



New York State Tug Hill Commission
 Dulles State Office Building
 317 Washington Street
 Watertown, New York 13601

Address Service Requested

U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Watertown, NY 13601
 Permit #100

NYS Tug Hill Commission

31st Annual Local Government Conference
Thursday, March 26, 2020

Jefferson Community College, 1220 Coffeen Street, Watertown, NY 13601

Assessors will receive six hours of certified training.

\$50 if postmarked by March 6
\$100 if postmarked from March 7 - March 13
\$150 if postmarked after March 13

Certificates of attendance will be available to all attendees.

*** Those registering on site can pay with a check or a completed voucher. ***
 *** No cash please on conference day. ***

~ No refunds after March 6. ~ No registrations by phone, fax or email. ~

Two Ways to Register!!

Register Online:

www.lgc2020.eventbrite.com
 Open through March 13.
 Pay with a credit card.

or

Register by Mail:

www.tughill.org/lgc2020
 Complete fillable form, print and mail back with check or voucher.
 Incomplete vouchers will be returned.

Please call the commission at (315) 785-2380 with questions about the event.

March 26, 2020 Conference Sessions

Town Boards ~ Village Boards ~ Clerks ~ Planning Boards ~ Zoning Boards ~ Highway Departments ~ Assessors

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. ~ Opening Remarks & Keynote

Session 1

9:15 - 10:30 a.m.

1A. Employee Handbook Basics

An employee handbook is a valuable communications tool that sets forth the organization's policies, procedures, practices and benefits to employees. Clearly stated policies and procedures help supervisors and department heads maintain consistency in implementing and enforcing policies. This session will explore the case for written policies and will focus on what should and should not be included in a well-written employee handbook.

1B. All About Grant Preparedness

This session will focus on the many grant opportunities that are available for projects in your community and what you can do to prepare for the application.

1C. Site Plan & Subdivision Review

From the applicant's first sketch on the back of a napkin to the final approved project, the complete land development review process including SEQR will be explained in detail. Helpful checklists, forms, and outlines will be provided. Planning boards, zoning boards of appeal, code enforcement officers, and all those interested in learning more about the review of proposals for development are invited to attend in order to better understand the project review process.

1D. Spot Zone or Grant the Illegal Use Variances?

This session will explore situations in which a proposed use differs from those around it and how it might best be handled. Discussion will include a review of the use variance test, the definition of spot zoning, and a few cases that will help local officials make sure their zoning works for their municipality.

1E. Right-sizing Culverts for Wildlife & Resiliency

Stream ecosystems are often disrupted by undersized and improperly placed culverts at road crossings, resulting in significant habitat fragmentation and increases in erosion, flooding and flood related damage. Culverts and bridges can be designed to minimize impacts to stream habitats and aquatic connectivity. Learn about DEC's "passability" protocols and funding solutions to help local municipalities right-size culverts and bridges for improved connectivity and resiliency.

1F. Vital Records

The Department of Health will present on and answer questions related to vital records (births, deaths, and marriages), including EDRS, and recent changes in laws that impact local clerks and registrars.

1G. What Does the State's Climate Leadership & Community Protection Act Mean for Municipalities?

The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (Climate Act for short) was signed into NYS law in 2019. Learn more about the energy and carbon goals set by this far-reaching legislation, and how they may impact your community in the near future.

Session 2

10:45 a.m. - Noon

2A. Reserve Funds & Long Term Planning

Reserve funds are an effective planning tool for local governments to assist with their long-term operating and capital needs. This session will discuss the most popular reserve funds used by local governments including capital reserves, repair reserves, retirement contribution reserves and others. Learn how to legally establish reserves, properly expend from a reserve and how to effectively account for and budget for reserves.

2B. Cyber Threat Mitigation

Cyberattacks are an evolving danger to municipalities and their employees and are especially alarming for municipal data and operations. A strong cybersecurity system relies on cyber defense technology and on people making smart cyber defense choices. Learn about what can be done to defend against cyber threats.

2C. Historic Preservation

Historic buildings define the character of communities. This session will explain what it means to preserve a place's older and historic buildings and distinguishes between listing a property on the National Register of Historic Places and local landmark and historic district regulation. Environmental and economic benefits of historic preservation will also be discussed.

2D. In the Light of Day - How to Enhance Transparency in Planning Proceedings

Public confidence in government is at its lowest point in decades. Simply "checking the boxes" in terms of open meetings requirements is not enough to ensure that the public understands projects and their potential impact. This session will give planning officials an understanding of best practices and inexpensive (or free) tools at your disposal to ensure that the public understands the impact of proposed projects, and your thought process in arriving at a final decision.

