

Ulster County EMC Meeting Minutes February 25, 2015

Meeting was called to order at 6:43 PM

Members in Attendance:

Steve Noble, Chair, At Large
Cindy Lanzetta, At Large, Marlborough
Kristen Schara, At Large, Hurley
Virginia Starke, Hurley
Tim Ganon, Rochester
Guest: Manno Jo Greene, UC Legislature

Amanda Lavelle UC Dept. of Environment
John Sansalone, Gardiner
William More, At Large, Kingston
Mary O'Donnell, Saugerties
Emilie Hauser, Kingston

Meeting minutes from the January 2015 meeting were reviewed. Corrections were noted. Amended minutes will be submitted for approval at the next meeting.

Updates provided by Manna Jo Greene

Enabling legislation was passed to create the Energy Improvement Corporation. The purpose is to aid businesses and institutions to make energy saving improvements and to install renewable energy production equipment. Project financing payments will be made using a line item on property tax bills through the local municipality. The loan payments stay with the property if a sale or transfer takes place. Q – Can tax exempt organizations such as a volunteer fire department participate? A- Research is needed to respond.

Several towns have passed resolutions calling for GE to extend dredging to include navigation channels, floodplains and backwaters in the upper Hudson beyond EPA requirements. Supporters are looking for 100 resolutions to persuade the EPA. The work will cost taxpayers more if the NYS Canal Corporation performs the dredging.

The UC Legislature passed a resolution opposing the Pilgrim Pipeline project.

A Solid Waste Management Improvement Commission was formed including representatives from towns, waste haulers, UC legislators, the League of Women Voters and at large members. The first meeting will take place on March 9th. The commission will study needs for the next 20 years including recycling, and the economics of local vs. regional landfill. This is a part of the Mid-Hudson Sustainability Plan and Climate Smart Communities initiatives. EMC members are encouraged to attend.

UC Legislator Tracey Bartels is working on a fleet policy to replace older vehicles with energy efficient hybrid and electric vehicles in a cost effective way. The goal is to reduce the carbon footprint of the UC fleet and to purchase locally generated electricity.

Manna Jo's goal is facilitate solutions by bringing together governmental, nonprofit and commercial groups with shared interests.

New Business

Creek Week – Steve requested input on when to schedule Creek Week. The dates of September 18-27 were recommended. John motioned for these dates to be used and William seconded the motion.

Vote: Yes - 9, No – 0

John requested that a one page description of Creek Week be provided to EMC members for distribution to interested town officials and groups. Amanda will email a flyer including the new dates.

Ulster County Dept. of the Environment Update

There was a hearing on proposed Local Law 12 to ban the use of polystyrene foam food containers in food service establishments. Copies of the proposed law were provided to the EMC. Comments at the hearing were positive and alternative containers are affordable. Q – Are churches and food pantries covered? A – Yes. Q- Who will enforce the law? A – UC Health Dept. Q - Does the Health Department have jurisdiction over delicatessens that sell food prepared offsite as opposed to the NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets? A. – Research is needed to verify. Exemptions are provided for establishments with gross income less than \$300,000 or where feasible alternatives are not feasible. Steve asked that EMC members present it to their towns for support. Cindy requested that a copy of the resolution be sent via email prior to the next meeting.

Resolution 314A regarding conversion of Sheriff's Vans to LPG was passed by the UC Legislature. The UC Executive vetoed the resolution. It may be reintroduced to override the veto. Amanda presented her analysis demonstrating that the proposed conversion would not yield the environmental or financial benefits that had been claimed. In addition, the van conversion would not be in line with the UC Executive's goal of using sustainable alternative fuel technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Amanda provided copies of a memo detailing her analysis to the EMC. She suggested that towns may find it useful when evaluating vehicle purchases or conversions.

Member Roundabout

Virginia Starke – The UC Executive has worked out an agreement with the NYCDEP to make the north shore of the Ashokan Reservoir accessible to the public. There will be public meetings, possibly in April, to solicit input from the public. Preliminary work is being done to assess the feasibility of trails, parking and needed facilities. Q – How does this affect the Catskill Mountain Rail Road? A – Currently the rails are not expected to extend beyond the Glenford Dike. The Hurley Town Board passed a resolution supporting continued dredging by GE.

John Sansalone – The ECC is interested in supporting the concept of continued dredging by GE. The NY Water Environmental Association is advocating a ban on plastic microbeads in personal care product. The beads (<1mm) are showing up in water, fish, etc. and can negatively affect the food chain. Amanda added that the NY Attorney General's office will provide sampling kits for wastewater treatment plants such as Kingston and Saugerties that empty into the Hudson. Wipes that are flushed, even those claimed to be safe, are causing problems such as jamming in wastewater equipment.

William Moore – The NY Attorney General sent out cease-and-desist letters to over the counter herbal supplement retailers. Testing showed that the ingredients were not present as advertised.

Mary O'Donnell – The CAC did not take a position on the Pilgrim Pipeline because there is no proposal yet. Mary provided copies of a brochure explaining their Open Space Plan. It will also be available online. More brochures are planned.

Emilie Hauser – The Cary Institute is hosting a presentation on Feb. 22nd regarding personal care products in the water supply. The Niagara Bottling Plant proposal has been withdrawn. A ban on plastic bags is being considered. An intern is helping with the NRI. Opportunities for LED lighting replacement are being analyzed.

Cindy Lanzetta – A Master Composter training program was presented at the Hudson Valley regional meeting of recycling and solid waste coordinators. The Mid-Hudson Valley League of Women Voters has a webpage by their Materials Management Committee with links to information about waste management including DEC websites, and solid waste management plans for Ulster and Dutchess Counties.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:37.