

Minutes of the EMC General Meeting January 9, 2008

Present: Glynn Bebee, Kenny Christianson, John Dennis, Herb Engman, Keith Epstein, Martha Ferger, Lara Kimber, Dan Lamb, Stan Marcus, Ashley Miller, Amy Risen, Larry Sallinger, Roger Segelken, Jacie Spoon, Gary Stewart, Lucia Tyler, Mark Whitmore
Excused: Cliff Babson, Neha Khanna, Michael Miles, Marissa Weiss
Absent: Larry Sharpsteen, Roger Yonkin
Associates: Joyce Gerbasi, Dooley Kiefer
Guests: Sylvester Johnson, Kariann Mackie-Cunningham, Steve Nicholson, Aurora Valenti
Staff: Scott Doyle, Joan Jurkowich, Leslie Schill, Kathy Wilsea

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Mark Whitmore at 7:04 p.m.

Oath of Office – Aurora Valenti, Tompkins County Clerk, administered the oath of office to new and reappointed members: Lara Kimber, Stan Marcus, Ashley Miller, Amy Risen, Jacie Spoon, Gary Stewart, and Mark Whitmore.

Privilege of the Floor – Sylvester Johnson was present, representing the Climate Change Action Group of Central New York. The group feels there is a need to end carbon offset trading and change to a federal carbon tax. Traders, brokers, and attorneys increase the expense of trading. A major part of the proposed carbon tax would be refunded to citizens who use efficient transportation and public transportation and then file to get refunds. He asked that members learn more about the organization's goal by going to www.climatehealth.net and clicking on "campaign". [Also provided this address: www.federalcarbontax.org] He welcomes comments and questions. He will bring a resolution to the EMC February meeting and hopes EMC will recommend it to the County Legislature.

Changes to the Agenda -- There were no changes to the agenda.

Election of Vice Chairs – Jacie Spoon represented the Nominating Committee. She announced that four members were on the slate. There were no nominations from the floor. Paper ballots were distributed.

Tompkins County Planning Department – 2008 Work Program, Select Items – Joan Jurkowich said there are several projects for which staff will request EMC help during the year. She spoke of the UNA update and will work with the UNA committee. Leslie Schill spoke of the Energy Plan, which is a new element of the County Comprehensive Plan. Information will be gathered regionally and nationally. She welcomes any ideas for the plan and ideas for interaction. Scott Doyle spoke of the Stream Corridor Management Plan, which is partially funded with a DEC Water Quality Improvement Program grant to develop tools for use in Tompkins County. They will be examining history, easement language, incentives, and model ordinances. He welcomes ideas for information or needs that should be addressed, and is also looking for information on areas that are good examples of corridor management or areas that would be good targets for work. Joan explained that Kathy Wilsea will attend EMC meetings and do council administration. Joan expects to attend about half of the EMC meetings, and other staff will attend as needed.

Election Results – Ballot tally resulted in Dan Lamb, Ashley Miller and Kenny Christianson becoming Vice Chairs for 2008.

EMC Workplan for 2008 – Joan Jurkowich had organized material developed at prior meetings and it was distributed with the agenda. Additions and changes were discussed. 2007 Committee chairs reviewed past work of committees. These committees were formed: Environmental Review, Unique Natural Areas Update, Air Quality, Energy, Invasive Species, Education, Consumer Products, and Website. These liaison positions were available on the signup sheet: Lake Source Cooling, Intermunicipal Organization for Cayuga Lake Management Planning, Water Resources Council, Ag & Farmland Protection Board, Cornell Community Waste Management Advisory Committee, Adopt-a-Highway Clean-up Coordinator, Planning Advisory Board Energy Plan Committee, Cayuga Sustainability Council, and DEC's Partnerships for Regional Invasive Species Management.

Committee and Liaison Signups – Signup sheets were distributed. Information will be sent to the members who are willing to convene the first meetings.

We Should Cut Down Our Trees and A Less Costly, More Aesthetic and Environmentally Sound Solution to Stream Stabilization – Roger Yonkin was absent. This item will be rescheduled.

Approval of Minutes -- The minutes of December 12, 2007 were accepted with changes. Final minutes are available on the County webpage: www.tompkins-co.org/emc.

Establish Meeting Schedule for 2008 – A draft list of meeting dates was distributed. Dates were agreeable, so EMC will meet the second Wednesday of each month except August.

Chair's Report – Steve Nicholson said he has been contacted about the 2008 Earth Day Celebration, and the first organizational meeting will be held 1/17, with Joey Gates coordinating. He expects to receive Ithaca Festival information soon. Kathy Wilsea distributed new membership contact lists. Members who want to trade email/mail distribution of their agendas should let her know. A box of old books from the EMC library was available to anyone who was interested in these publications.

Legislature Liaison's Report – Steve Nicholson said members of the new Planning, Development & Environmental Quality Committee are Martha Robertson, Frank Proto, Pam Mackesey, Carol Chock, and Mike Sigler. Someone from the Legislature will be appointed as EMC Liaison for 2008.

Presentation of the Golden Hard Hat Award – Dan Lamb presented this award to Martha Ferger for her help on Adopt-a-Highway cleanups.

Member Items – Herb Engman's new work phone is 273-1721 x 125. Mark Whitmore said his specialty is trees, and he wants to speak at EMC specifically about the Emerald Ash Borer. This will be scheduled in March. Stan Marcus provided a paper copy of the Michigan preparedness plan and will provide a .pdf file for members. This document is considered a good model for ash protection. Steve Nicholson announced each committee will be asked to suggest a speaker for a meeting in 2008. Kenny Christianson thanked outgoing Executive Committee members Mark Whitmore, Neha Khanna, and Glynn Bebee, and there was a round of applause for them

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Wilsea, Secretary
Tompkins County Planning Department

Approved by Council on February 13, 2008