

Ulster County EMC Meeting Minutes September 27, 2017

Members in Attendance:

Dave Haldeman (Chair), Shawangunk
Kristen Schara (Secretary), Hurley
Emilie Hauser, Kingston
Eric Stewart, Marbletown
Jim Littlefoot, New Paltz
Jim Mays, Olive
John Sansalone, Gardiner
Mandy Wolfson, UC Dept. of the Environment

Judith Karpova, Rochester
John Sansalone, Gardiner
Margot Becker, At Large
Mark Ellison, Esopus
Sarah Underhill, Wawarsing
Virginia Starke, At Large
William More, At Large

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm.

August minutes were approved as amended.

Old Business

The NYSACC/NYSEMC conference is scheduled for Nov. 17 and 18. There is a committee working on speakers. They have many registrations. Workshop panels include Clean Transportation, Clean Energy, Natural Resource Inventories, Land Trusts and Municipal Partnerships, Smart Growth, Clean Food Economy, Coastal and Inland Flooding, Water: Conservation and Protection, Resilience Planning. They are looking for sponsors and exhibitors to help defray the cost and a keynote speaker. Q- Do they need volunteers? A- Set-up, moderators, etc.

New Business

The state is promoting geothermal energy. There will be a public hearing regarding the installation of geothermal heat pumping systems for NYC DEP buildings at the Ashokan reservoir. The EMC reviewed a letter addressing flaws in s6750, a law recently passed by the NYS Senate and Assembly regarding disposal of pharmaceuticals. Three counties have already adopted bills that could act as an effective model for this bill. The bill would preempt county efforts and many environmental groups are opposed. The state legislature is currently out of session. The governor can veto it before it is adopted or he could call for a special session. A major flaw is the use mailing programs which have a low compliance record. The law would counter efforts by the DOH to have collection boxes in stores with costs defrayed by the pharmaceutical industry. The effects to water quality should be added to the draft letter. Citizens Campaign for the Environment, NYS Sustainable Business Council, Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board are drafting opposition letters. Drop boxes at the expense of the industry is becoming the accepted norm and they are cheaper for consumers. Dave and Margot will edit and send the letter based on comments.

Dept. of Environment Update/Legislative Update

Amanda presented an overview of UC solar projects on landfills at the NYS Association of Solid Waste Managers conference along with Repower America to encourage solar on brownfields. DEC is trying to demonstrate predictability in terms of what design layout details they will approve. There are many opportunities for solar on closed landfills in UC. Q- Would EPA offer technical assistance? A- The EPA will come out with guidelines to ensure the integrity of the caps, for example. The solar landfill project is expected to start staging materials and building soon. Contracting for the composting grant is underway. There will be a Household Hazardous Waste collection on October 21.

FEMA has accepted the UC Multi-Jurisdictional Hazardous Mitigation Plan. The towns must adopt it as well.

The Drive Electric Event took place at the UC courthouse parking lot.

There is a workshop on the community rating system to evaluate readiness for disasters such as flooding events. It could make towns eligible for reductions in insurance rates.

Six more charging stations are being purchased and installed; 2 at Golden Hill, 2 at the Dept. of Social Services, 1 at the UC Office Building, and 1 at SUNY Ulster. The Dept. of Environment can provide a workshop for these grants. The grant program has a rolling deadline. The Dept. of Environment has a new employee starting next week to work on energy issues. The USDA Forest Service is working on a stewardship mapping and assessment project, STEW-MAP. They are collecting information from local environmental groups.

UC Legislature Energy and Environment Committee has not met in recent months.

Roundabout

John Sansalone – NYWEA’s NYC watershed technical conference was held in Saugerties. The papers presented are online. There was an onsite waste water workshop at SUNY Ulster. The Canandaigua watershed manager inspects septic systems near the lake. The ECC continues to work on water resources law. They plan to meet with their attorney. The ECC had a Smart Energy Communities Program presentation. They will bring it to the town board. John nominated the Eco Machine at Omega institute for a NYWEA award. Refer to the Omega website for more information. Towns could use it as a model.

Emilie Hauser– Solarize Hudson Valley is going to refocus to Community Solar to advocate for community solar installations. The CAC is working on the NRI and on contract for an open space planning consultant. Climate Smart Kingston was awarded \$100K with no match to be used for storm windows for city hall. Excess funds will be used to replace lighting. The city continues to search for a consultant to perform a greenhouse gas survey and a fleet manager. A sustainable storefront community center has been set up across from Broadway Lights diner.

Jim Mays– A consultant drew up an analysis of their flood problems. Irene caused flooding, destroyed the supermarket and other things along the Esopus Creek. The report is posted on the town’s website. NYC is replacing the “Five Arches” bridge. Money will be made available for flooding mitigation. The town needs to relocate the fire station and either build a berm or declaring low lying areas a flood zone and buyout homeowners. Residents are in favor of moving. The CAC is drawing up lists of commercially suitable property in that region for the supermarket above the flood line. Using the parcel viewer and ground inspections, the Catskill Water Commission is preparing a similar map. A sewage treatment plant is mandated for Shokan. The mapping could be folded into an NRI. The federal government has acted to prevent Chinese “dumping” of solar products in the US. Solar producers are worried about price increases. The US International Trade Commission made the decision.

Judith Karpova – The ECC is moving ahead with stream naming. A local ordinance requires a 100-ft. buffer for named streams, 50 ft. for unnamed. The USGA favors names that are historically based. They have asked the local historical society for input.

Margo Becker – Local architect Peter Reynolds is building a passive house. A passive design open house will be held there on Oct 14 with a presentation at 3 pm. The town wants to put in another EV charging station to using the solarize contractor’s offer to cover the cost. They are looking for a business to host it instead of a public lot. The ECC is working on LED streetlighting. The board approved LitGreen to do the work. The fire training facility project is looking at alternative sites due to community opposition. The new pollinator garden was dedicated and named in honor of local butterfly advocate Maraleen Manos-Jones. They are getting solar panels for town sites not picked. There may be a community solar farm installed on a 300-500-acre land parcel behind the Bevier House. It would be hidden from view. They are looking for a second location for another pollinator garden.

Kristen Schara – The CAC is waiting for the town board’s review of the draft open space plan. The CAC is working on LED street lighting.

Mark Ellison – There will be a visioning meeting concerning the new master comprehensive plan. It will be broadcast on Channel 23.

William More – There is a household hazardous waste collection on Oct 21. There is a proposal to have the UCCRA to provide a central drop off date for facilities that generate small amounts of pharmaceutical waste (less than 220 lbs./month). They would have to drive it there themselves. The request will have to the UCRRA should come from the UC Legislature. William will draft a letter.

John made a motion to adjourn. William seconded. Meeting adjourned unanimously at 8:20.