

Ulster County EMC Meeting Minutes May 31, 2017

Members in Attendance:

Dave Haldeman (Chair), Shawangunk
Kristen Schara (Secretary), Hurley
John Sansalone, Gardiner
James Mays, Olive
Mark Ellison, Esopus
Margot Becker, at Large
Mandy Wolfson, UC Dept. of the Environment
Amanda LaValle, UC Dept. of the Environment

Emilie Hauser, Kingston
Judith Karpova, Rochester
Jim Littlefoot, New Paltz
Francesca Sansone, Esopus
Mary O'Donnell, Saugerties
Sarah Underhill, Wawarsing

Guests: Diane Dintruff, Esopus; Maude Salinger, NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

April minutes were approved as amended.

Speaker - Producing an Effective Press Release presented by Emile Hauser and Maude Salinger

Key questions to address when putting out a press release include: Who, what, where, when, and why. What is the message you want to convey? If it is an event, who do you want to attend? Be sure to find out publishing deadlines and work backwards from them to create your timeline. Use photographs and captions related to the event e.g. a scenic vista with the caption "Is this view important to you?" Use questions to spark interest. Be sure to provide the required photo resolution. The US Fish and Wildlife Service provides free photos you can use. Tell the editor the "why" of the story. You can also send the editor a pitch to get the paper's interest. You can write the article for publication. List the day of the week and the date. Determine if you need approval from a town official. At the top of the release have the media contact. The event contact should be in the body of the write-up. Be sure to proofread. A "XXX" or "#" indicates the end of the release. Check to see how the recipient wants to receive the release. Use strong verbs that tell your story. Contact the paper ahead of time. Have something written. Highlight the most interesting feature.

How do you reach your stakeholders? Facebook; town website, newsletter, or e-newsletter; Newspapers; Events calendars; Manna Jo Greene's newsletter; The Hudson River Watershed Alliance; Outreach to other groups; Local cable television; Direct email or calls to important constituents, land trusts, and local groups; Include a letter to citizens with their tax bills (no extra postage needed); Flyers and posters; Letters to the editor from the CAC - what you are doing and why it is important.

Old Business

Creek Week – EMC members are encouraged to sponsor an event in their town in September

Topics for half day training – The joint NYSACC/NYSEMC conference is to be held in Kingston, Nov 3-4. The EMC members have the opportunity for input to the agenda. Are there issues or accomplishments we want to share with the rest of the state? EMC members could help to plan and suggest workshops. The topic of flood response training is of interest. Mandy will send out a link to the site Julie Noble has created. Suggested issues include single use bags, pharma waste (Rockland County Law), bike paths, rebates/tax incentives for solar, and water quality issues.

New Business

Dept. of Environment Update/Legislative Update

State funding applications grants are available for projects relating to water quality improvement, Climate Smart Communities, flood risk reduction, planning, greenhouse gas emission reduction, food waste reduction and composting. To get ideas, see what they funded last year. Grants for both implementation and certification are available and require a 50% match. Mandy will send a link or Google DEC WQIP.

Eight charging station grants were awarded. There is going to be another round along with a rebate for electric cars. UC is getting prices on a networked charging station that other municipalities can piggyback on for pricing. Municipalities can get a rebate of up to \$5000 for each car. Thruway rest stops will have charging stations.

The composting grant might be of interest to towns. Marbletown currently has a container at the transfer station. The current UC program will improve the UCRRR composting facility and pilot a program at the jail. UC is doing a mapping

exercise to identify food waste producers as a tool for UCRRA. New Paltz is providing composting for the CIA and restaurants. Communitycompost.com is a private firm that will come to your home if you are in their service region. The Dept. of Environment hired 2 youth workers for the culvert assessment program. Esopus is doing culvert assessments also.

Roundabout

Dave Haldeman - 193 "Trees for Tribes" were planted.

Margot Becker - The ECC is pursuing a plastic bag ban within the town. They are also working on a pharmaceutical disposal law using the Rockland County law as a model. They are looking for partners for a CSC planning grant for bike lanes. Email Margot (margotrbecker@hotmail.com) if interested. They are also working on a CEC grant to retrofit the community center and to change all the streetlights to LEDs. The Solarize campaign runs through end of July and is countywide.

Mark Ellison – On Earth Day, the EB handed out flyers at a public library event. The flyer included the transfer station fee schedule, useful links, information on town parks. It was a way to promote the EB. They now have a waiting list for applicants. The town committed with DEC to do a survey of *carex frankii* before it gets mowed by Central Hudson at Sleightsburg Park. On July 19th, there will be a talk on the eradication of the mile a minute plant and other invasives such as bittersweet vine, the ash borer, and knotweed.

Jim Mays – The CAC continues to work mostly on the Rondout Valley Solarize program. The next event is on June 10th at the Boiceville Inn.

Jim Littlefoot – The Town of New Paltz has a moratorium on building for 9 months. Rocking Horse Ranch wants to build a water park and conference center, with a butterfly zoo. The CVS project is halted. They wanted to bring in fill contents that were not identified. The moratorium also stops Ferris Woods project for senior housing. Wetlands surround the site.

Emilie Hauser– The Mickelson consulting firm finished the NRI project. Behan has been awarded the open space plan. Kingston is using an analysis modeled on work by Rosendale of how the Pilgrim Pipeline will affect natural resources. The comprehensive plan is complete and zoning needs to be changed to reflect it. Betta Broad of New Yorkers for Clean Power, plans to open a sustainable store front to provide a space for environmental issues. She will post signs and information there.

Mary O'Donnell– The CAC sponsored an information forum on Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. Bank stabilization on the Esopus Creek above the dam is being considered. There will be a meeting tomorrow with the engineering firm. The creek has filled in with silt.

John Sansalone – The ECC has several projects to review. They are involved in a 12-lot subdivision where more than half is wetland. The Heartwood adult summer camp wants to build. There is a possible cluster development near town aquifer. From the legislative dialog by NYWEA, there is an initiative starting to exempt bonds for wastewater projects from fund caps. John provided a handout about drug free water. 1,4 Dioxane is showing up on long island. There is an environmental rights proposal in the legislature that would guarantee that each person have the right to clean water and air. There were press releases concerning water quality improvement grants, DEC grants planning for water, and waste water projects. The ECC is experiencing deadline pressures because of a schedule mismatch with the planning board. State wetlands law S1749 passed the assembly but is stuck in the senate. It would reduce regulated wetlands to as little as 1 acre and reduce steps for mapping. There is a bill to ban 1,4 Dioxane from cleaning products.

Judith Karpova – The ECC continues to work on the Solarize campaign. They are preparing to present the natural heritage open space project to the town board

Sarah Underhill – The ECC is working on an open space plan. They are doing the monthly water sampling of the Rondout Creek. A citizens group wanted to move the site of the firefighter training center. Alternative sites have been suggested. There is a deadline soon. On June 9th, local officials are invited to a forum on decommissioning the Indian Point nuclear plant.

Kristen Schara – The CAC presented copies of the open space plan to the town board for review.

Meeting at adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Handouts – “Media Release Basics”, “What is Clear Communication?”, examples of press releases