

January 1, 2021

Letters from a Tug Hill Logger Winter 2021 Series

The Tug Hill Commission is excited to offer a historical and entertaining series of webinars called "Letters from a Tug Hill Logger." We hope you'll join us for this three-part series narrated by Leona and Peter Chereshnoski, the granddaughter and great-grandson of John Clemens and keepers of his treasured scrapbooks of memories. They will read letters, share stories, show off artifacts and photos and "spin yarns" of Tug Hill logging in its hey-day, all through the eyes of two remarkable personalities, one who wrote the stories and the other that broadcast them over the radio for the masses to hear.

A cache of letters exchanged between John "Old Lard" Clemens and Robert "Deacon" Doubleday, a popular early morning Syracuse radio announcer in the middle 1900s, provide the backdrop for this series. Each page-long letter, written by Clemens and read over the air by the Deacon, tells some tale of the Tug Hill woods or some character who could be found there. In the slang of the woods, using comical nicknames, and with a flavor all his own, Clemens "spun the yarns" for about ten years.



Deacon Doubleday from www.radiotimeline.com/wsyr-syracuse-tribute/

In This Issue

- Tug Hill Logger Webinar Series
- Executive Order No. 202.87
- Organizational Meetings
- Oaths of Office
- Conservation on Tug Hill Webinars
- Lowville Community Survey and Website Launched
- Parish Zoning
- Firefighters Grants
- Emergency Planning Webinar
- NYS DEC Urban and Community Forestry Grants
- Green Infrastructure Funding
- Invasive Species Symposium

Letters from a Tug Hill Logger - Part 1

Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Register in advance at: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_km0oVByPRImsBgJvAFbfcQ

Letters from a Tug Hill Logger - Part 2

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 07:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Register in advance at: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7FQt7HgTpmUVADeB7gTDg

Letters from a Tug Hill Logger - Part 3

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Register in advance at: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SgIXM7TJSSCQccG2uv6eSw

Executive Order No. 202.87

Governor Cuomo has issued Executive Order No. 202.87, which extends the authorization for local governments to hold meetings remotely by video or teleconference call, provided that the public has the ability to view or listen to such proceedings and that such meetings are recorded and later transcribed, through January 29, 2021.

Town Board Organizational Meeting

The question always comes up for towns in New York State this time of year – when do we hold our organizational meeting? Is there a date by which we *must* meet?

No. In the past, the New York State Association of Towns has advised that:

It is important for each town board to start each calendar year with an organizational meeting, which should be held during the first few days of January.

The town board may schedule the meeting by resolution, or pursuant to Town Law, §62, it may be scheduled by the supervisor. It is important to note that a supervisor-elect has no authority to act prior to taking office January 1st and so may not schedule a special meeting until he or she begins the term of office.

New York State Town Law section 62, which addresses town board meetings, only states that towns “shall meet on or before the twentieth day of January in each year for the purpose of making the annual accounting by town officers and employees as required by section one hundred twenty-three of this chapter” (with certain exceptions subsequently noted).

Towns having their regular town board meeting in the earlier part of the month sometimes opt to hold their organization meeting on that date, with the regular monthly meeting following.

Towns which hold their meetings later on in the month, or which have pressing organizational business or topics which need to be addressed sooner rather than later, may choose to hold a special meeting earlier than that. Such organizational meetings fall under the usual state laws and procedures for special meetings.

Where there has been significant change in the town’s elected officers, the town may wish to schedule an early special meeting for the purpose of taking care of those matters which keep town activities going without interruption or disruption.

Did You Know...Oaths of Office

Public Officers Law section 10 and Town Law section 25 require that every public officer “...take and subscribe” an oath of office “before an officer authorized by law to administer oaths...” and to file that oath of office before he or she performs any official duties. The oath of office for an elective office must be taken and filed before duties are performed and within thirty days after the commencement of the term of office. The oath of office for an appointive office must be taken and filed within thirty days after notice of appointment or within thirty days after the commencement of the term of office. All “town officers” are subject to this requirement – any position where the functions and duties directly affect the citizens of the town and involve the exercise of the powers of the town, would be considered a town officer (including deputies, planning and zoning board members, assessment review board members etc.).

