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Tug Hill Times

Tug Hill Times is published semimonthly by the Tug Hill Commission for its board members, staff and associates, and the local representatives of the region's communities.

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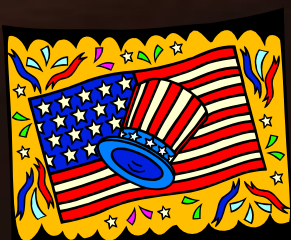
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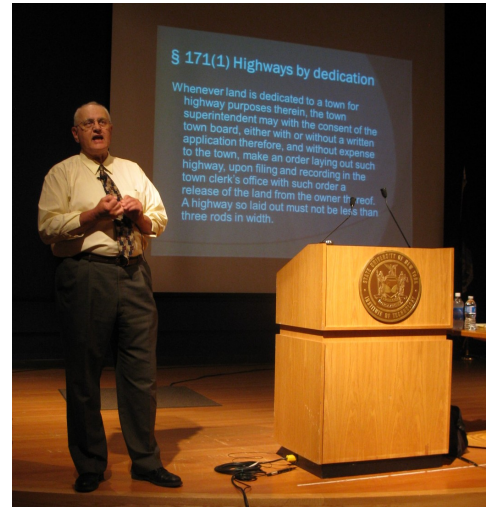
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Big Turnout for “One for the Road” Workshop

Attorney Ken Ayers presented information about highways, roads and streets to an audience of over 170 local officials as well as DEC and DOT staff for four hours on Wednesday, June 29th at SUNY IT in Utica. The session was sponsored by the Tug Hill Commission, the SUNY IT Institute for Local Government, and the Local Government Education Committee of Oneida and Herkimer Counties. The workshop was moderated by NOC-COG Circuit Rider Gerry Ritter. The session began at 1:00 pm with a warm welcome from Deborah Tyksinski, Assistant VP, Director of Continuing Education at SUNY IT. Tug Hill Commission Executive Director John Bartow made a few remarks relating to roads in the Tug Hill region and introduced Ken Ayers. For the next four hours, Ken covered the definitions for highways, roads, and streets; public highways vs. private roads; the history and background of turnpikes and plank roads; highways by dedication, eminent domain, and prescription; widths of highways; discontinuance and abandonment of highways; and answered a host of questions from the audience. A wealth of information was exchanged and the audience hopefully walked away with a better understanding about highways.



The workshop attracted 17 village officials, 84 town officials, 5 county officials and 36 representatives from NYS DOT and DEC.



End-of-conference survey results will be tabulated and shared with the cosponsoring agencies. Verbal comments as attendees left for the day were very positive. Printed copies of Mr. Ayers PowerPoint handout are available from Tug Hill Commission by emailing tughill@tughill.org or by calling the office. Ken Ayers can be contacted by going to his website at www.theayerslawfirm.com.

New York State Clean Air Grant Program

The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has funding available to help municipalities purchase equipment and help educate the public about the state's open burning policy, which strictly limits what people have traditionally burned on their properties. (For more information about New York's regulations and ban on open burning visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/58519.html>.)



Applications for the New York State Clean Air Grant Program are due to DEC by Friday, August 5, 2011. A full description of the program, eligible projects and who can apply is available at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/75126.html>. Individual awards will vary up to \$5,000. There is no match required.

Projects eligible for grant funding include assisting communities in the purchase of equipment to manage residential organic waste materials that were previously disposed of by burning, as well as building community understanding of the dangers associated with open burning. **Examples of eligible purchases include vacuum leaf collectors, chipper/shredders and specialized composting equipment including grinders, windrow turners and bagging equipment.** The program will also fund outreach programs to educate residents about outdoor burning restrictions, the health and safety hazards of outdoor burning and safer ways to dispose of organic waste materials that were historically burned.

For more information on the New York State Clean Air Grant Program, please contact Karl Berger at DEC at (518) 402-8044 or by email to kaberger@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant

Now that the FY 2011 Federal budget has been approved, details for this year's AFG Program are available. The total FY 2011 appropriation for AFG is \$810 million. Of that amount, \$405 million will support fire and EMS operations and safety grants, firefighting and emergency vehicle grants, and fire prevention and safety grants and SAFER grants are supported at \$405 million. The projected schedule for application periods will be announced for each application period as soon as the grant guidance and application information becomes available. Be sure to sign up online to receive the AFG newsletter at <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/program/newsletter.shtm>. By doing so, you will receive the dates for all the application periods as soon as they are announced. Please visit <http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/index.shtm> for more information. There is one workshop in Scotia, NY on July 5th, however, for your convenience, the workshop presentations are online at http://www.fema.gov/firegrants/program/workshop_schedule.shtm.

Joint Infrastructure Management Initiative Update

Members of the JIMI group met on June 27th at the Dulles State Office Building. At the meeting, a status update was given on the project and next steps. Currently, the group is working through a VPN (remote access) issue, which will hopefully be fixed in the near future. After this issue is resolved, data collected during the project will be installed into the group's asset management software. Following data installation, the group will be gearing up for their 4 day, on-site asset management software training, followed by GPS training. The group will then begin the process of testing the full system. The goal is to have the full system fully functional by early fall.



