



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

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www.Stlawco.gov/Departments/Planning/AdvisoryBoards/EnvironmentalManagementCouncil

MEETING Minutes Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Classroom A, One Stop Career Center, Human Services Center

80 State Highway 310, Canton, NY 1361

I. **Call to Order:** Chair called the meeting to order 6:12 p.m.

A. Land Acknowledgment: Sue Rau read a land acknowledgement provided by Tony David, Director of the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe 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 the traditional indigenous territories, including the Rotinonshionni (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.”

B. Roll Call 7 of the 13 members present. **Quorum was obtained**

1. **Members Present:** L. Bage; L. Hanss; A. Pearson; S. Rau, *Chair*; N. Terminelli, *BOL Liaison*; B. Washburn, *Vice-Chair*; N. Woodworth, *Secretary*;
2. **Members Absent:** H. Bullock, S. Cunningham, S. Hurlbut, M. Iversen, L. Rudiger, M. Weaver
3. **Staff:** S. Joseph, *Planner II*;
4. **DEC Representative:** R. Young, *DEC Region 6 Director*;

C. Acceptance of Order of Business: Accepted unanimously

D. Approval of Minutes (Washburn/ Bage) Passed Unanimously

E. Comments from the Public None

II. **Reports**

A. Report of Board of Legislators

1. Fisheries Resolution passed operations and is expected to pass Aug 5
2. Deer River update. IDA working with North Country Dairy to help financially for modifications to waste treatment

B. Report of Staff (see work report)

C. Report of Department of Environmental Conservation

1. Deer River Public Meeting in Brasher July 23 6 pm at pavilion
2. Major storms caused a lot of damage to roads
3. Complaints about a person in Lisbon accumulating solid waste. Officers investigated and will take appropriate action but seems like a local code issue
4. Questions and discussion about Deer River. Some sampling results seemed some odd, the DEC representative R. Young suggested to arrange a meeting with DEC water engineers and discuss the issue. Question about waste treatment changes that caused the issues. Why was being treated that was not in the treatment before and so the change in material might influence the process. The plant is in compliance with SPDES permit, but the violation results from changes in the river. Discussion on IDA role in helping the plant become compliant. DEC mentioned another violation relating to SPDES permit last month regarding BOD. Discussion on monitoring rivers more broadly for baseline conditions, DEC said no one is currently doing that.
5. Question regarding PFAS if reason for concern in County or if EMC should do anything specific. DEC recommends becoming familiar with sources and transport through environment. DEC currently sampling sewage sludge because a potential point to accumulate and is sometimes land applied. DEC has already sampled old landfills and paper mill sludge.
6. Question on what are municipalities currently doing with their sewage sludge? Young will follow up on that.

III. Unfinished Business

A. iMap Invasive Workshop Debrief

1. Good turnout (15 people)
2. SLELO PRISM's Megan Pistolese reviewed what PRISMS were and projects that they run
3. She then taught how to use three apps iMap Invasive, iNaturalist, and Seek. Some participants encountered technical difficulties with the apps not working as intended (login issues, internet connection etc)
4. Megan continued with a brief overview of some emerging invasive species and brought in specimens.
5. Presentation went on longer than intended and many left before walk because went over time
6. Future potential event in other parts of the county such as APIP region.
7. Discussion on water chestnut pull and the need for volunteers

B. Fisheries

1. Final version to be accepted by board at Aug 5 meeting, well received
2. Thank you letters to those group that are related to the fisheries

C. Deer River

1. Takes time to address. It is complicated and there is a time lag to see results
2. There might be a seasonal component and so be prepared that this issue might come up again in the spring time. Facultative lagoons have a hard time functioning optimally in winter and so can result in an accumulation of waste, and the sewage fungus is a cold water species.
3. Discussion about the sample results compared to County's sample results. Will discuss with DEC water engineers directly.
4. Discussion on water flow and movement and where pollution accumulates in a river, specifically where the water current slows down, and certain wastes are known to concentrate downstream from source. Water engineers include this in their review process. The group of houses that encountering the problem is in a slower part of the river downstream.

D. PFAS

1. Concerns brought up a few meetings ago, and so S. Joseph contacted Clarkson Professors to get a brief overview of the situation. Meeting scheduled during executive board meeting over zoom on August 7th 10 a.m. to review status of PFAS, current research, potential treatment or response.
2. All water companies need to have insurance and will likely dramatically increase because of this issue. An potential action is to reach out to municipalities and see how it is affecting insurance

E. Annual Picnic

1. August 21, discussion about having picnic in Canton
2. Will reach out to council regarding dietary restrictions. Everyone brings a dish to share, and contributes \$5. John provided hamburger, hotdogs, buns, and drinks. Discussion on coordination of dishes. Send an email specifically for the picnic. Invite someone associated with compost collection on Canton.

IV. New Business

A. 30 x 30

1. Initiative to conserve 30% of natural areas by 2030 DEC and OPRHP released a draft strategy document seeking public comment by August 30th
2. NYS is currently at 22% total, 16% public, and remaining private.
3. Discussion on this being an opportunity for the EMC to help identify spaces for preservation so localities can fund some parks. Discussion on original objectives of the EMC to create an inventory of natural resources within the county. Question about impervious surface limits. Discussion on how the state is going to achieve this goal by need local communities to identify and create local parks. Two public meetings July 25 1-3 p.m. and Aug 15 6-8 p.m.
4. Discussion on 30x30 interface and connect with the NYS Open Space Plan. Going to integrate the 30x30 plan into the Open Space Plan. The 30x30 is a goal with assessment of what is already protected, and what should we need to protect and how. The Open Space is a blueprint for the acquisitions.
5. Question regarding revising 480A forest tax programs. Proposed legislation did not pass.

B. Electrical Utility Climate Change Vulnerability Study

1. Seeking feedback by Aug 30

V. Ongoing Projects

A. Partner Directory Nothing to report

B. New Member Packet

1. Google drive folder: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15zVIW1x4SEf8hN8V-vdnksW379gbrKAQ?usp=sharing>
2. Authorizing legislation
3. More recent history
4. Link to meeting minutes
5. Expectations of members

C. Battery Storage Nothing new to report

D. Recruitment

1. Look at where we have representation and determine where we need to recruit from
2. PSA in North Country Now, NCPR segment, in person events seating
3. Reach out directly to Town and Village Boards

VI. Member Updates

A. Rau: NYSDOT broke beaver dam

1. Concerns about turtles being hit by cars crossing highway because NYSDOT removed beaver dams draining a wetland that has been there for long time.

VII. Announcements:

A. Oswegatchie River Water Chestnut Pull Heuvelton Rescheduled to Aug 5th starting at 11 a.m.

B. Picnic: Bend in the River Park Aug 21 6 p.m.

C. Public Comment for 30x30 Plan Aug 30

D. Public Comment for National Grid Climate Resiliency Plan Aug 30

E. Hazardous Waste Collection September 28 HSC

VIII. Adjourn 7:32 p.m.

IX. Action Items:

A. Staff:

1. Organize picnic
 - a. Reserve space
 - b. Contact members about coordinating food
2. Recruitment
 - a. Direct appeal to municipalities we would like more representation from
 - b. PSA North Country Now
 - c. Reach out NCPR

B. Members:

1. B. Washburn: meet with DEC water engineers to discuss Deer River findings
2. E Board: Meet with Clarkson Professors to get over view state of PFAS
3. General: Read through 30x30 strategy for comment and assess longer connected project for EMC