

## COG Leaders Meet in Redfield

February 28, 2020

Representatives from the Tug Hill region's five Councils of Governments (COGs) met in Redfield last week for their annual get-together with commission directors and circuit riders. After briefings on the commission's budget, staffing, and major projects, each council of government shared information about COG activities. These ranged from solar and wind renewable energy proposals, to special areas mapping, to sewer and water infrastructure projects.



Meetings attendees were Rip Colesante, Chair, North Shore Council of Governments; Roger Tibbetts, Chair, Cooperative Tug Hill Council; William Potter, Chair, Salmon Rivers Council of Governments; Wayne McIlroy, Chair, River Area Council of Governments; Harlan Moonen, Contract Circuit Rider, Northern Oneida County Council of Governments, Commission staff Katie Malinowski, Jean Waterbury, Matt Johnson; and circuit riders Angie Kimball, Paul Baxter, and Mickey Dietrich. A Super COG meeting in 2020 is not being planned at this point. If necessary, the COG leaders will revisit having a Super COG meeting later in the year.

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## Proposed Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act

Governor Cuomo's 30-day budget amendments include a new act entitled the "Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act." As written, the new act would largely replace the Article 10 process with a new Empire State Development (ESD)-led siting process for all projects greater than 10 MW. It would also address transmission through modification to Article 7 of Public Service Law.

Through a new Office of Renewable Energy Siting at ESD, uniform standards and conditions for the siting, design, construction and operation of major renewable energy facilities would be developed through rulemaking. Once applications to this office were deemed complete, there would be a one-year time frame for approval. If not approved or denied in the one-year time frame, projects would be automatically approved. Projects currently in the Article 10 process would have the option to switch to this new process.

NYSERDA would also become responsible for a separate process to identify and develop "build-ready" sites for renewable energy projects. PILOT agreements would be negotiated through NYSERDA. Changes to Real Property Tax Law 487 would also be made. Notice and public hearing requirements, as well as consideration of local town laws, would be significantly changed if the act becomes law.

For full text of the proposals, see <https://www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy21/exec/30day/ted-artvii-newpart-iii.pdf>.

The Association of Towns has a comprehensive article on the proposal on their website, <https://www.nytowns.org/images/Documents/Announcement/Volume%203%20In%20Session.pdf>.

The March 26 Tug Hill Local Government Conference session originally slated to review the enacted Climate Act will also include a discussion of this new proposal. April 1 is the goal date for finalization of the 2020-21 state budget.

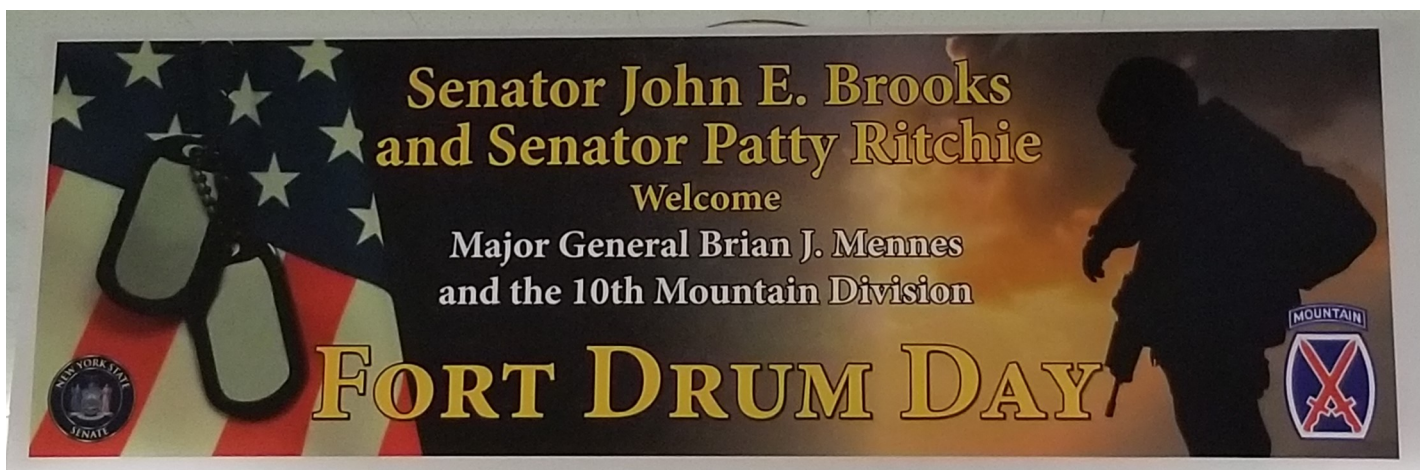
# Newly Elected Training in Trenton March 12

The Herkimer-Oneida Counties Local Government Education Committee has scheduled a training for elected officials both new and experienced alike. The training is meant for supervisors, mayors, trustees, board members as well as town and village clerks. The workshop will feature a panel of experienced town and village officials leading the discussion, followed by a question and answer period.

The event is scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 12 (snow date March 17) at the town of Trenton Municipal Building, 8520 Old Poland Road in Barneveld. Check-in is scheduled for 6:00 p.m.; a \$10 fee to attend will be collected at the door. Light refreshments will be served.

Topics will include powers and duties, roles and responsibilities, budgeting, agendas and minutes, the state's Freedom of Information Law, executive session, conflicts of interest and other municipal issues.

Registration can be completed online at [LGEC.org/workshop](http://LGEC.org/workshop) or by calling Steve Smith at 315-866-4671.



