



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council
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MEETING Minutes

Wednesday July 19, 2023 at 6:00 PM
2nd-Floor Conference Room, Public Safety Complex
49½ Court Street, Canton, NY
And via ZOOM
Minutes by Samuel Joseph

1. **Call to Order** Chair Sue Rau called the meeting to order 6:02 pm
2. **Land Acknowledgement** Sue Rau read a Land Acknowledgement, provided by Tony David, Director of the SRMT Environment Division, and used with his permission:
“As we meet today, let us first give thanks and acknowledge that the land upon which we are gathered is part of traditional indigenous territories, including the Rotinoshionni (Low-dee-no-SHOO-nee), the People of the Longhouse, also known as the Iroquois Confederacy; and the Kanienkehaka (Ga-nyun-geh-HA-gah), the People of the Land of Flint, also known as the Mohawk Nation.”
3. **Comments from the Public / Speaker:** The speaker was Dr. Aileen O’Donoghue, the Henry Priest Professor of Physics at St. Lawrence University. She gave a presentation about solar eclipses (partial on 10/14/23 and total on 4/8/24).

The presentation reviewed the causes of eclipses, what we can expect to see and time and path of the totality will occur. Reviewed ways to safely view the eclipse including new solar glasses (they degrade so don’t use the ones from 2017), solar filters on lenses, and pinhole viewer. Discussion on the tourism ramifications. Anticipated large traffic from Canada and downstate into the county. Make sure there is enough law enforcement, and facilities, including gas, food, and toilet paper. The Chamber of Commerce wants to collaborate with businesses in the area and designate good viewing spaces. Mud season can make it hard on certain fields and areas.

4. **Roll Call, Determination of Quorum. A QUORUM WAS NOT OBTAINED.**
Because there is not a quorum the meeting will proceed through consensus.
Members present: Herb Bullock; Richard Marshall; Adam Pearson; Sue Rau, *Chair*; Lance Rudiger; Legislator Nicole Terminelli, *BOL Liaison*; Brian Washburn, *Vice-Chair*; Neil Woodworth.
Members absent: Catherine Bennett, *Secretary*; Sean Cunningham (excused); Lucas Hanss; Shannon Hurlbut (excused).
Staff: John Tenbusch, Planner II; Jason Pfothhauer.
Guests: Brooke Rouse, Director of Tourism SLC Chamber of Commerce; Kathryn Puleo,

EMC: Everybody Must Care!

Destination Services Manager SLC Chamber of Commerce; Dr. Aileen O'Donoghue, St. Lawrence University Professor Physics.

5. Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business
No new business

6. Approval of the Minutes of the May 2023 and June 2023 EMC Meeting
Unable to approve due to lack of quorum.

7. Report by Legislator Nicole Terminelli, Representative of the Board of Legislators

- Thank you John from the Board of Legislators for the dedication and service.
- Angst about solar arrays on ag land. Balance of owners' rights and future of county
- BOL passed a resolution opposing NY senate bill 4976A and Assembly bill 2084 which was prohibiting use of lead ammunition on state land and land that contributes surface water to NYC. The resolution passed stated a public education approach rather than ban.
- At June finance meeting, reviewed summary of NY state solid waste management plan. Developing extended producer where the disposal would be priced to the producer. Proposed amending and expanding food donations and food scraps recycling law to include smaller food scraps recyclers and eliminating mileage limits for organics recycling facilities. Per ton disposal disincentives surcharge for waste produced in NY state being shipped out of state for landfilling.
 - Question regarding if this passes does that make disposal free? The producers would be responsible for a plan to dispose of the material end of life.
- BOL passed a resolution opposing all electric building act.
- Approved Pilot solar project 4.14 MW photovoltaic 22 acre site. Community solar project
- This year's NYSAC conference Sept 13-15 email calling for resolutions. NYSAC advocates the state on behalf of the counties. Nicole is asking for EMC for an issues we would like her to bring to NYSAC on her committee of Environment, economy energy
 - When would we need this? Friday Aug 4th close of business. Will send the resolutions once she sees them if we want to comment

8. Report of the Committees

- a. Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaws revision
 - i. Still need to incorporate that into the document to send out. Because we are not voting on this until September they will clean up the document and send it out.
 - ii. Suggestion sending out a letter urging people to attend because we need 2/3 of the committee to pass the bylaws.
- b. Public Advisory Committee for Expedited Review of Plan 2014 – Shannon Hurlbut
 - i. Shannon is not here, but see attached email
- c. Review of DEC draft Recreation Management Plan for Conifer-Emporium Tract Conservation Easement – Neil Woodworth
 - i. Close look at the RNP, specifically sensitive areas.