National Grid is accepting applications for a number of programs and services to assist with community economic development strategies and materials for marketing your community or to redevelop marketable sites and buildings and brownfields. The programs have a strong focus on site development, urban revitalization, strategic marketing, and facilitating customer growth through infrastructure assistance, energy efficiency and productivity improvement. National Grid programs and services reflect an increasing emphasis on sustainable development, the efficient use (and re-use) of existing energy infrastructure, and the strategic deployment of renewable generation technologies. Programs and services offered fall under the following topics: Agri Business Productivity, Industrial Building Assistance, Shovel Ready Infrastructure, Main Street/Commercial District Revitalization, Urban Corridor Revitalization, Capital Investment Incentive, Industrial Building Assistance, 3-Phase Power Incentive, Power Quality Enhancements, Renewable Energy and Economic Development, Energy Efficiency in Empire Zones, and Small Business Demand Charge.

The above programs and services are part of the New York State Public Service Commission approved National Grid's New York Economic Development Plan. Additional information and online applications can be found at <http://www.shovelready.com/programs.asp#anchor 6>. Tug Hill Commission staff are also available for assistance with project development or preparing your application and can be reached at (888) 785-2380.

Tug Hill Area Farmers Markets

The “buy local” trend continues to gain momentum throughout New York State. Family farmers sell their products directly to the public at Farmers Markets, which continue to grow in popularity. The produce is fresher, which means it is tastier and more nutritious than store-bought produce. It is also good for your local economy--buying directly from family farmers helps them stay in business. Please support our local farmers by visiting farmers markets in the Tug Hill area.



Below is a sample of farmers markets in and around the region. You can find a statewide listing of markets by county at <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/ap/communityfarmersmarkets.asp>. For a complete listing in Lewis County, click <http://www.lcida.org/farmersmarket.html>. For a complete listing in Jefferson County, click: <http://www.ccejefferson.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/2011-Farmers-Market-Schedule.pdf>. For a complete listing in Oswego County, click: <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/ap/communityfarmersmarkets.asp#Oswego%20County>. For a complete listing in Oneida County, click <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/ap/communityfarmersmarkets.asp#Oneida%20County>.

Community	Location	Day	Start Time	End Time
Boonville	Just off Route 12	Thursday	Noon	6:00 pm
Carthage	Riverside Drive	Friday	7:00 am	2:00 pm
Camden	Village Green	Saturday	9:00 am	1:00 pm
Lowville	Lewis County Fairgrounds	Saturday	8:30 am	2:00 pm
Lowville	Lewis County Hospital Parking Lot	Thursday	Noon	6:00 pm
Lyons Falls	Riverside Park	Tuesday	Noon	6:00 pm
Rome	West Dominick Street	Friday	9:00 am	5:00 pm
Trenton	Holland Patent Village Green	Saturday	9:00 am	1:00 pm
Watertown	Washington St. (Dulles Building)	Wednesday	6:00 am	3:00 pm

NYS Tug Hill Commission

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citizens for over 38 years.**



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www.bikethebyways.org
Is now up and running!

"Through this site, NYS DOT's Scenic Byways Program and ANCA's Byways Program build visibility for the Adirondack North Country region as a desirable bicycling destination for all interest levels," said Kate Fish, ANCA Executive Director.

Dissolving or Consolidating? Three Things Local Governments Need to Know

(NOTE: This article appears in the Summer 2011 *Employer Forum*, a Semi-Annual Bulletin published by the New York State and Local Retirement System and the NYS Office of the State Comptroller. It can be found in its entirety online at http://204.80.57.54/retire/word_and_pdf_documents/publications/newsletters/employer_forum/employer_forum_sum_11.pdf.)

Many local governments are considering dissolving or consolidating operations; some have already done so. If your local government is in this situation, please remember that the New York State and Local Retirement System (NYSLRS) and the Office of Local Government and School Accountability of the Office of the State Comptroller must be notified. To ensure a smooth transition, here is some important information to keep in mind.

• Outstanding Balance:

As with any other creditors, you may need to account for outstanding payments to the Retirement System. It is important to communicate with NYSLRS about payments owed on the annual invoice. Outstanding obligations may need to be transferred to the new entity.

• Legal Documentation:

NYSLRS and Local Government and School Accountability will need legal documentation, such as a resolution, to verify that your municipality is dissolving or consolidating with another municipality.

• Retirement System Members:

If two governments are consolidating and the staff is merging, it is extremely important that you talk to the NYSLRS about retirement plans. As a result of the consolidation, the new merged entity or the existing one may need to make some changes to the plans available to their employees.

If a participating employer takes on the employees of a non-participating employer, any full-time permanent employees of the non-participating employer become mandatory members of the Retirement System and need to complete registration forms. Part-time employees of the non-participating employer have the option to join the System and must be offered membership.

Retirement System members may have many questions or concerns regarding the dissolution or merger of employers. It may be helpful to have an Information Representative come speak to these members and explain how their pension benefits may be affected. NYSLRS understands the challenges dissolving or consolidating presents and is available to help make this transition a little easier on you and your employees. So, please let them know about your planned dissolution or consolidation by calling our Employer Participation & Education Unit at 518-474-0167. You can also email them directly at RTEmpSer@osc.state.ny.us.