



# Schuyler County Environmental Management Council

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105 Ninth Street, Unit 39  
Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Phone: 607-535-8211  
Fax: 607-535-8193

## Minutes – January 18, 2023 ~ 6:00 p.m.

### I. Call to Order and Attendance – Confirmation of Quorum.

Gita Devi, Kate Bartholomew, Jessica Rodgers, Martha Hawksworth, Kristin VanHorn  
Missing: Michael Lausell

### II. Kristin notified us that Jacob Kotler is no longer working as a County Planner.

### III. Vote to Confirm Officers for 2023

A motion was made to continue the existing roles: Kate as Chair, Jessica as Vice Chair and Gita and Martha as Secretary. Martha said that she will be starting graduate school this month and it may affect the night she is available for our EMC meetings. We agreed that we can change our meeting date to accommodate her schedule.

#### a. Motion to Approve: All agreed

### IV. Public Comments - None

### V. Approval of Minutes

A. October 2022

Motion to approve: Jessica

2<sup>nd</sup>: Gita – all approved

### VI. Chair and Staff Report

A. **ENB Review** – Kate emailed the latest Review prior to the meeting and she highlighted several of the items.

B. **Comment Letters** - none

### VII. Old Business

A. **Project Seneca Update** – none

### B. Natural Resources Inventory Update - None

C. **Solar:** Kristin discussed the NYSERDA Build Ready Program, NYSERDA is partnering with local communities across New York State to identify and advance under-utilized land for renewable energy projects. NYSERDA takes difficult sites and makes them "build-ready" for private renewable energy developers to ultimately construct and operate.

Under-utilized lands include, but are not limited to:

- Existing or abandoned commercial sites
- Brownfields
- Landfills
- Former commercial or industrial sites
- Dormant electric generating sites

<https://www.nyserderda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Clean-Energy-Standard/Landowners-and-Local-Governments/Build-Ready-Program>

**D. Strategic Plan** – We had some discussion about whether the EMC could possibly merge into the new Sustainability Committee, related to the Climate Smart Project: Silver Designation/Clean Energy.

**E. Recycling Updates - no updates**

**F. Solid Waste Management Plan** –

The issue is how we will reduce the waste in our county. Because we are one of the smaller counties and we send our waste out it makes the issue a bit complicated in coming up with a plan, compared to other larger counties. Discussion ensued. Can the EMC help? It is hard to get data and the projection tables aren't big enough.

**G. Climate Smart Communities:**

- Kristin stated that the resolution to designate Schuyler County as a Climate Smart Community was pulled from the last CDNR Meeting.
- The Village of Montour Falls and the Town of Hector are both designated Climate Smart Communities. The Village of Watkins Glen is not designated but is working on some Clean Energy Communities Tasks.
- We had some discussion about whether the EMC could possibly merge into the new Sustainability Committee, related to the Climate Smart Project: Silver Designation/Clean Energy.
  - Kate and Kristin will meet in February and discuss how the EMC could get involved. Could EMC morph into a Sustainability Committee that would be composed of EMC members, legislatures, environmentally conscious residents, highway supervisors, business leaders, agricultural people, etc.
  - Martha really liked this idea and suggested that we check with other counties to review their bylaws. Kate said she will talk with her contacts in both Tompkins and Broome Counties.
  - During the discussion, it was thought we could do the following: Submit a proposal to the Legislature in Feb/March. Kristin will discuss this with Michael Lausell, Fonda Chronis and Mark Rondinaro to get their input.

## **VIII. New Business, Committee and Member Reports**

**A. 2023 Membership – See III above. The following remains true from the last meeting:**

- . We need new/more members from the 8 towns. During the discussion the following ideas were discussed:
  - a. Draft a letter to Town Boards
  - b. Advertise on the Schuyler County web site
  - c. Advertise via Facebook
  - d. We can share ideas via email and discuss at our January meeting and then decide on a course of action going forward. Jessica will send out an email to start the discussion.
  - e. Kate will email the By-Laws to current members

**B. Cryptocurrency – No Update**

**C. Committee Updates**

1. **Recycling Committee - no updates**

#### **D. Solid Waste Alternatives –see VII. F above**

#### **E. Community Reports**

- Jessica sent an email to EMC members asking them to submit their comments to Seneca Meadows regarding their application for an extension beyond 2025 (when it was supposed to close down) and for a 70-foot (7 story) expansion. The comment period closes on Friday, January 27.
  
- Jessica also raised a question about the NYS Climate Action Councils Scoping Plan and the Governor’s State of the State call to require all new construction to be zero-emissions starting in 2025 and end the sale of fossil fuel-powered heating equipment by 2030.
  - There was a discussion about the proposed Scoping Plan, the financial impact of the proposed timeline, and the concerns about the capacity of existing infrastructure systems to handle 100% electric by 2030
  - Draft documents are available and either Kate or Kristin will email them to us. It was agreed that the EMC should work on this issue and prepare a statement to present to our County Legislature.

**IX. Adjournment:** Motion to Adjourn: Gita 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jessica - All approved.

**Next Meeting – April 19, 2023**



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## Minutes – August 16th, 2023 ~ 6:30 p.m.

- I. **Call to Order at 6:35 pm by Kate and Attendance – Confirmation of Quorum.**  
Gita Devi, Kate Bartholomew, Martha Hawksworth  
Missing: Michael Lausell, Kristin VanHorn, Jessica Rodgers
- II. **Public Comments - None**
- III. **Approval of Minutes**
  - A. January 2023  
Motion to approve: Gita  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Martha – all approved
- IV. **Chair and Staff Report**
  - A. **ENB Review** – Kate will email any relevant issues the latest ENB
  - B. **Comment Letters** - none
- V. **Old Business**
  - A. **Project Seneca Update** – none
  - B. **Natural Resources Inventory Update - None**
  - C. **Recycling Updates - no updates**
  - D. **Solid Waste Management Plan – No updates**
- VI. **New Business**
  - A. **Climate Smart Communities- Resolution** The council reviewed the resolution and supports it. Gita sent suggested changes regarding wording to Kristin.
  - B. **Seneca Meadows Resolution-** The council reviewed the resolution and endorse it. Members of the council will bring before town boards for similar endorsement when finalized by the county legislature.
  - C. **Committee Updates**
    1. **Recycling Committee** - no updates
  - D. **Solid Waste Alternatives** –no update
  - E. **Community Reports** – no updates
- VII. **Adjournment:** Motion to Adjourn: Gita 2<sup>nd</sup>: Martha - All approved.

**Next Meeting – October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**