Country Regional Economic Development Council process.
14. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Cutter", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Thomas Cutter  
Secretary

Minutes prepared by J. Montan, J. Tenbusch.

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