

TUG HILL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

May 15, 2023

Town of Constantia, 14 Frederick Street, Constantia, NY 13044

Chairman Bogdanowicz opened the meeting at 10:12 a.m.

Opened

Commission members included Messrs. Bogdanowicz, Yerdon, Maciejko, Boxberger and Mdm. Cheresnoski. Staff included Katie Malinowski, Gwen Decker, and Paul Baxter circuit rider (NorCOG). Guests – Vern Sundet supervisor (West Monroe), and Carole Kupelian resident (Constantia).

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 Yerdon and seconded by Commissioner Maciejko members approved the minutes of March 20, 2023.

Minutes Approved

Chairman's report followed.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Bogdanowicz welcomed everyone and thanked the town of Constantia for hosting the meeting. Introductions were made.

Welcome

Thank you to staff, sponsors, COGs and attendees who made our Local Government Conference at Turning Stone held April 5 and 6 a successful event.

Three Assembly, three Senate, and one Governor appointment are pending. Bob Keller, Oneida County, submitted a resume and it has been forwarded to the governor's office. Mr. Maciejko is retiring at the end of his term in July. There is someone that has expressed an interest in that vacancy. It is unclear how long finalization of appointments will take.

In March, the village of Pulaski presented a letter of interest to join the Salmon Rivers Council of Government. Mr. Baxter reported the letter of interest went to chair William Potter. The executive committee met with Mrs. Malinowski to discuss as the village of Pulaski joining as the village is outside the region. In April, membership was offered to the village. Currently with associate circuit riders Vern Sundet and Heidi Kelley there is the ability to provide meeting coverage. If additional municipalities join the COG, additional staffing may be needed.

Commissioner Bogdanowicz shared that the 2003 Outside the Region policy requires updating. He requested a committee be formed to discuss what resources are necessary in updating the policy. Commissioners Boxberger, Cheresnoski and Yerdon volunteered to be on the committee along with Commissioner Bogdanowicz. He will also ask Mr. Willbanks to be on the committee.

On a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commission Cheresnoski member approved to forming the committee to update the Outside Region Policy.

Executive Director's report followed.

**Executive Director's
Report**

Mrs. Malinowski reported the commission is in the enacted budget. Included in the budget was an increase of \$71,000 for personal services. Not included was the \$100,000 dry appropriation for special revenue allowing us to process payments and expenses for the LGC. Also included was \$1,000,000 in EPF for ACUB.

Administration

The new 2023 Toyota RAV 4 was delivered on May 9. We are working with the state system to process the registration, plates, and insurance to be able to drive the vehicle. We hope to have it on the road this week. The 2011 Toyota RAV 4 is at DOT, Rt. 342, Watertown until an auction date and location can be confirmed.

We are interviewing for the planner position. There is a candidate that we are considering, who would need training.

The Local Government Conference was successful, and the added drone session went well. The first Scott Chatfield session had a few issues that were addressed, and the second session went fine. Survey results, budget summary, attendance by COG (handouts) are provided. Attendance appears to be 50/50 within/outside the region. NOCCOG attendance went up due to the location being in Oneida County. The unaffiliated attendance has dropped, as we have fewer unaffiliated communities. Last year we had a loss of \$8000, and this year we had a loss of \$300. Food costs have increased. Registration was raised from \$75 to \$85. We worked hard to get sponsorships.

LGC

Looking ahead for 2024 Turning Stone has provided us with a proposal. They will not guarantee state rate rooms on site and want us to guarantee 67 rooms at a higher rate. They have given an available date for end of March. Jefferson Community College provided an available date for beginning of April but has not provided a cost for food and facility yet. We toured Drivers Village in Cicero, however there is not enough space. Another possibility we thought about using Tailwater Lodge and breaking up the conference. A decision should be made by the middle of June.

A draft nomination form and updated sage summary (handouts) are ready for the board to review as well as a timeline for nomination submissions. The board agreed the new sages will be selected by the end of September. The board will do the selection process as a whole rather forming a subcommittee.

Tug Hill Sages

The survey result summary (handout) for the 2023 Local Leaders Survey shows a return rate currently at 40% to date. More responses are anticipated to be returned. Mrs. Malinowski shared that the survey questionnaire contained one error that was brought to her attention by Mr. Sundet. The error is in section two regarding the answering scale on how important and how effective, the scales were same for each question and should have been different. The issue was addressed and both the paper copy and online survey were corrected. Mrs. Malinowski contacted Joel Lalone, Center for Community Studies at Jefferson Community College regarding the error and they plan to review the data once the survey is completed and make an assumption to determine the best way to compute the data on the surveys that the error occurred.

