

TUG HILL COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 18, 2026

Lorraine Municipal Building, 20876 County Route 189, Lorraine, NY 13659

Chair Ritter opened the meeting at 10:04 a.m.	Opened
Commission members included Mdm. Ritter and Messrs. Bogdanowicz, Boxberger, Munk, Scriber and Yerdon. Staff included Katie Malinowski, Gwen Decker, Taylor McKinney and Heidi Tompkins. Guests – Dave Broadhurst, Adams mayor, Jan Tighe, Pulaski trustee and SRCG chair, Norm Paradis, Worth councilman, and Lee Willbanks.	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 Scriber and seconded by Commissioner Bogdanowicz members approved the minutes of February 4, 2026.	Minutes Approved
Chair's report:	Chair's Report
Chair Ritter welcomed everyone and thanked the town of Lorraine for hosting. Introductions were made. Signs of spring are showing, and maple season is in progress. Chair Ritter and Ms. Malinowski met with Senator Griffo's staff and Assemblymember Buttenschon on budget increase for commission. Both are supportive of the commission. COG Chairs meeting is March 25, 6 - 8 p.m. in Rodman, and she cannot attend and asked if another commissioner could attend. Commissioners Boxberger and Bogdanowicz offered to attend. Chair Ritter indicated that Leona Cheresnoski would prefer not to have a separate event for her retirement celebration but rather be included at the annual dinner. Looking at options for the annual dinner, Osceola Ski Resort, available dates are October 1 or 8. The other possibility is Tailwater Lodge. Commissioner Scriber suggested if using Osceola Ski Resort changing to September as October could be a bit cold for outdoor pavilion. Gift ideas include a bird house or bird camera.	Welcome
Paperwork has been submitted for reappointments for Commissioners Yerdon and Boxberger. Paperwork for Jackie Hobbs has also been submitted.	
Executive Director's report:	ED Report
Ms. Malinowski reported the proposed 2026-27 executive budget for the commission is flat. She is working on a detailed 2026-27 commission budget for consideration at the May board meeting. Assemblyman Barclay sent a letter to Governor Hochul supporting a budget increase for the commission. Ms. Malinowski will be in Albany for Women's History month at the Governor's mansion and hopes to touch base on it while there. Assemblyman Barclay's office will be submitting another bill for Redfield to be added to Highway Law 205-c, where Lorraine is currently the only town listed. There is also a pending bill for Montague to be added. Assemblyman Barclay has announced he is not running for re-election. All	Administration

legislative meetings are done except with Assemblyman Gray. Senate appointments have been resubmitted by Senator Walczyk.

The Headwaters 2025-26 Annual Report and Newsletter was completed. It will be going out via email on Friday and in the mail next Tuesday. It is available on the commission's website now.

Headwaters

The Strategic Plan Dashboard is live on the commission website. The dashboard shows the 2025 finalized first year of progress for the commission's strategic plan.

Strategic Plan
Dashboard

A staff meeting schedule through the end of July was provided if commissioner would like to attend any of the meetings.

Staff Meetings

Registration numbers for the LGC are strong, with more expected by the end of this week. Looking ahead for 2027, the commission is working through an Information for Bid process required by the state.

Local Government
Conference

Ms. Malinowski suggested the personnel committee meet to discuss edits to the commission's Consolidated Procedures, Principles and Policies to review potential edits to outside the region policy and language adjustments that may be needed for flex time and comp over 40. Commissioner Ritter, Scriber, Boxberger and Yerdon serve on the committee.

Consolidated
Procedures, Principles
and Policies

Governor Hochul has launched a new portal Express NY, a statewide effort to improve how state government operates by cutting red tape. The public can share suggestions on the portal through April 3. This was discussed at this month's staff meeting and a number of items are being fleshed out. Commissioner suggestions are welcomed and can be included.

Express NY

Ms. Malinowski shared that Ben Coe has been declining and family has been called.

Ben Coe

The region's councils of governments continue to grow, mostly recently with the town of Sandy Creek joining Salmon Rivers. The village of Black River is interested in joining RACOG in May. The COG map has been updated to show Sandy Creek, and an updated spreadsheet shows communities outside the region that are in COGs. Clearly delineating what we can and cannot do for municipalities in a COG but outside a region, after the CPPP was adopted, is more important than ever.

COG Growth

Ms. McKinney presented a revised draft of the Tug Hill Roads paper, based on materials received by Ayers Law Firm and additional research. The paper is organized with the intention that each chapter could be a pull out when looking for something specific. The paper is directed for those with some highway expertise. The paper included general information, state and regional information, home rule and more. A discussion with members took place. Mr. Willbanks suggested putting in a disclaimer for legal assistance.

Roads Paper

Ms. Kimball reported that there are nine new supervisors in CTHC. Ms. McKinney will be attending the Adams meeting regarding ATVs, as the town has a new highway superintendent. Constableville has had some changes proposed to their new zoning law by

COG Report

the Lewis County Planning Dept. Lewis had a public meeting on a moratorium local law for wind project. Leyden is concerned about a carbon dioxide dome for energy storage project being discussed in their area and would prefer that the county not negotiate on their behalf. Lorraine is working through the process to re-approve their minimum maintenance roads laws, and continues to work through the transition with a new assessor. Montague supervisor Bruce Williams is considering the length of his term. Osceola has a new supervisor and board members, and they are working on a comprehensive plan and a new website. Port Leyden is working on a draft comprehensive plan with the county. Redfield's fire department is working on a new program to allow guest fire fighters to volunteer with the department, while a member of another volunteer department. Rodman has a resident on an MMR requesting to have it plowed. The town of Turin is working through MMR process. The village of Turin is working on a water project. West Turin was awarded a salt shed grant. Williamstown had a major turnover of elected officials and are undergoing a requested OSC audit. Worth is working a contract with their ambulance provider and has received legal approval to build a new building on their property. The CTHC spring meeting will be April 30 at the Hideaway.

The 2025-26 financial statement was shared. Salary expenses are on track, and non-personal services expenses are low, as all expenses haven't been reconciled. Looking ahead, for 2026-2027 we will be over on salary and will need to use non-personal services to cover the increases. It is important to get the budget increased in Albany.

Finance Report

Chair Ritter opened the floor for public comment.

Public Comment

Commissioner Scriber shared that Parish wants to have hometown heroes banners for the 250th Anniversary of America. Towns and villages lack knowledge of what they can do when it comes to installing and purchasing.

Commissioner Ritter shared there was an amazing outpouring from the community after the terrible fire in at Abundant Life Fellowship Church in Boonville a few weeks ago. One firefighter is still in the hospital.

There being no further business, on a motion made by Commissioner Boxberger and seconded by Commissioner Bogdanowicz members adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Adjourn

These minutes were approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Tom Boxberger
Secretary