

**TOMPKINS COUNTY Climate and Sustainable Energy Advisory Board**  
**Tuesday, Oct. 28, 2025, 4:00-6:00PM (Via Zoom)**

**Final Minutes**

**Meeting Facilitator: Martha Robertson**

**Attendance**

Member		Member		Staff	
Andrea Aguirre	P	Rebecca Evans	P	Terry Carroll	P
Ethan Bodnaruk	P	Guillermo Metz	P	Hailley Delisle	P
Louise Bruce	E	Martha Robertson	P	Kristin McCarthy	E
Veronica Pillar*	P	Irene Weiser	P		
Brian Eden	P	Chris Wirth	E		
Danielle Eiseman	P				

\*Non-voting member

**Guests:** Peter Bardaglio, Emily Belle, Adrianna Hirtler

**1. Call to Order/Agenda Review/Draft Minutes Approval** – Meeting facilitator Martha Robertson called the meeting to order at 4:03pm. The agenda was reordered to accommodate guests and members needing to leave early, moving the data center discussion to later in the meeting.

**Action:** Brian Eden made a motion, seconded by Irene Weiser, to approve the draft August and September 2025 minutes. Motion carried.

**2. Public Comment** – Peter Bardaglio announced the upcoming monthly Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative meeting, featuring discussion of the NYSEG rate case and the County's role, as well as the overall rate-making process and confidentiality issues.

**3. Member Updates** – Members reported on utility thermal energy network proposals, the RAPID Act comment period, Empower Plus program budget cuts, and a court ruling requiring DEC to issue Climate Act regulations. Updates also covered a new Cornell nuclear energy club, community participation at the NYSEG rate case hearing, and methane emissions from Seneca Meadows landfill.

**4. Report/Discussion: Sciencenter and Community Science Institute Encouraging Youth Climate Action**

– Danielle Eiseman, Emily Belle, and Adrianna Hirtler

Danielle introduced her summer storytelling pilot project on flooding experiences, which led to collaboration with the Sciencenter on communicating environmental issues to policymakers. Emily Belle and Adrianna Hirtler presented their summer project with the Future Science Leaders program, where middle school youth worked with CSI volunteers on water quality monitoring, assessing Cascadilla Creek through biomonitoring, touring the wastewater treatment plant, and collecting Cayuga Lake samples. Students tested eight sites for general toxicity using photoluminescent marine bacteria at locations including three in Cayuga Lake, two in Six Mile Creek, Cascadilla Creek, and Ithaca Falls, finding no significant toxicity concerns. Emily highlighted that students learned about microplastics legislation, discussed reducing gray water volume and recycling systems, and emphasized the importance of consistent monitoring to establish baselines. Students articulated understanding where water comes

from, where it goes, and how it affects life in those areas. Ethan mentioned his firm is beginning infiltration and inflow studies with the town and City of Ithaca and suggested potential collaboration on youth education during fieldwork. Irene, as an incoming County legislator, invited the presenters to work with youth to speak to the legislature about environmental issues, noting that young voices are often highly impactful.

**5. Discussion: Impact of Data Center Development on County Residents– TK**

**6. Discussion: Priorities and Process for Education of Incoming Legislators** – Martha opened discussion on educating seven to eight incoming legislators with varying environmental backgrounds. The group discussed onboarding processes and available recorded presentations, open meetings law clarifications for educational gatherings, the possibility of a public educational forum and concerns about discouraging basic questions, and creating an inventory of nonprofit and community organizations working on climate issues to demonstrate broader community commitment.

**7. Staff Report** – Terry and Hailley reported on department activities. Delisle discussed working on NYSEG and RG&E testimony with PEEQ Committee legislators and announced a presentation on the rate case at the TCCPI meeting. Terry provided updates on the solar array project at the Whole Health Department, exploration of additional solar at the airport, and finalization of the 2024 greenhouse gas inventory. He indicated a draft inventory would likely be presented to the board for feedback.

**8. Discussion: Officer Selection for 2026** – Martha noted that she, Irene, and Rebecca would follow up on this item after the meeting.

**9. County Legislature Report** – *Anne Koreman*

Veronica gave an update on the County budget process. She reported that Cayuga Lake Watershed Network dues restoration passed overwhelmingly, training budget restoration failed with only three votes, and fleet replacement was reduced from 11 to six Sheriff's Department vehicles, with legislators requesting a systematic replacement plan and some suggesting bonding for purchases. Additionally, Irene raised biosolids spreading concerns regarding PFAS; Brian noted the County lacks authority over this issue as it falls under DEC jurisdiction and municipal land use control.

**10. Chair's Report** – None

**11. Meeting Wrap-up** – The meeting concluded with discussion about the board's sustainability and attendance challenges, including the need to recruit new members. Members expressed concern about the lack of a next generation stepping up to replace long-time volunteers and acknowledged that boards with working people face inherent scheduling challenges. The group discussed whether earlier meeting times might improve participation but reached no definitive conclusion.

**12. Adjournment** – Meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.