## Ninth Annual Fort Drum Day in Albany

Fort Drum Day was held for the 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive year in Albany on February 26. Co-sponsored this year by Senator Ritchie and Senator Brooks, the day included interactive displays with 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division soldiers in the Legislative Office Building and an address by Commanding General Mennes to the full New York State Senate.

Fort Drum is the largest single-site employer in New York State, had a \$1.8 billion economic impact in 2018, and accounts for 25% of payroll in the tri-county area (Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties). Advocate Drum, Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, and the Tug Hill Commission joined Senate Ritchie and the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division to highlight the important community-Fort Drum partnership, and to encourage continued New York State support to the army base.







*Converse  
Laboratories*



## JEFFERSON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Thursday March 19th, 2020 7pm and Friday March 20th, 2020 9am — 2pm

# Jefferson County Agricultural Development Conference

## Our featured speaker is The Farm Babe!

Michelle Miller, also known as **The Farm Babe**, is an online influencer, columnist, popular keynote speaker and farmer from Iowa. She will be speaking on Thursday, March 19 at Sturtz Theater on the Jefferson Community College campus, and during the Ag Conference on Friday, March 20 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown. She and her boyfriend operate a 2,200 acre crop, sheep and beef farm. Miller is known as a dedicated agricultural “myth buster” with over 120,000 followers and an average social media reach of 3 million monthly views. She has been featured in Forbes magazine and was recently a guest on Dr. Drew.



Visit [www.agricultureevents.com](http://www.agricultureevents.com) or call  
315-782-5865 for more information on this  
free event.

800 Starbuck Avenue  
Watertown NY 13601  
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# Jefferson Lewis BOCES Complete Street Partnership

The RACOG villages of Carthage, Copenhagen and Deferiet passed complete street policies late in 2019, which allowed them to get funding for several projects through a partnership between the Tug Hill Commission and the Fort Drum Regional Health Planning Organization. The communities identified a need for park benches, kiosks, bike racks, boardwalks, and picnic tables to encourage walking and biking by residents and visitors. They are partnering with Jefferson Lewis BOCES to have students work on these projects. Currently, the fabrication class at the Charles H. Bohlen Jr. Technical Center is making two custom metal benches for the village of Deferiet, one with the year the village was incorporated and the other with the year the fire department was incorporated. More projects will soon begin with the Charles H. Bohlen Jr. Technical Center and the Howard G. Sackett Technical Center.



## Contact Us

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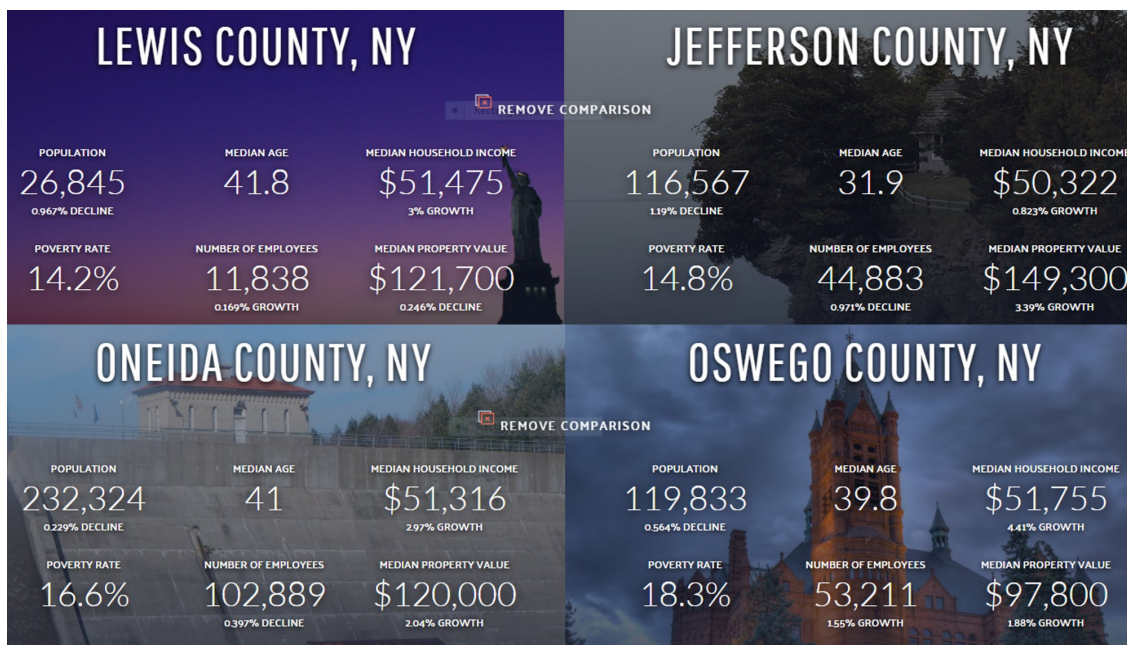
To request our newsletter electronically please email [gwen@tughill.org](mailto:gwen@tughill.org) or call 1-888-785-2380.

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

## Clean Transportation Conference April 23-24

The Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) is holding a conference to discuss challenges in rural regions related to transportation-related carbon emissions. The new Climate Act includes ambitious greenhouse gas reductions, including within the transportation sector. Titled "Clean Transportation: the Adirondack ON-RAMP," the event will be held April 23-24 at Hotel Saranac in Saranac Lake.

Rural residents often travel long distances for work, school, groceries or medical services. Access to public transportation is limited, resulting in dependence on passenger vehicles and small trucks. While electric vehicles are a competitive transportation option in more densely populated areas, rural northern parts of New York currently lack the infrastructure to support a robust electric vehicle transportation system.



Food for thought. This four county comparison graphic was generated with information from <https://datausa.io/>.