



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

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Approved

MEETING MINUTES

September 21, 2011 7:00 PM

Room 226, Courthouse, 48 Court Street

Canton, New York

Action items in bold italics

- 1. Call to Order:** In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair Peter Skomsky called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.
- 2. Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was present.
Members present included: T. Cutter, D. Doe, G. Hart, A. Heidenreich, D. Howard, D. O'Shea, J. Rosales, L. Rudiger, P. Skomsky, B. Zimmerman.
Members absent included: B. Flavin, R. Horst, G. Johnson, D. Katz, A. Soutar, Scott Sutherland.
Staff: J. Montan, J. Tenbusch.
Guests: Martin Karpensky, VP-Development, Eagle Creek Renewable Energy; Greg Sharland, Alliance Energy, Syracuse; Joseph Lightfoot; St. Lawrence County Legislator.
Press: None.
- 3. Hearings, Comments from the Public:** P. Skomsky introduced Martin Karpensky, VP-Development, Eagle Creek Renewable Energy. Karpensky described the biomass-fueled co-generator proposed for Alliance Energy on a site near the Ogdensburg Psychiatric Center.

Karpensky reported that a co-gen facility (steam/electric) had been constructed on this site in 1994; it sold electricity to Niagara-Mohawk, and provided steam at no charge to the Psych Center, on whose property the co-gen facility was located. Sale of electricity to Ni-Mo was terminated in 1998; the gas turbines were subsequently sold. A steam turbine and ancillary equipment remain on site, and are in operable condition. Steam continues to be provided to the Psych Center, per the original agreement, which will expire in 2117.

A new co-gen facility, fueled by locally-available wood chips, would be able to continue to supply steam heat to the Psych Center; without this facility, the Psych Center would

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need to invest in its own heating plant. The proposed facility would also produce 26 MW of electricity, enough to power approx. 23,000 homes. This facility would consume 300,000 tons of biofuel per day; the project would permanently employ approximately 15 persons in management positions; another 100 FTE jobs would be created for drivers/delivery of biomass. This facility would require 30-40 trucks per day to deliver wood chips; one alternative would be to construct a railhead for delivery of wood chips via the OBPA-owned railroad.

If this co-gen plant is constructed, the current steam loop to the Psych Center might be extended to the Ogdensburg Correctional Facility, and possibly to the nearby industrial park.

One constraint regarding this project is the need to renegotiate the existing agreement with the Psych Center (which owns the site). This current agreement is nearing the end of its term.

4. **Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:** The Order of Business was accepted by consensus.
5. **Approval of the Minutes of the July 2011 Meeting:** On a motion by Rudiger (O'Shea), *the minutes of the July meeting were NOT approved*, on a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays, and 4 abstentions (EMC bylaws require a majority of the EMC's membership to vote affirmatively in order to approve an item of business. Currently, eight votes would be required to approve an item).
6. **Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (BOL):** In the absence of Scott Sutherland, Legislator Lightfoot reported that the BOL is working on the County budget. Lightfoot also reported that he is working with K. Zimmerman and others to evaluate a potential new financial software system for the County.
7. **Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:** No conversations reported. J. Tenbusch briefly described to Mr. Lightfoot the intent of the monthly conversation process.
8. **Report of the Committees:**
 - a. **Executive** – None.
 - b. **Education** – Tenbusch reported that the committee had discussed:
 - A letter from Donald Hassig asking the EMC to review a report by the World Health Organization on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); the committee will review the report. *The committee proposed that the EMC Chair meet with the SLC Commissioner of Public Health to discuss Public Health activities related to POPs.* J. Rosales asked if the EMC approved the committee's proposal to talk with the Commissioner of Public Health; *by consensus, the EMC approved.*

- Tenbusch had reviewed for the committee the presentation made at the July EMC meeting regarding Black Lake. Issues discussed included tourism promotion; weeds in the lake; issues with the boat launch; and issues with opening day of fishing season. *The committee will attempt to put together a meeting with representatives of Patricia Ritchie; Addie Russell; NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation; the Black Lake Chamber of Commerce; and other stakeholders to resolve these issues.* D. Howard, R. Horst, G. Hart, D. O'Shea, L. Rudiger may be able to attend this meeting. B. Zimmerman suggested that the SLC Chamber of Commerce be invited to attend this meeting. *Howard suggested that the Black Lake boat launch might be put on the list of Priority Projects for the North Country Regional Economic Development Council.*
 - Regarding speakers for upcoming EMC meetings, G. Hart suggested hearing from a group that pulls Eurasian milfoil; a speaker on the Port of Ogdensburg; a presentation on the EPA's recent activities at the GM Powertrain site; an update on the cost-benefit analysis being done on the draft Climate Action Plan.
- c. Natural Resources** – Skomsky reported that the committee had discussed.
- The dump at the GM Powertrain site. Skomsky reported that there is a mechanism to require encapsulating the dump site. *J. Montan reported that the EMC will contact the EPA site manager for GM Powertrain and request that a report be made to the BOL concerning its 5-year review.*
 - Skomsky also reported on contamination in the Massena Area of Concern. He noted that construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway has been an environmental catastrophe. Skomsky reported that the US Army Corps of Engineers is looking to fund habitat improvements to mitigate aquatic habitat disturbances associated the Lake St. Lawrence dikes.
 - Skomsky also reported that the EPA is about to issue its findings regarding the lower Grasse River Superfund site. He expressed concern that the EPA's findings would not include the issues of contamination in the Massena Power Canal, upstream from the Superfund site. This Power Canal is contained by a deteriorating, 100-year-old dam.
- d. NYSAEMC** – Tenbusch reminded the group of the upcoming NYSAEMC Conference on the Environment, to be held at the Rensselaerville Meeting Center in Rensselaerville, NY on Oct. 21-23.
- 9. Report of the Staff:**
- J. Montan reported that the International Joint Committee will be meeting to discuss water levels on the St. Lawrence River.
 - Tenbusch reported on the North Country Regional Economic Development Council process.

10. Unfinished Business: None.

11. **New Business:** None.
12. **Announcements:**
 - J. Montan announced that the EMC will not have a booth at this year's Local Living Festival.
13. **Message to Board of Legislators:** EMC members were asked to talk to their assigned legislators about the biomass-fueled co-generator facility proposed for Ogdensburg.
14. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 7:53 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. Tenbusch.

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