

JANUARY 27, 2017

Commission Meets in Constantia

The Tug Hill Commission held its first meeting of 2017 at the Constantia Town Hall, Constantia, New York. The meeting was well attended, and items discussed included routine fiscal matters; the state of production of the Commission's annual report, Headwaters; preparation for the upcoming Tug Hill Local Government Conference on Thursday, March 30 at Jefferson Community College, Watertown; and proposed initiatives for inter-municipal cooperation.



Left to right: Katie Malinowski, Tug Hill Commission Executive Director; Commissioners - Mike Yerdon, Leona Cheresnoski, Tom Boxberger, Jan Bogdanowicz, Arnie Talgo, and Roger Maciejko.

Senate Bill on Minimum Maintenance Roads Introduced

Senator Griffo sponsored a Senate bill on minimum maintenance roads last week, S02537, to amend the highway law and vehicle and traffic law in relation to the maintenance, improvement and repair of certain town highways. There are several cosponsors on the bill, including Senator Ritchie whose district includes approximately half of the Tug Hill region. The "same as" bill in the Assembly is A00418. Both bills have been referred to their respective transportation committees in the Senate and Assembly.

No Sales Tax Changes in Oneida County

Communities in the NOCCOG region and throughout Oneida County will not see any changes in the distribution of sales tax as had been proposed. The committee that Oneida County Executive Picente had convened to evaluate possible options was dissolved following a meeting on January 9th.

Lee Town Supervisor John Urtz said that the cities of Rome and Utica, who are able to levy their own sales tax under the current formula, would have to give up their pre-emption for the formula to be revised. An agreement could not be reached.

Towns, and particularly villages, expressed significant concern with the impact of a redistribution plan. Although the discussion is over for the time being, the issue has prompted the organization of the villages in Oneida County, who would have been most heavily impacted by a change in sales tax revenue.

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Tug Hill Commission Summer Internship

The Tug Hill Commission, in partnership with the Cooperative Tug Hill Council, is currently seeking qualified applicants for a 2017 summer internship. The intern's primary task will be to update, restructure, and improve the existing report titled ***Tug Hill Resource Management Plan (2006)***, which can be found here: <http://www.tughillcouncil.com/PDFs/ResourceManagementPlan2006Update.pdf>. The intern will use internet (U.S. Census, NYS Office of Real Property Services, NYS Comptroller's Office, etc.) and other sources to retrieve data and software such as Microsoft Excel for processing and analysis.

The full internship description can be found on the commission's website, www.tughill.org.

The basic qualifications and preferred experience are:

- College student with good writing and communication skills.
- Ability to think systemically and logically.
- Ability to creatively solve problems.
- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Power Point, Excel, etc).
- Driver's License valid in New York State.
- GIS experience is a plus.
- Familiarity with Tug Hill region a plus.

The intern will work 37.5 hours/week starting mid-May until mid-August. Interested students should submit a cover letter and resume by March 1, 2017.

Limited Number of Boot Brush Stations Available

As part of a grant from the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO-PRISM), the Thousand Islands Land Trust purchased materials for boot brush stations. A limited number of boot brush stations are available at no cost, other than pickup, to organizations or municipalities that have trails on their property.

The brush and sign are mounted on a sturdy metal and wood podium, to allow hikers to brush clean the sides and bottoms of footwear quickly. By using the boot brushes, trail visitors will remove seeds from their boots, which can spread seeds of invasive, non-native plant species to other areas. The educational signage will also inform hikers of simple steps they can take to help reduce the spread of invasive species.

If interested, contact Katie Malinowski via email, katie@tughill.org.

Rockefeller Institute to House New York Municipal Clerks Institute

The Rockefeller Institute of Government of SUNY will soon open a new professional development program for local public servants, the New York Municipal Clerks Institute (NYMCI). The NYMCI will open in July of 2017, and is a partnership between the Rockefeller Institute, the NYS Association of City and Village Clerks, and the NYS Town Clerks Association. It is designed to "enhance the skills, professional growth and performance of municipal clerks in New York State to improve local governance and better serve citizens."

NYMCI participants will attend classes at the Rockefeller Institute and elsewhere around the state and participate in distance learning to meet their training needs. Michael Hattery, the Rockefeller Institute's director of Local Government Studies, will run the new program. For more information on the NYMCI, contact Director Michael Hattery at mhattery@albany.edu.