Local Leaders Survey

Commissioner Boxberger requested a footnote be included in the final results.

Minimum Maintenance Roads legislation – S1836/A2225 is on the senate agenda this week and we believe it will pass. Assemblyman Barclay is working to get it on the assembly agenda. Mrs. Malinowski and Commissioner Bogdanowicz submitted a memorandum for support (handout) to leadership in both houses and transportation committee.

MMR

Home Rule legislation for the town of Lorraine passed last Thursday. A memorandum for support (handout) for legislation for Lorraine was submitted to bill sponsors and they received a bill number A6412/S6249.

Wildlife Management Area legislation - S5405/A2141 is in the assembly and senate. Senator Mannion, Senator Walczyk and Assemblyman Barclay sponsor the legislation. We're not sure if it will move at this time.

Wildlife Management Area

At a recent CTHC meeting Francis Yerdon, Osceola supervisor expressed concern regarding 480A and asked for the commission for assistance. He has contacted Senator Walczyk for assistance in legislation. The commission has sent Senator Walczyk information on 480A.

480A

The commission submitted the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee grant request for \$56,500. If successful, the grant would be available to us by October 1. A traffic safety coordinator would do traffic safety in the four counties. We would like to fill our last vacancy, to bring the staff to 15 FTEs. The grant would pay for half of the 15th position.

Traffic Safety

Real Property Tax Law 575-b— appraisal model (handout) advises assessors how to appraise property with wind and solar. We reached out to NYSERDA on this. The town of Denmark is filing a lawsuit with Lewis County against this. The local control is appearing to be going to the state. We are working on updating our solar paper. Communities need to be specific about where they want solar and wind and take affirmative action.

Real Property Tax

Mr. Baxter reported that there has been much discussion regarding a North Shore economic study. With Micron on the horizon and its proximity communities are wondering how the economic development map would look. The study could help to determine how the four North Shore COG communities want to promote and manage associated growth.

COG Report

Vern Sundet, West Monroe supervisor shared that all municipalities in NorCog are on board for the survey. The county is considering taking more control of individual community sewer and water system. There are nine municipal treatment plants in Oswego County without the resources to take care of the communities. With Micron coming in it is a cause for more concern. Therefore, North Shore reached out to RACOG to learn about their economic study, and now has requested the commission assist with a similar study for the North Shore.

Mr. Baxter shared the village of Pulaski was approved and has joined SRCG as a member. There is a possibility Richland and Sandy Creek may be interested. Associates will be assisting with meeting coverage.

The 2022-23 year to date financial statement (handout) is not quite an end of year statement as there are still a few outstanding expenses. We are over on advertising due to multiple times running the planner position. We are over on IT due ACC coming on board and added costs for their services. Research and analysis is low as we are working with PBS on a 50th anniversary video that is not included yet. A new copier was purchased for the office. We are under budget.

Finance Report

The 2023-24 draft budget (handout) includes salary increases, potential steps for staff, and longevity. Laird Petrie has agreed to continue providing financial assistance to municipalities. Lee Willbanks has agreed to continue as the commission counsel. Other items include vehicle repairs, lodging, and traveling. We allocated \$30,000 for 2022-23 for the purchase of the new RAV, however, reallocated that to 2023-24 as it will come out of this year's budget, as the state purchasing process took long even though it was started in last year's budget.

On a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Maciejko, members approved the 2023-24 budget as presented.

Mrs. Malinowski shared that she will be on vacation May 22-31. Mr. Johnson and Mrs. Harvill will be covering in her absence. Mr. Johnson will be attending Fort Drum Day on May 30 in Albany in her place. Mr. Boxberger will be the emcee for the Black River Watershed Conference on June 14 at Zero Dock Street in Carthage.

Commissioner Bogdanowicz opened the floor for public comment.

Public Comment

Commissioner Maciejko presented each board member with his letter of resignation effective August 1, 2023. He expressed appreciation to the board and has enjoyed his time serving the commission for 27 years.

Adjourn

There being no further business, on a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Cheresnoski members adjourned the meeting at 11:24 a.m.

These minutes were approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Tom Boxberger

Secretary