

MONROE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for September 20, 2023

In Attendance:

Burt Gorton – *Vice Chair and Natural Resources Committee Chair*
Haines Lockhart - *Program and Presentations Committee Chair*
Bill Santos - *Nominating and Community Liaison Committee Chair*
Charles Johnson - *Town of Gates*
Larry Lazenby - *Town of Chili*
Steve Rutherford - *Town of Hamlin*
Jake Straub - *Town of Clarkson*
Dave Wetter - *Town of Mendon*
Bill Parkhurst - *Town of Ogden*
Cynette Cavaliere - *Town of Penfield*
Caroline Kilmer - *Town of Pittsford*
Greg Adams - *Town of Riga*
Clement Chung - *MCDES*
Yasmin Guevera - *MCDES*
Steve Olufsen - *MC Planning & Development (non-member)*
Ryan Parra-Merrell – *MCDPH (non-member)*
Starr O’Neil - *MCDPH*
Madison Quinn - *MCDES (non-member)*
Sally Howard - *FMCE (non-member)*
Elizabeth McDade - *RENEW*

Meeting location:

- Monroe County Fleet Center, Building 1 Conference Room
145 Paul Road, Rochester 14624

Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order at 4:05

Review of Minutes:

- May Minutes revised (Beth Hoak in attendance at last meeting). Motion to approve by Steve Rutherford; seconded by Bill Parkhurst.

Meeting Topic(s):

Introductions and Roundtable discussion of current Conservation Boards and Advisory Councils

- **Chili** - Larry Lazenby
 - On Conservation Board for 40 years, chair for the last 30.
 - Board has longevity – consists of 7 members, 6 of which have been on the board for over 10 years each.
 - Works well with Planning Board – when Conservation Board makes recommendation,

- Planning Board almost always accepts without question
- New town codes re: soil depth and tree numbers.
- Plans must be stamped by licensed landscape architect. If no place for additional landscaping in plan, “required” planters recommended
- Solar panels – educating the Planning Board (butterflies, goats, sheep)
- Informing the community regarding spotted lanternfly
- **Clarkson** - Jake Straub
 - In 3rd year on Conservation Board, 6 months as chair.
 - Conservation Board consists of three members. Board spends most of time on SEQR – would be helpful to see how other municipalities handle.
 - New comprehensive plan approved.
 - Working on development and approval of solar fields.
 - Clarksons consist of open space and is mostly rural – want to conserve.
- **Gates** - Charles Johnson
 - In 1st year on Conservation Board. All board members are new. Founder of “Keep Gates Clean” is one of the new board members
 - Climate smart community task force
 - Adopted a number of clean energy codes (informally, no new laws).
 - Tree program plants about 20-25 trees per year
 - Would like to have information/education from EMC to bring back to town
- **Hamlin** - Steve Rutherford
 - On Conservation Board for more than 10 years, chair for the last 3. On the EMC for the past 8 years. Chair of MC Fishery Advisory Board for the last 5 years
 - Sewer system by lake finishing up (pumped and go to NW Quadrant).
 - About 5 solar energy projects in progress. Some concern by citizens is that it uses too much land, but often the farmers don’t own the land and the owners are the ones doing the developing
 - Tree replacement of about 5 trees/year (which is most of the Board’s budget)
 - Latest issues is chickens – need license if < 1 acre of land
- **Henrietta** - Bill Santos
 - Green Energy application is going well.
 - EV charging stations – unknown where the town is at, but receiving HCR funding.
 - SW Quarter / Lehigh being worked on for residential development.
 - Bike lane road lane conversions in progress.
 - Working on connecting trails in Riverwood and requiring trails on E. River Rd.
 - Biggest offering that EMC can provide is training conservation board members in the municipalities.
- **Irondequoit** - Deb Muratore
 - 5 years on Conservation Board and on EMC.
 - Conservation board consists of 10 members (2 are town members)
 - Updated landscape guidelines approved by board.
 - Identified as Tree city.
 - Arborist has identified all street trees in community. Citizens can access data
 - Restarted live-streamed speaker series in cooperation with town library.
 - Monthly electronic recycling events at DPW.
- **Mendon** - Dave Wetter
 - 3 years on conservation board.