CTHC Executive Committee Meets

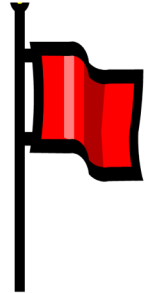
The Executive Committee of the Cooperative Tug Hill Council met on Thursday January 19th at the town hall in Martinsburg. Following reading and approval of the minutes and the financial reports, the committee heard a presentation by Mickey Dietrich from the commission staff in regards to Special Areas mapping. They also discussed some additional updates to their revamped website and invite people to check out the updated site at www.tughillcouncil.com. Katie Malinowski, the commission's executive director, updated the committee on several matters including minimum maintenance roads, the proposed Real Property Tax Law (RPTL) 480a changes, information about the Local Government Conference and several other subjects. The committee also briefly discussed the Inter-Municipal Agreements (IMAs) that the Council towns will need to update by the end of this year. The committee set a tentative date of April 27th for the 2017 spring meeting. Information will be going out as soon as the location and other details have been firmed up. The committee members also discussed several other administrative matters prior to adjourning.

Fiscal Oversight / Red Flags for Fraud



Presented by:

**The Office of the State Comptroller
Syracuse Regional Office**



Date: Wednesday, March 1, 2017
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Location: Lewis Town Hall
1039 State Rt. 26
West Leyden, NY 13489

Date: Thursday, March 2, 2017
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Location: Parish Fire Hall
16 Union St., Parish, NY 13131

This training program is designed to assist village and town officials in carrying out their fiscal oversight responsibility. Topics to be covered include:

- What are the board's fiscal oversight duties?
- What is the purpose of an audit and who is responsible?
- An overview of the records of the chief fiscal officer (supervisor or treasurer).
- An overview of the fiscal responsibilities of the justice and clerk.
- Important audit concerns and key records to look at (a checklist approach).
- What do you do if questions are raised during the audit process?
- What are the major red flags for *fraud* you should watch for?
- What do you do if you suspect *fraud*?

**Registration is requested for this training program
Please contact:**

NYS Tug Hill Commission
1-(888) 785-2380 or tughill@tughill.org
Please RSVP by **Tuesday, February 28, 2017**

THERE IS NO FEE FOR THIS TRAINING PROGRAM!

Open Houses for Mad River, Deer River Wind Farms in March

Atlantic Renewables (a subsidiary of Avangrid Renewables) is holding its first open house for the proposed **Mad River Wind Farm** in the towns of Worth and Redfield on **Wednesday, March 8, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. and 6:00-8:00 p.m.** The open house will be held at the Redfield Volunteer Fire Company, 4879 County Route 17, Redfield, NY 13437.

More information about the Mad River Wind Farm is available on the project website, <http://www.avangridrenewables.us/madriver/>.

Atlantic Renewables is also holding an open house for the proposed **Deer River Wind Farm** in the towns of Harrisburg, Montague, and Pinckney on **Thursday, March 9, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. and 6:00-8:00 p.m.** The open house will be held at the Town of Pinckney Town Hall, 307 State Route 177, Barnes Corners, NY 13626

More information about the Deer River Wind Farm is available on the project website, <http://www.avangridrenewables.us/deerriver/index.html>.

New York State Slow Moving Vehicle Symposium Training

February 21, 2017 • 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

DoubleTree Hotel , 6301 State Rt. 298, East Syracuse, NY 13057 • 315-432-0200

It is not unusual to find yourself sharing the road with slow moving vehicles such as farm/agricultural equipment, construction vehicles...even horse and buggies. They all have the *right* to use the roadways. Our challenge is to develop a plan to deal with these unique highway safety challenges so that all users have access to safe roads.

The New York State Sheriffs' Association and the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee cordially invite highway safety advocates from law enforcement, farm/agriculture, construction, Amish/Mennonite, public health, and non-governmental organizations to the 2017 Slow Moving Vehicle Symposium.

The symposium will cover slow moving vehicle highway safety issues from the farm, construction, law enforcement, and religious community perspectives. A member of the Amish community will describe his lifestyle and his highway safety efforts. Current methods of SMV highway safety outreach will be shared.

- Registration and a continental breakfast will be from 8:00 am to 9:00 am.
- Lunch will be provided.
- Contact the hotel directly for lodging.
- Register using the attached form.

Sponsored by: New York State Sherriff's' Association, New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee . Funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration with a grant from the New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.

Contact Us

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www.facebook.com/TugHillCommission

If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically please email your request to gwen@tughill.org or call 1-888-785-2380.

Electronic versions appear in full color!

ZBA Basics Workshop

The Tug Hill Commission will be offering a workshop on zoning board of appeals basics on Tuesday, January 31, from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the Amboy Town Hall, 822 State Route 69, Amboy, New York.

This workshop provides two hours training credit for planning board members and zoning board of appeals members.

Preregistration is requested but not required. Please register by e-mail at tughill@tughill.org, or via the Commission's toll free number, 888-785-2380, with your name, e-mail address and phone number. There is no fee for this workshop.