

January 28, 2022

Remote Meetings Extended Through February 14, 2022

On January 14, 2022, Governor Kathy Hochul signed into Law Chapter 1 of the Laws of 2022 amending Chapter 417 of the Laws of 2021 to authorize any public body (as that term is defined by §102(2) of the Open Meetings Law) “to meet and take such action authorized by law without permitting in public in-person access to meetings and authorize such meetings to be held remotely by conference call or similar service, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceeding and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed.”

Chapter 1 takes effect immediately and shall expire and be deemed repealed upon the expiration or termination of the state disaster emergency declared pursuant to Governor Hochul’s Executive Order 11 or any extension or modification thereof. As of the date of this memo, Executive Order 11.2 had extended Executive Order 11 through February 14, 2022.

Here is the link to the .pdf version of this memo: <https://opengovernment.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/01/Extension%20of%20Chapter%20417.pdf> .

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Commission Planner Position Vacancy

The Tug Hill Commission continues to recruit to fill a planner vacancy. The commission is hiring an entry level Planner to assist local governments in the rural Tug Hill region with land use planning, local law development and revision, and general technical support to planning boards and other municipal boards. Minimum qualifications are a Master’s Degree in Planning or Bachelor’s Degree in relevant field with experience. Degree requirement may be substituted with substantial relevant experience. The expected beginning salary is \$49,834. The position also includes NYS management/confidential benefits including health insurance and NYS retirement.

Interested applicants should submit a resume and cover letter to Matt Johnson, matt@tughill.org. Application materials are being reviewed on a rolling basis. The full announcement can be viewed at tughill.org/job-openings/.

2022 LGC Registration Open

Registration and session information for the April 19, 2022 Tug Hill Local Government Conference at Turning Stone Event Center is available at www.tughill.org/lgc2022. The regular registration fee is \$75 if postmarked by March 18, 2022, and can be paid on-line via credit or mailed in with a check. There will be ample opportunity to visit vendors, network with colleagues, and learn from speakers with varying areas of expertise. A training certificate will be provided to all attendees as well. Hope to see you there!



Broadband Continues to be a Hot Topic on Tug Hill and Beyond

The Rockefeller Institute of Government recently published an article providing a good general overview of what has been going on with broadband, nationally. You can read the article here: [With Billions for Broadband Incoming, How Have State and Local Governments Expanded High-Speed Internet Access? | Rockefeller Institute of Government \(rockinst.org\)](https://www.rockinst.org/2021/12/15/with-billions-for-broadband-incoming-how-have-state-and-local-governments-expanded-high-speed-internet-access/). After hearing many concerns from local officials on Tug Hill, the commission has worked with regional and local leaders to identify what broadband needs there are and where they are.

The article highlights five nationwide, state-level policies and initiatives for promoting broadband:

1. “creation of strategic plans, mapping initiatives, and broadband offices,
2. funding and tax incentives to encourage investment by private internet service providers (ISPs),
3. construction of publicly owned broadband infrastructure,
4. rights-of-way laws and other efforts at enabling infrastructure access, and
5. promoting broadband adoption and addressing affordability and awareness.”

There have been several major state-level initiatives in New York to expand broadband. The NYS Broadband Program Office has administered many grants to internet service providers and others to close the digital gap between urban and rural areas of New York. A second initiative was a 2021 law that requires internet service providers to offer a \$15 per month broadband plan to low-income households. Currently, a statewide mapping initiative is underway to identify gaps in coverage areas, especially for unserved and underserved households, as well as gaps in broadband adoption for reasons spanning from cost to quality of service.

All Tug Hill counties have partnered with the same consultant that NYS contracted to map coverage gaps in Tug Hill communities. In the next week or so, the commission will complete its analysis of infrastructure gaps in collaboration with several counties and regional partners, which will be uploaded to the commission’s broadband map and website: www.tughill.org/broadband. They will be called, “target areas.”

If a community, after reviewing the map and/or speaking with their residents, would like to find out ways to encourage broadband investment in their target areas, please reach out to the commission, Jennifer Harvill at jennifer@tughill.org. The commission does not provide broadband services, however, it is connecting communities to internet service providers, county contacts, and regional organizations to promote broadband expansion in target areas.

