

TUG HILL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 19, 2021

Village of Central Square Municipal Building, 3125 East Avenue, Central Square, NY 13036

Also Via Video and Audio with Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88426390017>, Meeting ID: 884 2639 0017

Chairman Bogdanowicz opened the meeting 10:24 a.m.

Opened

Commission members included Messrs. Bogdanowicz, Boxberger, Yerdon and Mdm. Ritter and Cheresnoski. Staff included Katie Malinowski, Gwen Decker, Felicia Passino, Jennifer Harvill, Matt Johnson, Carla Fowler, Jean Waterbury, and Alaina Mallette. Circuit Riders - Paul Baxter, Angie Kimball, and Mickey Dietrich. Guests included Counsel – Lee Willbanks, Central Square mayor Randy House, Norm Paradis town of Worth, Sandra March C2AE, Bruce Williams town of Montague, Carole Kupelian town of Constantia, Jackie Murphy village of Parish, and Tim Kelley town of Amboy.

Attendance

On a motion made by Commissioner Yerdon and seconded by Commissioner Cheresnoski members approved the agenda as presented.

Agenda Approved

On a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Ritter members approved the minutes of March 15, 2021.

Minutes Approved

Chairman's report followed.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Bogdanowicz thanked everyone for attending the hybrid meeting. The state budget was voted in and the commission is included, and our numbers remain the same as last year. The commission's yearly attorney contract with Mr. Willbanks is up. Mr. Willbanks has agreed to contract as the commission's attorney for another year. Chairman Bogdanowicz asked for a motion to approve the attorney contract of \$3500 for 1 year.

Welcome

On a motion made by Commissioner Yerdon and seconded by Commissioner Ritter members approved the yearly attorney contract as presented.

Executive Director's report followed.

Executive Director's Report

Mrs. Malinowski reported the continuing of operations plan submitted to Albany for return to work has been approved. In April staff will return at 50% capacity. This is the same plan used last June.

Administration

Mrs. Waterbury will be retiring at the end of July. Her last day will be near the end of June, as she has vacation time to use. Mrs. Malinowski hoping the NOCCOG circuit rider paperwork is processed in Albany to have John Healt on board by May. She is also waiting for Mr. Johnson's promotion to be finalized. Once those are completed, she will address filling Mrs. Waterbury's director position.

We updated the COVID-19 fact sheet (sent via email) to reflect changes that include no travel restrictions and another extension to remote public meetings. The factsheet is available on our website.

Nominations for the Community Recognition Program are due June 1. An article was in the Tug Hill Times and the form is available on our website. Circuit riders are sharing the information at meetings. A press release will be sent out soon also. We will announce who is chosen at our annual meeting in October.

Community Recognition Award

Commission staff is working on virtual training events for the months of May and June (sent via email). The webinars will remain virtual at least for this spring. Mrs. Harvill provided a presentation on the upcoming webinar trainings: Broadband three-part series on May 12, May 19, June 16; Ms. Mallette is working on the Abolition & Underground Railroad three-part series on May 20, June 10, June 2; Mr. Johnson is working on the Comprehensive Planning on May 27 and Regulating Short Term Rentals on June 23; Ms. Harvill is working on the Black River Watershed Conference Wednesday Webinars which we are hosting virtually with the soil and water conservation districts on May 12, May 19, May 26, June 2, June 9, June 16, June 30 (sent via email).

May/June Training

Other webinars we are working on include another Constable Hall series and a historical series, in the fall.

Ms. Mallette provided a presentation to update on the broadband project she and Ms. Fowler have been working on. We are working on different levels with the North County, Central New York, and Mohawk Valley, with regional partners in each of the areas that are working with ECC Technologies. Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties are part of the Development Authority of the North Country process. Lewis County's survey is done, and they have formed a legislative broadband committee and are reviewing how to move forward. The survey is in progress for Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties, both hope to be done by end of April. Oswego County's inventory is near completion and Onondaga County's inventory is complete. Both will begin survey the end of April. Oneida County inventory to be completed by end of June and Herkimer County inventory to be completed by end of May. Both will begin survey the beginning of May. We are hoping both the infrastructure and the inventory for the whole broadband project is completed by August. The commission will host a regional map that will include 911 addresses, broadband infrastructure, and census data. This will be a web portal and mapping service.

