

ULSTER COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Dave Haldeman, Chair
Margot Becker, Vice-Chair
Kenneth Panza, Secretary

Minutes for the EMC Meeting of May 29, 2019

Chair and Vice-Chair not present, the regular meeting of the Ulster County Environmental Council was convened at 6:35 PM in the Howard C. St. John Business Seminar Room, George Clinton Hall, on the campus of SUNY Ulster in Stone Ridge, NY, by Amanda LaValle, UC Dept. of Environment Coordinator.

Municipal Members Present

Mark Ellison, Town of Esopus
Jim Littlefoot, Town of New Paltz
Jim Mays, Town of Olive
John Sansalone, Town of Gardiner
Eric Stewart, Town of Marbletown

At Large Members Present

Margot Becker
Kenneth Panza

Department of the Environment
Amanda LaValle, Coordinator

Approval of Minutes

A quorum not present, the minutes of **April 24, 2019** meeting of the EMC were presented, discussed, but not approved.

There followed an extended discussion of the Taylor biomass gasification process, the subject of the presentation at EMC's April 24, 2019 meeting.

Speaker/Presentation

There being no speaker scheduled, there followed a discussion about possible topics and speakers for future meetings.

Tracy Bartels, Ulster County Legislature Chair, is tentatively scheduled for the June 26, 2019 meeting of the EMC.

EMC discussed how to prepare for a meeting with Pat Ryan, interim county executive.

Old Business

Bring Your Own Bag Act – Kick-Off, July 12, 2019

In preparation for the July 15, 2019 launch of Ulster County's, "Bring Your Own Bag Act," a kick-off event is planned for Friday, July 12, 2019. Judith Enck, former EPA Region 2 Administrator, has been invited as the featured speaker.

Enck is the founder of "Beyond Plastics," a new project designed to promote local laws to reduce plastic pollution and train college students and community members in becoming anti-plastic packaging advocates.

Appointed by President Obama, Enck served as the Regional Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency overseeing environmental protection in NY, NJ, eight Indian Nations, Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands.

Judith Enck, previously served as Deputy Secretary for the Environment in the New York Governor's Office and served as a policy advisor to the New York State Attorney General. Enek is a senior fellow in the Center for the Advancement of Public Action, and is a senior advisor at the Institute for Governance and Sustainable Development at Bennington College.

Recycling/Composting/Waste Management

UCRRA currently ships 98 percent of Ulster County's solid waste to Seneca Meadows, a landfill located between Syracuse and Rochester. The site is expected to close in six years, and the agency has accelerated its search for disposal options. **Margot Becker, At-Large Member**, reports that UCRAA has issued an RFP to identify other sites that can accept Ulster County's trash.

Margot Becket also reports that a working group focused on composting is preparing a draft law that will require large generators of organic waste, i.e. schools, hospitals, etc., to compost. This draft law will be submitted to the legislature for its consideration.

Margot Becket reports that the **Solid Waste Planning Commission** is working on long term plans for solid waste management in Ulster County.¹

Danskammer Energy Center

Danskammer Energy, LLC filed a proposal to repower its Danskammer generating station, an existing 532 MW natural gas peaking plant, with a new natural gas combined cycle generator of up to 600 MW that will interconnect with the existing 115 kV electric transmission infrastructure and natural gas pipeline.

On behalf of EMC, **Kenneth Panza, At-Large Member**, filed comments in response to the draft stipulations distributed by Danskammer, LLC.

- Requested delineation of the existing coal ash landfill, its leachate collection system, processing facility, and location of landfill monitoring wells.
- Requested descriptions of the impact of discharges of aqueous ammonia and #6 bunker fuel oil be added to stipulation 15, Exhibit 15(l).
- Include a site plan showing the location of the proposed Project Facility in relation to the projected high, sea-level rise for 2100 in the lower Hudson River as defined by 6 NYCRR Part 490, Projected Sea Level Rise.

A formal review of the stipulations will be scheduled in Albany for mid-June.

Danskammer report submitted to EMC attached.

¹ Established by Resolution 121, March 19, 2019, of the Ulster County Legislature, to wit, "RESOLVED, that that the Solid Waste Planning Commission shall be established to review the Cornerstone draft Local Solid Waste Management Plan, and provide policy guidance to Cornerstone in drafting said plan; to review the draft recommendations of the Solid Waste Improvement Committee; to investigate other available information relating to options for handling and disposal of the county's solid waste, including regionalization and intermunicipal compacts; and draft recommendations for legislation."