2E. Municipal Rights of Way

This session will examine a municipality's responsibility with respect to its highways, including: highways by prescription (use); width and bounds; encroachments and obstructions by abutting owners; abandonment by non-use and discontinuance; and other issues related to municipal rights of ways.

2F. Your Role in a Disaster

You've had a disaster. Now what?! Who's going to pay for all this? From acts of God to acts of terrorism, how it all works.

2G. PILOTs for Renewable Energy Projects

Wind and solar energy projects are being proposed in many North Country communities. Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements are an important component of many projects and will have an effect on your community's revenue stream and character. This session will discuss how PILOTs are negotiated and things to keep in mind during the process.

Session 3

1:15 - 2:30 p.m.

3A. The EMS Crisis & Its Impact on Municipal Budgets

Who will answer the call? Emergency medical services are in crisis. When your life is in jeopardy, how long are you willing to wait? How will the current state of EMS affect your community, your family and you?

3B. Small Wireless Facilities & 5G in New York State

5G describes the next generation of mobile networks which builds on today's 4G wireless broadband infrastructure. 5G wireless service uses higher-frequency wavelengths transmitted through a network of "small cell" devices, roughly the size of a backpack, scattered throughout communities. As stewards of substantial amounts of public rights-of-way, municipalities are concerned with recent federal actions that undermine local governments' ability to serve as trustees of public property, safety and well-being. This session will discuss this issue and next steps in the 5G infrastructure build-out.

3C. The Bigger Picture - Translating Comprehensive Plans in the Face of Live Projects

There are many reasons why plans aren't typically reflected in current development, but reasons largely fall into two buckets: bad plans and weak implementation. This session will provide planning officials without great comprehensive plans with a toolkit for evaluating future plan proposals. Also discussed will be insights on how to get more mileage out of existing solid planning work; all aimed at ensuring future development aligns with a community vision.

3D. Land Use & SEQR Case Law Update

This session will provide a review of all Court of Appeals and Appellate Division land use, zoning & SEQR decisions for the past year and then present the top eight to ten cases with an overview of the particular area the case covers.

3E. Selecting Pavement Preservation Techniques

Pavement preservation is an excellent way to maintain and improve roads and streets. The key is to select the right treatment at the right time in the right place. Come join the fun and see if you can select the proper repair technique for your highways.

3F. FOIL & Open Meetings Law

This session will include a discussion about the scope of the Open Meetings Law, the procedure for entering into an executive session, public participation and recorded meetings, the meaning of "confidential" and many other hot button applications of both FOIL and the OML.

3G. Climate Smart Communities

Grants of up to \$2 million are available to local governments through this competitive, 50/50 matching program for the purchase of electric vehicles (EV) and EV charging stations, and grants for municipal projects that reduce emissions and make communities more resilient in the face of a changing climate.

Session 4

2:45 - 4:00 p.m.

4A. Think Before You Tweet - Social Media & the First Amendment

The growth of social media in local governments impacts not only local officials, but also the increasingly information-hungry general public, who expect local government to use these technologies to more effectively disseminate information and allow a forum for comment. This session will discuss what to consider when public officials choose to utilize social networking tools.

4B. River Restoration & Resiliency

With increasing frequency, duration and intensity of rain and snow events, it is important for communities to learn about the benefits of building resiliency into the hazard mitigation planning process. Hear about examples of culvert and stream restoration and other projects and practices that Trout Unlimited and other counties have implemented.

4C. Ethical Considerations for Planning Boards & Zoning Boards of Appeal

The session will cover a wide range of issues that confront members of local land use decision-making bodies. Discussion will include many gray areas involving conflicts, and particular situations involving appearances before local decision-making bodies that may create ethical dilemmas.

4D. Q&A for Planning & Zoning Boards

Ask the expert land use attorney your burning legal questions in an open floor format about planning and zoning issues.

4E. Myths of Traffic Calming & Complete Streets

Roads and streets traditionally have been designed to move cars and trucks quickly, but there are alternatives to design for use by all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists. This session will cover what complete streets and traffic calming actually can do to help improve your community.

4F. Email Essentials

Email messages can be official records when created or received in the transaction of public business. Learn how to: identify emails that are records, set up the retention period for e-mail records, preserve emails and develop an email policy.

4G. Siting Utility Scale Solar Projects

The siting of a utility scale solar facility often requires that the solar developer apply for a zoning variance or a special use permit from the town. In addition to the necessity of engineering and environmental review, boards should consider the various legal aspects of such applications including the necessity for decommissioning bonds and security, landowner authorizations, timing requirements and the sensitivities of neighboring property owners.

Registration Opens: 7:30 a.m.

Lunch: Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Reception: 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Training for Assessors: 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

A full six hours of certified training for all assessors attending the Local Government Conference will be provided. The training topic will be "Preparing for an Audit" in the morning and "Trending Assessments" in the afternoon.