- Board consists of 5 members – some are new and are being trained
- Review all plans going through planning board.
- Goals: 1. Better community outreach. 2. Review and update Environmental Protection Overlay Districts (EPODs).
- **Ogden** - Bill Parkhurst
 - 12 years on the Conservation board, 4 years on EMC
 - Developing town-wide comprehensive plan
 - Reviewing solar farms
 - Commercial development at Union and 531 – getting pushback, but all plans have been approved
- **Penfield** - Cynette Cavaliere
 - Replacing Daniel Moore on Board and EMC (Daniel studying at UB – EMC helped shape his career path)
 - Brand new Energy and Environmental Committee (merging of two previous committees)
 - Approved draft of tree ordinance with goal of becoming a “tree city” and developing a forestry plan.
 - 1st year with dedicated sustainability engineer.
 - Putting in EV chargers.
 - Hit all benchmarks for Clean Energy Community
 - EPOD renewals.
- **Pittsford**- Caroline Kilmer
 - 1.5 years on Conservation Board. Director of the MC Soil and Water Conservation Board. Working with the MC Stormwater Coalition. Chair of the Water Education Collaborative (WEC)/H2O Hero Program
 - Pittsford designated as climate smart community in 2019.
 - Started residential scrap food program
 - Pollinator pathway challenge for residents (document plants that are pollinator friendly).
 - In the process of updating municipal codes to incorporate green infrastructure.
 - Town currently allows roof mounted solar.
 - Currently 2 EV charging stations, 1 more planned.
 - Just starting on a Climate Action Plan for the town
- **Riga** - Greg Adams
 - **15 years on Advisory Board, 5 years on EMC.**
 - Board is an Advisory Board to the Planning Board
 - Riga is rural area with wetlands and lots of open spaces - most development is single family homes.
 - Moratorium on solar farms – town going through code review. Citizens are not overly open to solar farm development
 - Future goal is to redo the comprehensive plan.
 - Some EV development in village, but not the town
- **Rush** - Beth Hoak
 - Wasn't present, but sent along updates via email
 - Major accomplishments - Insuring applicable rules for development are enforced, helping to prevent inappropriate development that could potentially endanger the environment
 - The town has codes for solar energy systems. These are in place to designate

appropriate locations for Tier 3 systems, protect residential property and agricultural land, and ensure that solar development is compatible with surrounding property and the character of the town.

- Challenges - Development pressures with limited or no regard for protecting the environment, pressures to rezone both commercial and residential areas for development, and controversy over bring sewers to Rush (which could result in suburban sprawl)
- Rush would like the county and region to acknowledge the unique rural qualities of Rush and help protect the prime agricultural soil we have in our town.

Committee/Liaison Reports:

- Added to members to committees:
 - Nominating and Community Liaison – Caroline Kilmer
 - Program and Presentations – Cynette Cavaliere
 - Natural Resources – Jake Straub (Charles Johnson added prior to meeting) Cynette (Presentations).
- Natural Resources Committee - Goal for this year is to pull together which towns/municipalities have what, and start working with county resources.
- Programs Committee - Robert Kiley will be presenting an overview of Monroe County Parks Department for the October meeting
- Nominating - Working on confirming all members through towns. Working on the liaison list – discussed inviting a representative from the MC School Board. Also discussed that Color Your School Green may be a helpful organization to get student members. Black Creek Watershed may be an organization to add to list.

Staff Reports:

- Starr – ROC the Riverway weekend (Oct 7-8) along the Genesee River and Charlotte Beach
- Madison – Climate Action Plan survey <https://arcg.is/1PmbeT>. Asked members to complete and share with their communities. Provided postcards regarding survey, too. Many zip codes lacking a comprehensive response.

Other Business / Announcements:

- None

Privilege of the Floor:

- Steve: grants from DEC for invasive species projects. For any municipalities. Second grant for landowners for reforesting property. Third: community forest conservative grant to help municipalities to buy land and re-forest it.
- Close to approval on Atlantic salmon restoration program on Sandy Creek
- Bass fishing tournament on Irondequoit Bay
- Sally: Environmental Landscape Analysis – directory www.rochesterenvironment.com

Adjourn:

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:33. Motion to adjourn by Greg Adams; seconded by Bill Santos