

PILOT Presentation at CTHC Meeting

October 11, 2019

The Cooperative Tug Hill Council's (CTHC) annual fall meeting was held at the Tug Hill Hideaway on September 19 with 14 of the 21 CTHC towns and villages present. Following minutes and financial report approval, Chairman Roger Tibbetts presented the proposed 2020 budget, which included a small increase in the total budget and stable dues, and the budget was approved.

The evening's main speaker was attorney Mark Gebo, who spoke about Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs). With many renewable energy projects, both wind and solar, proposed in CTHC, the subject was timely. Mr. Gebo presented much very useful information about PILOTs and how they work, given his experience negotiating several wind farm PILOTs in Lewis County.

Commission executive director Katie Malinowski presented results of the recently completed Tug Hill Residents and Landowners Survey, and asked for comments on the commission's draft 2020-2024 strategic plan. She also updated the Council on progress in hiring new planner Alaina Mallette and minimum maintenance road legislation.

Linda Garrett from Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust spoke about their work on a new regional farmland protection plan which will span all four of Tug Hill counties when complete. She also gave an update on work they are doing to protect farmland in the area through grant funding.

Lastly, the Council discussed the ongoing search for a new contractor to replace Associate Circuit Rider Kay Chapman at the end of the year, and then appointed Fran Yerdon to fill the vacancy on the executive committee until spring officer elections.

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The next meeting of the Tug Hill Commission will be Monday, October 21 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Lyons Falls Library, 3918 High Street, Lyons Falls 13368. The public is welcome to attend.

NOCCOG Highlights Shared Services

The Northern Oneida County Council of Governments (NOCCOG) held its annual meeting on September 26th at the Delta Lake Inn in Rome. Along with the dozens of local officials in attendance, guests included Assemblyman Robert Smullen and Oneida County Legislator Norm Leach. Following a brief business meeting where the current executive committee was re-elected to another one-year term, Tug Hill Commission RACOG Circuit Rider Mickey Dietrich shared an overview of NOCCOG's shared services project in which communities in the region are utilizing two sets of GPS equipment to begin mapping infrastructure. Commission executive director Katie Malinowski then presented results of the recently conducted local landowners survey which will help guide the commission's five year strategic plan. Among some of the region's concerns are better broadband access and economic development which go hand in hand.

Two Villages Join RACOG

At the September River Area Council of Governments (RACOG) meeting, the board approved the additions of the villages of Castorland and Copenhagen to RACOG. RACOG will now include the towns of Champion, Denmark, Lowville, Wilna and villages of Carthage, Castorland, Copenhagen, Deferiet, and West Carthage, for a total of nine communities.

RACOG's mission is to identify opportunities for cooperation, that will enhance the quality of life and improve service delivery. This is done through the analysis, study, and recommendations with respect to organizational and administrative barriers to economic growth and fiscal stability that might exist in and between communities.



Fish Creek Working Group Meets in Constableville

Around 40 individuals gathered at The Alpine on October 2 to hear updates on the East Branch of Fish Creek lands in southern Lewis County. Michael Giocondo from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, who holds a conservation easement on the entire property, reviewed road infrastructure improvements made this past year. He also shared information on current non-motorized access trails, which includes 35 miles of road/trail for mountain biking, 28 miles of road/trail for horseback riding and 3/4-mile of trail for hiking/foot access. Accessible features include Camp Five Road Area Fishing/Observation Deck and the International Road's Motorized Access Permit for People with Disabilities.

Tim Burpoe, property manager with Molpus Woodlands Group, who manages the 30,000 acres south of G&W Road on behalf of owner Corrigan Fund, talked about timber harvests in the Camp 4 Road area and ongoing management of beaver. He also noted that 12 of the 15 camp leases on Molpus property are accounted for, leaving three available for lease.

Lastly, Brian Roat with The Nature Conservancy (TNC), who owns approximately 15,000 acres north of G&W Road, also noted that he is looking for people to execute nuisance permits for beaver. Work has also started on the next leg of the Tug Hill Traverse trail which will connect the existing trail on the East Branch of Fish Creek State Forest to the Tug Hill Wildlife Management Area. He reported that TNC just finished their two-year reforestation project, and had a 38% one-year survival rate on their bareroot seedlings. Interestingly, the area experienced a significant drought right after planting, and some of the more experimental species including oaks and pines had the best survival rates. For a more detailed review of the meeting's discussion, the latest Fish Creek Update will soon be posted at <http://www.tughill.org/services/natural-resource-management/east-branch-of-fish-creek/>.

Mark Your Calendar – Upcoming Trainings

October 24, 2019, Minimum Maintenance Roads Workshop, 6:00-8:00 pm, Boonville Municipal Building, 13149 State Route 12, Boonville, NY.

October 28, 2019, Planning Board Functions, Responsibilities and Procedures Workshop, 6:30-8:30 pm, Jefferson Community College, 1220 Coffeen Street, Watertown, NY.

October 29, 2019, Water and Wastewater Facilities Workshop, 8:30 am – 3:00 pm, Tailwater Lodge, 52 Pulaski Street, Altmar, NY.

