January 29, 2021

Village of Lowville Joins RACOG

On January 20, 2021 the village of Lowville board approved a request to join the River Area Council of Governments (RACOG). Later that same day, the RACOG board approved their request to join. RACOG is now made up of the following ten communities: the towns of Champion, Denmark, Lowville, Wilna, and villages of Carthage, Castorland, Copenhagen, Deferiet, Lowville, and West Carthage. www.racog.org

Tug Hill Commission Highlighted by NYSACC

The NYS Association of Conservation Commission (NYSACC) recently highlighted the Tug Hill Commission on its website. NYSACC’s President, Simon Skolnik, reached out to the commission to learn more about our work and approach. Simon noted that county Environmental Management Councils are slowly disappearing in NYS, with only 17 counties (one of which is Oswego) currently with active EM-C’s. Additionally, two communities in the Tug Hill region, the town of Trenton and village of Boonville, have Conservation Advisory Commissions/Conservation Boards, which are municipal level (city, village or town) groups that advise their local legislative boards in the development, management, and protection of its natural resources.

CTHC Executive Committee Meeting

The Cooperative Tug Hill Council (CTHC) executive committee met on Thursday January 28 via Zoom. Following reading and approval of the minutes and the financial reports, the committee heard from Matt Johnson, the commission’s director of planning. He updated the committee on several matters including updates on the proposed minimum maintenance roads legislation, the commission’s newly released Real Property Tax Law 480a paper, and several planning projects underway with the council’s towns and villages. The committee also briefly discussed the associate circuit rider contracts and worked on proposed 2021 goals to be presented to the full council for approval. Circuit Rider Angie Kimball reported that the village of Adams had reached out for information on the possibility of joining CTHC. Angie will attend their next meeting to provide more information.

Did you know...YouTube?

You can access all our recorded webinars on the Tug Hill Commission’s YouTube channel! Go to www.tughill.org, and click the YouTube button at the top right of the page. Recently added videos include Letters from a Tug Hill Logger Part 1, the new NYS Records Retention Schedule, Emergency Management Plan Q&A, Conservation Easements 101, and Culvert Design. All Tug Hill Commission board meetings since April 2020 are also available for viewing.
Strong Cyber Security Practices in 2021 Webinar February 9

Lisa Atkinson from Zelvin Security will present on the 2021 threat landscape in the cyber security world, including how cyber criminals are attacking public and private organizations. The presentation will explore practical steps you can take to reduce your risk of a cyber-attack, the pillars of a strong cyber security posture, and how to improve your resiliency against hackers-in-wild.

The webinar is available on Tuesday February 9 at the following times:

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OaPUQMGQQU60cmjscO2GKQ
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RFM2Q22sRliryd7Iveyepw

Zelvin Security is a penetration testing and cyber security consulting company located in Central New York, hired to test defenses and security controls against cyber threats. The team uses some of the same techniques as a hacker-in-wild to simulate an attack and determine the level of sophistication needed to defend against malicious hackers. Industries consulted with include manufacturing firms, financial institutions, healthcare, education, and online retailers.

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Webinar February 25

Electric vehicles have gone mainstream and the growing demand for public charging access will significantly impact municipal planning activities. Whether your jurisdiction is considering providing public charging resources for your residents or adding electric vehicles to your fleet, this webinar will discuss the benefits of developing a robust network of charging resources. Highlighting local municipal and commercial projects, PlugIn Stations Online will demonstrate the value of EV charging infrastructure in your community.

On Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m., Ron Semp, Director of Commercial Sales for PlugIn Stations Online will present this information, originally slated for the 2020 Local Government Conference. Mr. Semp works directly with stakeholders promoting electric vehicle charging for commercial, institutional, and municipal end users. He is also responsible for project development which includes site consultation, proposal development, and sales. Register at us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Em8FzMtwT-Oo20JPC_axg.
FEMA SAFER Grant Program Application Period Opens February 8

The application period opens February 8 for the fiscal year 2020 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program. Hiring activities, recruitment, and retention activities are all eligible under this program. The application period will close on Friday, March 12.

Start planning your fiscal year 2020 SAFER grant application now by reviewing the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and application guidance materials. These materials were produced specifically to help potential applicants begin to plan their 2020 grant applications ahead of the application period. These documents can be viewed on the SAFER Program website at FY 2020 SAFER Application Guidance Materials.
Lowville Completes First of Two Visioning Workshops for Comprehensive Plan

The town and village of Lowville’s comprehensive planning committee hosted a community visioning exercise completely online with the help of the Tug Hill Commission on January 26. This was the commission’s first fully virtual visioning workshop, and participants agreed that it was a great opportunity to engage on the issues. In small groups on Zoom, the participants discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the communities, opportunities on the horizon, and potential barriers to actualizing those opportunities.

Many of the themes highlighted in the visioning workshop mirror comments coming out of the community survey, which closes on January 31. You can review the comments made in the visioning workshop via this link. If you were unable to attend the first visioning workshop, you will be able to watch it shortly on the commission’s YouTube channel. You can also register for the second visioning workshop, which will be held on February 2, at 10:00 a.m. at this link.

Lastly, if you have not yet submitted your survey for the comprehensive plan, please go to this link to do so.

Thank you to all our community and county partners for your support throughout the comprehensive planning process. If you are interested in getting more involved in the process, here are a few ways for you, your family, and your neighbors to get involved in the comprehensive planning process:

1. Tell your neighbors, friends, and family to fill out their community survey online or in the town or village clerks’ offices.
2. Attend the second visioning session to discuss community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
3. Attend any of the planning committee’s monthly working sessions (first Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.) to hear discussions about the comprehensive plan: us02web.zoom.us/j/81419649286 or call (929)205-6099 using meeting ID: 814 1964 9286.
4. Share comments on a comment card in the town or village clerk’s office or on the comprehensive plan website.
5. Visit the comprehensive plan website (lowville.racog.org/compplan2021/) to stay up to date.
6. To speak with someone directly about the comprehensive planning process, email the town at tolclerk@centralny.twcbc.com, the village at proes@villageoflowville.org, Tug Hill Commission at alaina@tughill.org, and/or Lewis County at kevinbrouillard@lewiscounty.ny.gov.

RACOG Emergency Management Plan Q & A Session

At the RACOG board meeting on January 20, 2021, Joseph Plummer, Jefferson County Emergency Management and Robert Mackenzie, Lewis County Emergency Management attended virtually for a question-and-answer session on the pandemic emergency management plans due by April 1, 2021. The session’s recording can be accessed at youtu.be/Jn9sL_3wxYM.