



St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council

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Meeting Minutes Wednesday, November 20, 2024 6:00 p.m.

Classroom A, One Stop Career Center, Human Services Center

80 State Highway 310, Canton, NY 13617

I. Call to Order: Chair called the meeting to order 6:04 p.m.

A. Land Acknowledgment S. 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 8 of the 11 members present. **Quorum was obtained**

1. Members Present: L. Bage; L. Hanss; M. Iversen; A. Pearson; S. Rau, *Chair*; N. Terminelli, *BOL Liaison*; B. Washburn, *Vice-Chair*; N. Woodworth, *Secretary*.
2. Members Absent: S. Hurlbut; L. Rudiger; M. Weaver.
3. St. Lawrence County: S. Joseph, *Planner II*;
4. Government Officials: H. Dedrick, *Supervising Forester, DEC*; M. Phillips, *Deputy Director for Planning, APA*

C. Acceptance of Order of Business (Woodworth/ Bage) Pass unanimously

1. **Items for Unfinished Business**
2. **Items for New Business**
3. **Moved** APA Master plan to after the BOL report because of guests

D. Approval of Minutes (October 16, 2024) (Woodworth / Washburn) Passed unanimously

II. Reports

A. Report of Board of Legislators

1. Second announcements for EMC members up for reappointment Pearson, Rau, Rudiger, and Woodworth
2. Resolution “Encouraging Governor Kathy Hochul to Recognize New York’s Freshwater Wetlands Act Rulemaking and Its Impact on Critical Local Highway, Bridge, and Culvert Projects” passed opposing new regulations on wetlands by NYSDEC in regards to potential impacts on highway departments costs and delay in permitting (See attached Resolution 325-2024)
3. Resolution “Calling on Governor Kathy Hochul with Concerns About the Impacts of Efforts to Electrify Highway Department Vehicles by Adoption of the Advanced Clean Truck Rule” The County does not have the capacity to move towards electrification of larger rigs due to significant costs and lack of established infrastructure at this time. The County owned vehicles should be exempt from Advance Clean Truck Rules at this time (See attached Resolution 327-2024)
4. County has submitted a grant application to US Environmental Protection Agency for Brownfield Communitywide Assessment Grant which will allow the County to assess brownfields and put a plan in place for cleanup and repurposing.
5. Two prior resolutions stem from New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC). Annual conference pass resolutions that they would like to see implemented, and then they forward them onto the individual counties to pass.
6. National Marine Sanctuary: 2 years ago approached by the National Marine Sanctuary who were looking to create a sanctuary for Eastern Lake Ontario and approached the County to see to extend it up the St. Lawrence River (SLR) to Robert Moses Dam. They came and presented about what marine sanctuaries look like. This one would be unique because this would be first fresh water National Marine Sanctuary. They

were looking at the impacts on PRISM, economic development, access. BOL ended up not passing a resolution to extend it up the SLR with the caveat that once the sanctuary is established we could reconsider extending the boundary. Asked to reconsider, because neighboring counties have passed resolutions in support of the sanctuary. In order to bring it back to the table one of the original legislators that voted it down needs to bring it back up before the board. Why it was not supported was fear of losing jurisdictional control over the waterway.

- a. Q: Would it affect the fishing tournaments? Balance between economic development and environmental considerations for supporting the fisheries. If the fisheries are in trouble there is the potential for regulation that trump the rest of the state. Some of the biggest tourist attractions and fishing tournaments occur in a sanctuary in Michigan, and so the sanctuary does not prevent tournaments from occurring.
 - b. One of the reasons is to preserve the history and shipwrecks for divers. Makes eligible for grant funding. There are benefits
7. Q: Does the BOL receive EMC minutes? Yes in meeting announcements and BOL liason also gives thorough reports at the BOL operations meetings

B. ADK Master Plan

1. Management of State Land: St. Lawrence County has significant amount of public land: County forest, State Forest outside of the blue line, and forest preserve mandated in NYS Constitution inside the blue line. Management and jurisdiction can be confusing and so two guest are giving some overview of NY state managed property and how it affects St. Lawrence County
2. DEC presentation on Division of Lands and Forests Management Plans by H. Dedrick, Supervising Forester Potsdam Office, Division of Lands and Forests. (See attached slides)
 - a. Q: Do you have to amend the Unit management plan (UMP) to add a campground? Yes if they are not proposed in the previous plan than they do have to be updated to include campgrounds. Small adjustments like minor relocation of preapproved campgrounds can occur. Any new structures or improvements do require updating unit management plan and campsites fit this definition. Concerns expressed over stretches of trails without existing campsites and the process it takes to establish campsites.
 - b. Q: How do WMA fit into this? WMA are managed by Division of Fish and Wildlife (different division) with different source of money and the areas are managed for wildlife.
 - c. Q: Oil, gas, and mineral extraction allowed on State Land, how does that work? Mineral exploration is allowed except in the forest preserved areas (blue line)
3. APA presentation on Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP) 2024 Amendment Package by APA representative M. Phillips, Deputy Director for Planning, Adirondack Park Agency (See Attached Slides)
 - a. The APSLM was created in 1972 and the plan created a land classification system. The agency classifies land within the park based on physical characteristic and capacity to withstand use. 9 different classifications starting with “wilderness” most restrictive and then progressively becoming less restrictive to “intensive uses.” If something is allowed in the more restrictive classification it is allowed in the less restrictive areas. For each classification there are guidelines for management and use.
 - b. The APSLM should be revised every 5 years, but in practice occurs less frequently and so this is first major comprehensive update in a couple decades.
 - c. Presentation on the amendments to plan (see slides)
 - d. Q: Follow up on campsite creation. Is there a way to expedite the process? Can we work to manage people without having to update the whole UMP? Possibly during the creation or amendment of a UMP have flexible language to implement certain management once certain criteria threshold are crossed such as have language that allows for creation of new campsites once need is identified.
 - e. Discussion on what defines power driven mobility devices. Concerns about whether this will allow atv / side by sides into wilderness areas of the park. Case by case credible assurance need to get a permit. Forest rangers will be out enforcing, and if a case by case permit issued the forest rangers are notified. There is actually no policy changes as this is already happening currently, just updating the master plan to reflect what is happening in practice. There are two permits 1. mobility access permit which allows

access on designated routes for people with disabilities, and 2. case by case permit and they can have someone with them and is available to different parts of the park. The current permits are for ATVs (as opposed to UTVs and side by sides which are a different class of vehicle, technically cannot be registered in state).

C. Council Logistics

1. New applicants
 - a. Talk with BOL members from areas that lack representation. Legislator Terminelli explained the process of if we submit more applicants than are openings will cause the BOL to select the candidates.

D. Report of DEC

1. Burn ban in effect
2. Ogdensburg wastewater plant under DEC oversight the City and Development Authority of North Country are working to mitigate the problem.
3. There was a case of chronic wasting disease in a captive deer in Herkimer County. No evidence in wild deer, Ag and Markets are investigating the situation, and DEC is monitoring for disease in wild populations. Hunters that want their deer tested can send a sample to Cornell Wildlife Lab.

E. Report of Staff

1. Q: County and State losing farmland, renewables coming in onto farmland and role of cryptomining and data centers, AI using up the additional energy. This lead to discussion on Agirculture in county and so staff shared presentation that was given to Ag and Farmland Protection Board (see attached slides)

III. Announcements:

A. Sustainability Day and Green Living Fair Saturday, March 29, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. SUNY Canton

B. Repair Fair May

IV. Adjourn: Washburn / Bage 8:21 p.m.