

TUG HILL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 22, 2024

Town of Trenton, 8520 Old Poland Rd., Barneveld, NY 13304

Chairman Bogdanowicz opened the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Opened

Commission members included Messrs. Bogdanowicz, Boxberger, Yerdon and Mdms. Ritter and Cheresnoski. Staff included Katie Malinowski, Gwen Decker, John Healt. Guests – Stephen Godfrey, Trenton supervisor; Willy Strieff, Floyd supervisor; Joe Rowlands, NOCCOG associate circuit rider; Betsy Mack, Dale Jones and Lee Willbanks, commission attorney.

Attendance

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

Agenda Approved

On a motion made by Commissioner Yerdon and seconded by Commissioner Cheresnoski, members approved the minutes of December 11, 2023.

Minutes Approved

Chairman's report followed.

Chairman's Report

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

Welcome

The commission was included in the Governor's 2024-25 budget that was introduced last week, with an increase of \$32,000 for personal services.

We are making some progress with the governor's appointments. We are working with Bob Keller on his appointment with background checks. Fred Munk, from Lewis County, recently retired from DEC Region 6, is interested in serving on our board. We have forwarded his resume to the governor's office.

Executive Director's report followed.

Executive Director's Report

Mrs. Malinowski reported the commissioners Cheresnoski, Ritter and Scriber have completed their oath of office for their assembly appointments.

Administration

We were included in the governor's budget and received an increase of \$32,00 in personal services. Jillian Lee accepted the project specialist position and will begin in February. This will bring staff to 14. We requested \$50,000 increase in our special revenue other (SRO) account for non-personal services related LCG accounting and asked to submit a letter along with it. Mrs. Malinowski will be in Albany tomorrow and will check on this.

Last year we received a governor's traffic safety grant just under \$50,000. The contract went into effect October 1, 2023, no funds have been received from the grant to date. Mr. Barboza is on staff for 50% traffic safety and 50% planner. Mrs. Malinowski has reached out several times and gotten nowhere.

Jillian Lee will be starting February 1 filling a project specialist position. She joined in on a Zoom meeting last week. She has a bachelor's degree in meteorology from SUNY Oneonta and master's degree in water science from the University of Delaware.

The Local Government Conference registration flyer was mailed the beginning of January. Commissioners can register online using a code. Please let Ms. Passino know if you will need a hotel room. May 1 is Infrastructure Roundtable 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and Reception 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. May 2 full day training sessions 7:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

LGC

Mrs. Malinowski will deliver the Local Leaders Survey to the Governor's office and legislature January 24 in Albany. She will meet with Assemblyman Magnarelli along with AATV to thank him for his support of the Lorraine low volume roads bill. While in Albany she plans to discuss the outside region policy and increasing our budget to accommodate increasing numbers of COG communities.

Local Leaders Survey

Mrs. Malinowski shared several items of interest for the Tug Hill region that are in the budget announcement last week. ACUB was included in the EPF (Environmental Protection Fund) at \$500,000.

Budget

The town of Montague is working on a home rule legislation (A8583/S8100) much like the home rule legislation (A6412/S6249A) for the town of Lorraine that passed in December.

MMR

There is a land issue with the Montague Highway Garage bordering state land. Both Montague and the state would need to give each other land to resolve, legislation is likely but has not been submitted yet.

Dendrology is the study of rings of trees. Peter Hayes trying to date lumber used in Constable Hall's construction. We connected Peter with Bob McNamara. Peter is interested in creating a database for big old trees on Tug Hill. Bob is looking into other places in the country that have done this.

Dendrology

Mrs. Malinowski had a call with NYS Association of Conservation Commissions (NYSACC) to discuss partnering with them on their fall 2024 conference. Trenton and Boonville Conservation Advisory Committees will be included in planning

NYSACC

Staff is working on road mapping for Lorraine, Turin, Annsville, and Redfield. We have been consulting with attorney Mark Schachner on some legal questions. We created an overview process .

Road Mapping

The Forest Industry Trends and Forecast 2024 article from the Northern Logger explores using wood instead of steel in structural buildings, making insulation from soft wood fiber, and how the economy is changing.

Forest Economy

The Winter Wildlife series webinar on the Fisher was completed. The next in the series is Martens on February 20. Clean Energy Communities webinar is February 29.

**Presentations
Workshops**

Related to history webinars, we are brainstorming on Salmon River Reservoir development, Blount Lumber, and others.

Commissioner Bogdanowicz suggested Woods Valley ski area. Commissioner Yerdon suggested contacting the Sandy Creek historian. Commissioner Chereshnoski suggested contacting Shawn Doyle on the reservoir.

Jill Markham O'Hara, a viewer of the G&W Railroad presentation with local ties, has reached out to us about a novel she is transcribing set in the area. Mrs. Malinowski put her in contact with Charlie Sweredoski who did the railroad presentation for us. We would be interested in having her do a presentation for us.

Mr. Healt reported the executive board met in December, the budget looks good, and things are going well. NOCCOG is covering the registration of one person in each municipality to attend the LGC. The scholarship program is set for this year. The GPS Program is getting ready for the upcoming season, John met with the mappers last week to discuss the possibility of the mappers also becoming drone pilots. There are numerous newly elected officials, including three new supervisors and three new clerks. Boonville (T&V) Forestport, Remsen are working on comprehensive plans, and Camden was recently completed. Town of Remsen finalized the purchase of the former Soda Fountain building for new town/village offices. Jim Moseman is retiring, he was the attorney for three NOCCOG municipalities. Village of Camden is rebuilding their DPW building, looking for ways to finance water and wastewater improvements. Vienna has begun work on expanding broadband infrastructure, they were the only NOCCOG town to invest ARPA money for the expansion. Annsville is considering update their official road map, and possibly Ava. Floyd invested ARPA money into replacing all the water meters, town wide.

COG Report

Joe Rowlands associate circuit rider shared that Forestport is exploring redoing a bridge, using panels from another bridge (the Tappan Zee), which is new technology. Barton and Loguidice are assisting.

The 2023-24 year to date financial statement was reviewed. We are looking into purchasing a new plotter and we purchased two computers, one for the new staff member and a spare, and our contribution for updating the recreational guide. The 2015 Fusion is in for repairs, looking ahead we want to think about a new vehicle.

Finance Report

Commissioner Bogdanowicz opened the floor for public comment.

Public Comment

Commissioner Yerdon shared concerns on changing the voting sequence proposed by the state. It could create issues for small towns and length of terms.

Trenton Supervisor Steve Godfrey thanked the commission for their support. Trenton has several initiatives happening, including the wastewater issue going through the Route 12 corridor for which Trenton is trying to gain money from state and county government. Trenton is in the planning stage now and BCA is working on grants; abandoned buildings are an issue; a new Dollar General is coming.

There being no further business, on a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Yerdon members adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

Adjourn

These minutes were approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Tom Boxberger

Secretary