The above cited section of the Public Officers Law also outlines who may administer an oath of office. These include notary publics, town councilmen or town justices in the town they serve, town supervisors or town clerks if they have taken their oath of office, justices of the State Supreme Court or Court of Appeals and several others (see Public Officers Law section 10). Once the oath has been completed the oath of office needs to be filed with the town clerk’s office, and town justices and court clerks must additionally file an oath of office with the county clerk and the Office of Court Administration. The oath of office is good for the term of the office for which it is taken.

Taking and filing an oath of office is very important because if an individual refuses or fails to file in the time limit established by law, the office automatically becomes vacant per Public Officers Law section 30 (1)(h). Taking and filing the oath late **does not** cure the vacancy. If the appointing body so desires it may fill the vacancy that occurs in this instance. The only exemption to this time frame deals with members of the Armed Forces who are absent from the county they reside in at the time of appointment and this case has its own time requirements. The actions of officers who continue to serve in their positions after a failure to file their oath are still considered valid under Public Officers Law section 15, but the officer can be notified of the vacancy by the town and then replaced at any time.



CONSERVATION ON TUG HILL

A THREE-PART WEBINAR SERIES FROM THE TUG HILL TOMORROW LAND TRUST AND NYS TUG HILL COMMISSION FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND LANDOWNERS

Wednesday, January 13, 7:00 p.m.

Conservation Easements 101: Fact vs Fiction.

An introduction to Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust and the primary tool they use to protect land. Register [here](#).



Wednesday, February 10, 7:00 p.m.

Farmland Conservation.

Learn how towns and farmers can partner with the land trust to protect important farmlands using state and federal grant programs. Register [here](#).

Wednesday, March 10, 7:00 p.m.

Forest Conservation.

Learn about the multiple benefits of forest conservation, and existing and proposed funding programs. Register [here](#).



Town and Village of Lowville Launch Community Survey and Website for Comprehensive Plan

The Town and Village of Lowville Comprehensive Planning Committee has launched its community survey to capture Lowville residents, business owners, and frequent visitors' voices as they establish a common vision for Lowville's future. Lowville residents may have already received a postcard in the mail encouraging them to fill out the community survey online or request a paper copy from the village or town clerk. Whether you live, work, or play in Lowville, your input is crucial to the development of the joint comprehensive plan for the town and village of Lowville. The survey will be open until January 31, 2021. Visit lowville.racog.org/compplan2021 to access the online community survey, check for updates on the comprehensive planning process, resources (including, the previous plan, the committee's recorded meetings, and contact information), and virtual comment card.

Village of Parish Updates Zoning Law

The Parish Village Board voted last week to adopt revisions to its zoning law. The new law, which includes updated standards for manufactured homes, manufactured home parks, and signs, is the result of a major effort undertaken by the Town and Village Planning Board. The new law will be posted on the Parish website in the near future - www.villageofparish-ny.us. Please contact the commission if your community is in need of zoning help.

Assistance to Firefighters Grant Application Period Opens

The Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) application period opens on Monday, January 4 and will close on Friday, February 12. The AFG Program provides financial assistance directly to eligible fire departments, and nonaffiliated emergency medical service (EMS) organizations for critical training and equipment. The program is one of three grant programs that constitute the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) focus on enhancing the safety of the public and firefighters with respect to fire and fire-related hazards.

Plan your AFG grant application now by reviewing the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and application guidance materials. Guidelines can be viewed on the AFG Program website at: [FY 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant \(AFG\) Application Guidance Materials | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov/assistance-to-firefighters-grant).

FEMA will host a series of [live webinars](#) beginning on January 12 to provide an overview of the FY 2020 AFG grant program. The presentations will outline important information and reminders about cost share requirements, program priorities, eligible costs, how to navigate the grant application, and tips for preparing an AFG application. FEMA Preparedness Officers will be available to answer questions.