Town of Montague Follows Suit with other Tug Hill Communities on Renewable Energy Regulations

In the past year, the towns of Watertown, Albion, and Amboy have worked with commission staff to develop and enact local laws to regulate renewable energy development. The town of Camden recently held a public hearing on a solar energy system moratorium. The town of Montague is following suit with these Tug Hill towns.

Town supervisor Bruce Williams is working closely with the commission to amend Montague’s land use law to include provisions for solar energy system development and battery energy storage system development. Though the town recognizes that major solar development is unlikely within their borders due to the amount of core forest area and topography, they want to preserve community character and protect their residents from the potential negative visual impacts. The town will be working with the commission over the next month to draft provisions and the town will begin the amendment adoption procedure in the spring.

Any residents of Montague should reach out to their town board to share their perspective as the town continues to draft its renewable energy provisions. If other communities are interested in partnering with the commission to draft their own provisions, please reach out to Matt Johnson, matt@tughill.org. Note that the commission may not be able to begin a new process for a few months due to work loads and staff leaves.

Clean Energy Communities

Program Overview and Q&A



Thursday Feb 24th 6:30 PM

Register in advance for
this webinar:

tinyurl.com/TugHillCEC

Topics Include:

Rebates & Incentives

Grant Funding

LED Streetlights

Energy Code
Enforcement Training

Electric Vehicles and
Charging Stations

Clean Heating
& Cooling

Community Campaigns

Benchmarking





**Office of Cannabis
Management**

CANNABIS CONVERSATIONS

Let's talk about the new law and next
steps for cannabis in New York

Western New York Thursday 1/27

Finger Lakes Monday 1/31

New York City Wednesday 2/2

Southern Tier Thursday 2/3

Central New York Monday 2/7

Mohawk Valley Wednesday 2/9

North County Thursday 2/10

Capital Region Tuesday 2/15

Mid-Hudson Wednesday 2/16

Long Island Thursday 2/17

Spanish Speaking (statewide) Monday 2/21

Events from 6pm-7pm

Register for your regional conversation at:

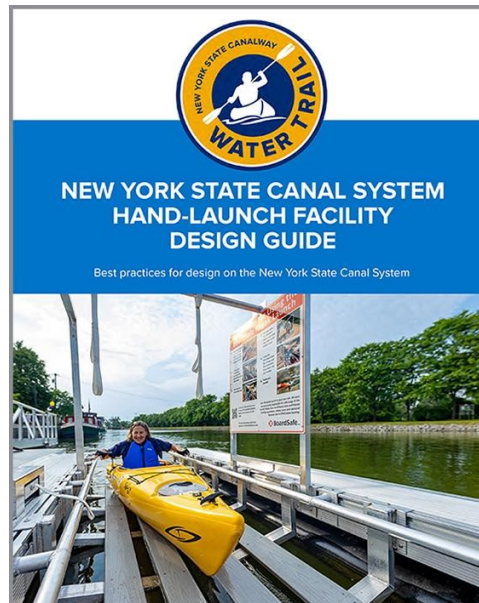
<https://ocmeventsnyc.eventbrite.com/>

Erie Canalway Heritage Fund Produces Hand-Launch Facility Design Guide

The Erie Canalway Heritage Fund has created a Hand-Launch Facility Design Guide with best practices for design on the New York State Canal System. Oneida Lake, the southern boundary of the Tug Hill region, is part of the state canal system.

The 70-page guide includes information on characteristics of a good hand-launch, special conditions on the state canal system, information on hand-launch facilities and equipment, universal access considerations, and guidance on enhancements, retrofits, operations, and maintenance. While the guide was created with the Canalway in mind, this guide contains information which would be useful for anyone considering the development or improvement of hand-launch facilities.

The Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor and Erie Canalway Heritage Fund can be found on the Internet at eriecanalway.org, and the Hand-Launch Facility Design Guide at www.tinyurl.com/canalhandlaunchdesign.



Contact Us

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To request our newsletter electronically please email gwen@tughill.org or call

1-888-785-2380.

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

Commission Meeting Video Recordings and Minutes Available

Videos of all Tug Hill Commission board meetings starting in April of 2020 are available on our [YouTube channel](#). Commission board meeting minutes since 2016 are available at tughill.org/minutes/. For minutes from previous years, please contact the office.

The next scheduled meeting of the Tug Hill Commission is Monday, March 21 in Cleveland, NY. More details will be available closer to the date. The complete 2022 meeting calendar is available at tughill.org/commission-meeting-schedule/.

