

TUG HILL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

Lee, New York

April 22, 2019

Chairman Bogdanowicz opened the meeting 10:08 a.m.

Opened

Commission members included Mdms. Ritter & Chereshnoski, Messrs. Bogdanowicz, Boxberger, Yerdon and Maciejko. Staff included Katie Malinowski, Gwen Decker, NOCCOG Circuit Rider Jennifer Armstong-Symonds. Guests –NOCCOG Associate Circuit Rider Harlan Moonen, town of Lee planning board member Ed Davis, town of Lee supervisor John Urtz and THC counsel Lee Wilbanks.

Attendance

On a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Yerdon, members approved the agenda as presented.

Agenda Approved

On a motion made by Commissioner Maciejko and seconded by Commissioner Yerdon members approved the minutes of March 27, 2019.

Minutes Approved

Chairman's report followed.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Bogdanowicz welcomed everyone and thank the town of Lee for hosting. Introductions were made. The Local Government was a big success with record numbers. Congratulations to commission staff on a great job! Chairman Bogdanowicz spoke with mayors, supervisors and other local officials while overseeing the Tug Hill Commission display table at the conference. Attendance is approximately 50/50 from inside and outside the Tug Hill region. The major concern of those within the region is economic development, keeping people here and for the younger generation to stay. This is something to look at for our strategic planning of the next five years.

Welcome

Executive Director's report followed.

Executive Director's Report

Mrs. Malinowski reported that we are in the final budget. With the exception of a \$20,000 increase in Personal Services, the budget remains the same. There will be a transition with Mr. Street retiring at the end of the year. Mrs. Malinowski will work on a proposed budget to have for members at the May meeting.

Administration

Last month Paid Family Leave (PFL) was discussed and members were in agreement to go forward. Mrs. Malinowski has been in contact with Albany and they will get us signed up and provide training for staff once members have approved PFL.

Whereas, the Tug Hill Commission is a public employer and has the authority to opt-in such employees to the Paid Family Leave (PFL),

Be it resolved that the Tug Hill Commission is electing to opt-in to PFL for its public employees not represented by an employee organization as a rider to the IPP coverage, to begin on or about June 24, 2019, and directs the giving of the statutory notice to the non-represented employees.

Resolution 2019-1

On a motion made by Commission Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Chereshnoski members resolved to approve the Paid Family Leave as presented.

In your packets is a copy of our contract for counsel with Lee Willbanks that is up for renewal.

On a motion made by Commissioner Cheresnoski and seconded by Commissioner Yerdon members approved the counsel contract as presented.

Mrs. Malinowski is trying to get final approval from the our budget officer to begin advertising to get a new hire on staff to work along with Mr. Street before his retirement at the end of the year.

Mr. Street was a presenter at the Rockefeller Institute on March 14th. A video of his presentation is available on our website and our Facebook page. Mr. Street is providing a training at JCC tonight and a video recording will done.

In your packets is a strategic plan summary based on information gathered at our exhibit table at the Local Government Conference. Also in your packets is a short survey monkey questionnaire to review. This will be an electronic survey to collect information to assist in our strategic planning. Mrs. Malinowski asked members to provide any input for the survey.

Strategic Plan

In your packets is the Local Government Conference final attendee information, survey results and yearly statistics. Survey return rate was 36%. This year was our highest attendance. The conference made a profit of over \$7, 700. Last year we spent money for motivational speaker and this year we did not. The early registration fee has remained at \$50 for several years. There is approximately 50% attendance from both in the region and outside the region. Each year we review the information and work to improve the conference for the next year.

LGC

In this year's budget there was a proposal to move ACUB funding in the EPF from the farmland protection to open space line, however, it remained under farmland protection in the final budget. Mrs. Malinowski and Mrs. Garrett have talked with the senate, assembly and our legislators about the importance of protecting farmland outside the Fort Drum line. They will continue to work to increase Ag & Markets flexibility and the importance of funding from EPF for the ACUB program.