Public Employer Emergency Planning Requirement Webinar Recording Available

On Tuesday, December 29, Timothy Riecker from Emergency Preparedness Solutions delivered a very timely webinar to 34 local officials and agency personnel. A new law that went into effect in September 2020 requires public employers to create plans to protect employees and contractors in the event of another public health emergency declaration in NYS. The requirement for these plans applies to all local, county and state government entities, including authorities and public benefit corporations and districts.

To view the webinar, which includes Tim's powerpoint and questions and answers during the presentation, go to the commission's YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/channel/UCvolFp3AbYIQW0DNDSTNHww

NYSDEC Urban and Community Forestry and Conservation Partnership Program Awards

To improve the health of urban and community forests and increase the sustainability of forestry programs, NYSDEC offers an annual Urban and Community Forestry grant of up to \$75,000 for large communities, and \$50,000 for small communities. In December 2020, NYSDEC announced \$1.4 million in awards under round 15, with the city of Watertown being awarded \$50,000 for tree maintenance activities. If your community is interested in tree education, inventories, management, and/or maintenance, contact Tug Hill Commission staff to help you plan for round 16 to support your project ideas. For more information, visit: www.dec.ny.gov/press/122001.html

To help local land trusts sustain and expand community and landowner outreach initiatives and develop an array of conservation, stewardship and education programs, NYSDEC and the Land Trust Alliance Conservation Partnership Program recently awarded \$2.2 million in partnership grants throughout the state. [Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust](#) (THLT) was awarded a total of \$35,190 for capacity and land transactions in the Tug Hill region.

Funding Available for Green Infrastructure Improvements & Planning

Funding through two state agencies is available for green infrastructure to improve water quality and initial planning of projects. Applications for the [Green Innovation Grant Program](#) (\$17 million) and the [Engineering Planning Grant](#) (\$2 million) are now being accepted through the Consolidated Funding Application. The deadline for all applications is **Friday, February 12, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

There is \$19 million in federal grant funding available to municipalities through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) for infrastructure projects that protect or improve water quality. This funding is made available through two programs -- the Green Innovation Grant Program (GIGP) and the Engineering Planning Grant Program (EPG). Funding through the GIGP will support projects aimed at improving water quality and mitigating the effects of climate change through the implementation of green stormwater infrastructure, as well as energy and water efficiency efforts. The EPG funding will help municipalities pay for the initial planning of water quality projects.

The Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will evaluate and score all projects for which applications are received based on several factors, including level of water quality protection or enhancement, financial need, and readiness of the community to proceed expeditiously with the project.

EFC will host a webinar to present the GIGP and EPG programs on January 13, 2021, at 11 a.m. A recording of the webinar will be available on EFC's website. The webinar will provide an overview of the GIGP and EPG, as well as guidance on how to apply for grant funds. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions. You may register for the webinar on EFC's website www.efc.ny.gov.

Seeking Abstracts and Exhibitors for June 2021 Invasive Species Symposium

The biennial symposium is hosted by the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM). It is a professional exchange of information that provides applicable and timely ways to support invasive species prevention and management initiatives while also enhancing the health and resiliency of the natural systems that make the St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario region so special.

The theme for this symposium is *Protecting Our Lands and Waters from the Impacts of Invasive Species*. Abstract submissions and exhibits should be geared toward or applicable to invasive species work within the SLELO region. Due to COVID, Presenters/Exhibitors should be prepared for both an in-person or virtual symposium. Please [submit abstracts](#) no later than February 1, 2021. Reach out to Megan.Pistolese@tnc.org with the subject "symposium" with any questions.

Contact Us

NYS Tug Hill Commission

317 Washington Street
Watertown, NY 13601

Phone: 315-785-2380

Toll Free within the region:

1-888-785-2380

Email: tughill@tughill.org

Visit us at:

Web: www.tughill.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TugHillCommission

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](#).