Broadband

Ms. Fowler provided a presentation on the upcoming Broadband webinar series. Scott Rasmussen with Empire State Development will present the Statewide Perspective on Broadband on May 12. Joe Starks and Andy Lukasiewicz with ECC Technologies, will present a regional perspective, How Broadband can be Delivered, a look at the Southern Tier Network on May 19. David Wolf with Development Authority of the North Country will present Technical Solutions and Things to Consider for Broadband on June 16. These virtual webinars are open to the public.

Mrs. Malinowski will meet with Senator Griffo or his staff this week on Minimum Maintenance Roads to discuss the proposed bill edits and the Appellate court case of November 20. Tim Hunt, Lewis County highway superintendent will also be attending the meeting.

MMR

Mr. Johnson will be presenting at Oswego County Cooperative Extension virtual solar workshop in May for the farming community. Mrs. Malinowski will be presenting for New York Planning Federation on one of their solar webinars in June. Mr. Johnson shared he attended the kickoff meeting Friday for the NYSERDA Ag Technical Working Group that he is he was asked to be a part of. There are 15 members from different planning entities and farm lobby entities. The group will meet quarterly and work on better ways to balance agriculture and clean energy goals in New York State.

Solar

The Climate Action Council is in process of listening to advisory panel presentation. They heard several recommendations in April and will meet in in May to hear remaining recommendations. Mrs. Malinowski is on the land use and government panel that will present their recommendation next month. The Climate Action Council has recently hired an executive director.

Legalizing marijuana passed and we are receiving questions from communities about local laws being adopted, opting out, tax structure details, and more. Municipalities are trying to figure out what to do. We plan to put together a fact sheet of issue paper as we collect information.

Marijuana

Federal money will be issued in Installment payments and will be going to municipalities beginning in May. At this time there are no clear rules or guidelines on how funds are to be used. The village figures are included in the town's figures, which will need clarification on amounts for each. Municipalities have many questions on how they can use the money they are scheduled to receive. Questions include if funds can be used on COVID related issues, possibility sewer and water, and more. Some type of workshop would be beneficial once we collect more information to assist our municipalities.

American Recovery Plan

NorCOG/SRCG – Mr. House mayor of Central Square was present and shared they are concerned about the recovery plan and how the money can be used. The village is working on a sewer upgrade and there are always improvements to roads. It would be nice to use some recovery funds for these projects. Waiting for regulations on how funds are to be used.

COG Reports

Mr. Baxter reported that West Monroe is working on land use and zoning for subdivisions. Constantia has a change in planning board chair and are looking at upgrade their comprehensive plan. The Parish referendum on the water district proceeding at a higher cost was defeated and they are figuring out how to proceed. Amboy completed the comprehensive plan update and is looking into how to improve their water system.

The financial report (sent via email) \$10,000 was allocated for equipment by members at our March meeting, but most purchases were not made as working on state contract took longer than expected. The commission's final 21-22 budget numbers are the same as 20-21. There is \$954,000 under cash ceiling which includes salaries and non-personal services. Salary increases and steps were frozen for 20-21 but should come through this year and will come out of this fiscal year, which should have been in last years. Mrs. Waterbury's retirement, the NOCCOG circuit rider position and hiring a new director will also hopefully take place. The internet line is high due to using the cloud and zoom technology. The equipment line is down as we eliminated the postage machine as we are using stamps now and the lease payment went down on copiers with minimal use last year. Money was built in for LGC and printing. Money was allocated for the snowmobile impact study last year. We ended our GIS ESRI subscription. Money for training was added. We bumped up commissioner travel. These are some highlights, and more items are detailed in the report that members can review.

Finance Report

On a motion made by Commissioner Yerdon and seconded by Commission Chereshnoski members approved the proposed budget as presented.

Commissioner Bogdanowicz opened the floor for public comment.

Public Comment

Commissioner Bogdanowicz reminded members to complete the financial disclosure by May 15 and the Community Recognition nominees are due June 1.

Mrs. Kimball shared that the CTHC executive committee will not hold a spring meeting this year but hope to hold a fall meeting.

There being no further business, on a motion made by Commissioner Yerdon and seconded by Commissioner Cheresnoski members adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m. **Adjourn**

These minutes were approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Tom Boxberger

Secretary