New Business

No new business introduced.

Report from Department of the Environment

Ulster County Department of the Environment is seeking qualified applicants to fill the position of Environmental Resources Technician. We are looking for candidates with a demonstrated interest and strength in water resources and/or watershed management. Among other related job duties, the successful applicant for this position would be responsible for coordinating the County's stormwater program.

Ulster County Department of the Environment is seeking qualified applicants to fill a summer Youth Worker position. The successful candidate will be primarily focused on supporting the County's "Bring Your Own Bag Act." On July 15th, single use plastic bags will be banned in Ulster County and the Department is currently engaged in education and outreach around this initiative. We are looking for candidates with a demonstrated interest and strength in the environment or sustainability. Experience interacting with the public and/or with social media is desired.

Boilers at Law Enforcement Center

Amanda LaValle, UC Dept. of Environment Coordinator, explained the need to replace a failing boiler at the Ulster County Law Enforcement Center. The boilers, installed in 2005, have an expected life span of 20 to 25-years, but actual life of the boilers has been less. The boilers are failing, and need constant repair.

Converting to natural gas will allow time for a "flex tech" study of alternative fuel sources. The boilers will need replacing sooner rather than later. The Law Enforcement Center is responsible for roughly 40 percent of the county's overall energy usage, and by moving from heating oil to natural gas, the county would reduce the emissions at the jail by 38 to 40 percent.

The legislature approved a \$220,000 contract with Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corp. to install a new gas line to the Law Enforcement Center. Based on fuel savings, the expected pay-back is 4-years.

Legislature Report – Energy & Environment Committee

See above discussion about boilers at the Law Enforcement Center.

Council Member Roundabout

John Sansalone, Town of Gardiner

Looking at updating the town's Natural Resource Inventory (NRI).

Final presentation to the Town Board of a proposed wellhead protection law has been scheduled.

Environmental Management Council Minutes for May 29, 2019

NYWEA Spring Technical Conference & Exhibition, "Developing a Sustainable Operator Workforce," Downtown Hilton & City Center, Saratoga Springs, NY	June 10-11, 2019
Hudson River Environmental Society, 2019 Hudson River Symposium: Ecosystem Response to Climate Change and Sea-Level Rise in the Hudson Estuary	May 8, 2019

Jim Littlefoot, Town of New Paltz

Every stream and tributary in the Wallkill watershed has failed water quality tests.

There's a crucial need for a program to clean-up the Rondout and Wallkill.

Wallkill River, Lower, Main Stem is assessed as an impaired waterbody fishing use that is known to be impaired by excessive nutrients from agricultural runoff and point source discharges.

Eric Stewart, Town of Marbletown

Enrolment in Hudson Valley Community Power, a CCA, has begun for Marbletown residents.

Changes to the zoning law have been proposed to accommodate larger solar arrays.

Adopted zoning changes that exclude fossil fuel infrastructure.

Working with Sustainable Hudson on a 100% renewable plan for the town.

Completed an energy retrofit of the community center.

Working to reestablished the Rondout Watershed Alliance

Continued water quality testing of the Esopus.

Mark Ellison, Town of Esopus

Hosted a reusable bag giveaway to promote the "Bring Your Own Bag Act."

Master Plan presentation to the Town Board scheduled for June 18th.

Obtained an extended comment period on NY State's cleanup plan for Dyno Nobel site.

Kenneth Panza, Woodstock

Woodstock Day School won the national Drawdown EcoChallenge. It's expected the legislature will award the school a "Pride of Ulster County" citation at its June 18th meeting. The school has been invited to participate in the Drawdown conference at Omega in October.

Mike Hein was recognized by the Woodstock Land Conservancy with its William R Ginsberg award for achievements in the protection and conservation of Ulster County's environment.

Hudson Valley Community Power, a CCA, announced its rates last week and we'll be taking a close look. Their source of renewable energy isn't identified, so it's hard to understand what is being offered.

The Wappingers Falls hydroelectric plant's penstock has ruptured, delaying the delivery of renewable energy to Woodstock.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm by unanimous consent.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Panza".

Kenneth S. Panza, Secretary

Attachments

Agenda for May 29, 2019 EMC Meeting

Danskammer Energy Upgrade Report for May 29, 2019

Wappingers Falls hydroelectric ruptured penstock