- ii. Biggest impact will be 11 parking areas, looking at those they seem to make sense because it seems like they should have had parking already. Thought DEC did a good job on the analysis.
- iii. Accessibility? Notable was handicap accessible hand boat launch.
- iv. Respond to Peter, from EMC. Appreciate the care given to the draft, with a comment to give extra attention to handicap accessibility.

9. Report of the Staff

- a. Work report: The water and waste water with ARRA money \$3 million BOL allocated to 12 different municipalities
- b. Planning office has been delegated to do grant preparation and program management for the NYOPRHP snowmobile grant, previously administered by Soil and Water. This grant is for trail maintenance entities to groom and maintain the trails.
- c. The planning office collaborating with Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) on submitting another round of community development block grant to rehabilitate poor quality housing directed at low to moderate income homeowners. Asking for \$615,000 and anticipate doing 12 units. Application deadline August 7th.
- d. Question about broadband who gets on to the list. There is a broadband committee 3 million from ARRA. County working with development authority. Determine number of units in need and then lots and locations near isp. Can address approximately half the units with this funding. There will be more money through federal and state sources.
- e. Solar visit to Ottawa: June 29th ML, JP, PS, MM traveled to tour a solar installation EDF renewables. EDF proposed 180 MW array south of Canton. Most interested in co-utilization of agriculture. 20MW array 100 acres old technology built in 2009 so larger footprint than would happen today. Pen sheep into 2 acre pen. It works, very labor intensive, only financially viable because of payment from solar company to maintain property. Apiary more of a gimmick. 5 hives.

10. Unfinished Business

- a. Activities for 2023

11. New Business

- a. Discussion on not being consulted by BOL before they passed resolutions on environmental issues
 - i. Know agenda of board meeting? It is hard because get packet on Friday afternoon before Monday vote
 - ii. Can we strategize a way to advise the BOL on environmental issues? Seems like we are missing important stuff
 - iii. Nicole suggests we keep an eye on state and federal issues and preemptively suggest resolutions
 - iv. Work with other groups, might become aware of issues
 - v. **There is the advisory component and then there is the public education component. We can focus on the public education, and attempt to advise the board on issues we choose rather than waiting for the BOL to ask for advisement.** See Visioning Statement
- b. Resolution honoring John's contributions.
 - i. Consensus reached

12. Announcements

- a. EMC picnic Aug 16th Waddington Beach
 - i. 5:30 pm food
 - ii. 6:00 pm short meeting
- b. Talking Rivers Listening to Water Symposium
 - i. Health of the Raquette River Aug 9th 6:30 PM Online webinar
 - ii. Rivers Tell Stories, Rivers Have Rights Aug 29th 6:00 PM at Potsdam Public Library
- c. NYSACC conference Sept 20 (remote) and Sept 21-22 (in person Ithaca, NY)
<https://www.nysacc.net/home>

13. Adjournment by consensus 8:32

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DRAFT EMC VISION STATEMENT

The Vision Statement that was developed in 2012 as part of the EMC Visioning document (see page 30):

<https://stlawco.org/sites/default/files/Planning/EMC%20Visioning%20Process%202013%20-%20approved%2011.20.13.pdf>

2023 Draft:

In five years, the St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council (EMC) will be:

- **Working in partnership with the Board of Legislators, local governments, and organizations across the County to review, evaluate and disseminate relevant, focused and timely information about environmental issues affecting our County;**
- **Developing relationships with groups that have interests in the environment to coordinate networks of information and activities in order to accomplish more than each could achieve separately;**
- **Focusing on local and regional aspects and impacts of environmental issues, to empower citizens across the County to sustain and improve their living conditions;**
- **Providing opportunities for public participation in projects that conserve resources, reduce environmental hazards, improve health and increase general understanding of the natural world in which we all live; and**
- **Ensuring that its goals and objectives make progress toward fulfilling its stated vision. The EMC's goals and objectives will be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-oriented (SMART).**