ACUB

Mrs. Malinowski attended Fort Drum's Summit Strike training exercise on April 9th. An Apache helicopter from Fort Drum had to make an unplanned landing due to visibility issues from rain and fog, at a farm in St. Lawrence County, which is coincidently an ACUB farm. You can read about it in enclosed Watertown Daily Times article.

Mrs. Malinowski and Mrs. Kimball went to Syracuse to meet with Senator May last week. Pat Mahar, town of Denmark highway superintendent and Don Cook, town of Pinckney highway superintendent and Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages were also in attendance. Senator May was receptive and is willing to talk with other senators to get the bill moving. Senator Griffo is also reaching out. We are still working on getting a meeting with Senator Metzger.

MMR

We recently learned that the grant application submitted by the JCC Center for Community Studies to Great Lakes Research Consortium to fund the residents and landowners survey did not get approved for funding. Mrs. Malinowski will work on some financing details to have for the May meeting.

Land Owner Survey

In your packets is the agenda and registration for the Black River Watershed Conference to be held June 4th at Aldersgate Camp and Retreat Center in Brantingham. If you are interested in attending contact Jennifer Harvill.

BRWS Conference

CTHC spring meeting is April 25 at the Steak and Brew in Turin. Mark Gebo will be speaker. He has retired, however, is still working on wind projects.

CTHC Spring Meeting

The COG Chairs meeting will be tomorrow April 23 in Redfield.

COG Chairs Meeting

In your packets is a summary of current zoning information for the Tug Hill municipalities. Staff provides municipalities with zoning assistance. A great deal of progress has been accomplished.

Zoning

This is the time of year for CFA's. In your packets is a CFA grant tracking sheet. The sheet includes status of grant applications and municipalities applying. Commission staff will be busy assisting municipalities with grant applications.

CFA Grants

Mrs. Malinowski will attend the Staying Connected Conference in Quebec, May 6-8. She will be presenting at a few of the sessions. Some staff will be attending the New York Planning Federation Conference April 28-30. Mr. Street will be presented with the Heissenbuttel Award at the conference.

Upcoming Conferences

Mrs. Armstrong-Symonds reported the town of Annsville supervisor resigned and Mark Trnchik will provide coverage at the current time. GIS equipment has been received, Mr. Dietrich will provide assistance and training. Local Government Education Committee will offer an Amish Training on state and local regulations. There is a big interest in solar for municipalities. Town of Ava is dealing with salt shed grant issues

COG Report

Mr. Moonen reported the town of Steuben is considering zoning for the first time as result of an attempt by a landowner to secure a building permit for a structure on an abandoned road. Currently, the town has issued a moratorium on the issuance of building permits on land that does not have a currently accessible road. The Association of Towns for Oneida County is considering a presentation on solar farms at its May meeting. Current solar farm development has municipalities concerned regarding not only loss of viable agricultural land, but also regarding decommissioning of the site once the useful life of the project has expired. Various municipalities in NOCCOG are considering and developing plans for the construction of salt storage buildings on their own without waiting for grant money. By being proactive, these communities feel that they can fulfill the need to protect salt piles from outside elements in advance of any forthcoming regulations imposed by DEC.

In your packets is the financial report. The budget is on track overall. Salaries are at 100% for the year, 2% increases and personal step increases will be coming. We spent just under \$50,000 on NPS.

Finance Report

Commissioner Bogdanowicz opened the floor for public comment.

Public Comment

Mr. Urtz thanked the commission staff for providing assistance with zoning.

Mr. Davis thanked the commission for facilitating the Local Government Conference. It improves each year. The commission staff does a great job providing us with assistance and training whenever we need help. The staff is great to work with.

There being no further business before the board, on a motion made by Commissioner Yerdon and seconded by Commissioner Maciejko members adjourned the meeting at 11:33 a.m.

Adjourn

These minutes were approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Tom Boxberger
Secretary