November 22, 2019, NYS Archives LGRMIF grants workshop, 9:30 am -1:00 pm, Adams Town Hall, 3 South Main Street, Adams, NY.

December 4, 2019, Newly Elected Training, 6:00-8:00 pm, Boonville Municipal Building, 13149 State Route 12, Boonville, NY.

December 5, 2019, Newly Elected Training, 6:00-8:00 pm, Lorraine Municipal Building, 20876 Co Rt 189, Lorraine, NY.

Two Tug Hill Sages Remembered

Over the past few weeks two Tug Hill Sages passed away: Dr. Edwin P. Russell Jr., of Rome, who became Tug Hill Sage in 1998, and George Capron, Boonville, who was recognized as a sage in 2015.

“Doc” Russell was an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting, fishing and simply being in the woods. He was a long-time member of the Fish Creek Club in Highmarket, N.Y. and served as president for a period. He was an active participant in the East Branch of Fish Creek Working Group for many years.



Doc Russell at a Fish Creek Working Group meeting around 2000.



Doc Russell receiving his Tug Hill Sage recognition from former commission executive director Bob Quinn in 1998.



George Capron receiving his Tug Hill Sage recognition from commission chairman Jan Bogdanowicz in 2015.

George Capron was known as “The Voice of the North Country,” with his career as a radio personality beginning at WBRV “The Moose” in Boonville when he was 17 years old. He remained employed at the station until his death; providing the news, the weather and his own infectious wit for 55 years.

Tug Hill Sages were first designated by the commission in 1983. The distinction is bestowed upon those individuals who have vast knowledge of Tug Hill’s heritage and its environment and have shown a life-long involvement in the region. For more information on Tug Hill Sages go to: www.tughill.org/about/tug-hill-sages/.

Deer River Wind Farm Open House Held in Pinckney

On October 2, Avangrid Renewables organized an open house on the Deer River Wind Farm Project with participation from Stantec, a company that has led studies on wetlands and other environmental resources in the project area. Altogether, there were six representatives from the two companies. Roughly thirty people from the community came to review the visual aids that were brought by the representatives. The room was designed for traffic circle-type dialogue. The center displayed maps, diagrams, and images on easels while the outer edge displayed more maps and information about the environmental studies that have been conducted. The representatives stood by these easels and answered citizens’ questions.



The topics that were of concern to some people were visual blight, noise pollution, inappropriateness for rural character of Tug Hill, potential adverse environmental impacts, process deficiencies, local leadership’s conflicts of interest, feeling that zoning laws do not represent public opinion, outsourced jobs and potential negative impacts on property values.

There were also residents present who enjoy the idea of a wind farm. Noise from the turbines does not concern them, and they find them to be aesthetically pleasing. Some people believe that those who are in favor of wind turbines are least likely to go to public meetings to discuss them.

For more information on the Deer River Wind Farm, see <http://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterCaseNo=16-F-0267&submit=Search>.

New Issue Paper on Historic Preservation Released

The commission has added a new issue paper to its collection. ***Historic Preservation for Rural Local Governments*** is now available at www.tughill.org. The paper discusses the importance of preserving and maintaining historic buildings and properties and outlines steps communities can take to accomplish this goal. Tools such as listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, historic tax credits, and local landmark laws are highlighted as well as grant opportunities currently available to municipalities and local organizations.



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For upcoming trainings, grant deadlines, and meetings, view our [calendar](#).

DHPSNY's Fall 2019 Planning & Assessment Services

Documentary Heritage and Preservation Services for New York (DHPSNY) currently offers planning & assessment services in four major areas, designed to support NY organizations in improving and advancing program efforts while forming strategies for future growth and development. The four areas are: Archival Needs Assessments, Preservation Surveys, Condition Surveys, and Strategic Planning Assistance. In each instance, services aim to improve adherence to best practices and are tailored to an organization's unique circumstances. **Deadline: November 15, 2019.** For assistance and more information, please visit <https://dhpsny.org/planning-assessment>.

DHPSNY staff is available to assist you in completing the application forms. Please contact Anastasia Matijkiw, DHPSNY Program Coordinator, for assistance, questions about eligibility, or additional information at (215) 545-0613 or amatijkiw@dhpsny.org.

Tree Grants Due December 4

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is now accepting applications for urban forestry projects (tree grants). Up to \$1.2 million in grant funding is available for tree planting, maintenance, tree inventory, community forest management plans and for educating those who care for public trees.

Eligible applicants include municipalities, public benefit corporations, public authorities, soil and water conservation districts, community colleges, not-for-profit organizations and Indian nations or tribes. Awards will range from \$11,000 to \$75,000, depending on municipal population. Tree inventories and community forest management plans require no match. Tree planting, maintenance and education projects have a 25 percent match requirement.

Interested applicants must apply for the grant in Grants Gateway. Not-for-profit applicants are required to pre-qualify in the Grants Gateway system. **If you are a not-for-profit and you are not pre-qualified, please start the process well in advance of the grant application due date.** DEC will not accept paper or hand delivered grant applications. **The deadline for applications in Grants Gateway is December 4, 2019 at 2:00 pm.**

Complete information can be found at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5285.html>. Application instructions are available on the Grants Gateway website at https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx