

EMC Final Minutes

Nov. 13, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom

Attendance

Member		Seat	Member		Seat
Dan Antonioli	A	At-Large	Susan Riley	P	At-Large
Steve Bissen	P	Town of Dryden	Barry Siebe	P	Town of Groton
Christine Collins	P	Town of Ulysses	Elaine Tietjen	P	At-Large
Cait Darfler	P	At-Large	Brad Will	A	At-Large
Edward Dubovi	P	Town of Lansing	Jack Zinda	P	At-Large
Ace Dufresne	P	Student 1	<i>Kathleen Yen</i>	P	<i>Associate</i>
Thomas Hirasuna	P	At-Large	<i>Brian Wendel</i>	P	<i>Associate</i>
Siobhan Hull	P	City of Ithaca	<i>Anne Koreman</i>	P	<i>Legislative Liaison</i>
Peter McDonald	P	Town of Danby	Darby Kiley	E	Tompkins Co. staff
Melissa Millspaugh	A	Town of Enfield	Kristin McCarthy	P	Tompkins Co. staff
Steve Nicholson	P	Town of Caroline			

5 Guests: Peter Loucks

6 **Call to Order/Breakout Rooms** – Chair Cait Darfler called the meeting to order at 4:04pm. Members
7 participated in breakout rooms, where they shared what small things in their lives were making them
8 smile. Responses included connecting with people during difficult times, pets providing comfort on gray
9 days, and vivid storytelling dreams.

10 **Agenda Review/Public Comment** – No changes were made to the agenda.

11 Cait introduced guest Pete Loucks, a retired Cornell environmental engineer from the Town of Ithaca,
12 who expressed interest in possibly joining the EMC.

13 **Approval of Minutes** – The September and October 2025 draft minutes were approved (motion by
14 Susan Riley, second by Tom Hirasuna) as submitted. Motion carried. =

15 Action: Establish a Nominating Committee

16 Steve Nicholson made a motion, which Peter McDonald seconded, to establish a nominating committee
17 to elect a chair and three vice chairs at December's meeting. The committee will include Steve N. as
18 chair, along with Christine Collins, Elaine Tietjen, and Barry Siebe. Motion carried.

19 Action: Vote to Recommend At-Large Members for Reappointment

20 Steve Bissen made a motion, seconded by Barry Siebe, to recommend Cait Darfler and Dan Antonioli for
21 reappointment as at-large members. Motion carried.

22 Executive Committee Report: Biosolids/Lansing Moratorium

23 Cait reported that biosolids work has dominated her time recently. She presented at PEEQ on Monday
24 alongside Cynthia Brock (Water Resources Council), Leo Riley (Recycling & Materials Management), and
25 Maury Josephson (County Attorney). The EMC had passed a biosolids resolution, but when state bills
26 were modified to remove key provisions, Cait rewrote the resolution for the PEEQ version to specifically

27 call out these missing provisions. The revised resolution passed PEEQ unanimously and will go to the
28 Legislature on Tuesday at 5:30pm. The Ag and Farmland Protection Bureau also passed a similar
29 resolution, and an interdepartmental working group will be formed to examine County actions,
30 particularly around hauler permitting. Annie Koreman thanked Cait and others for their extensive work
31 navigating the complex process. Discussion covered the Lansing moratorium, with Siobhan Hull
32 reporting on the town board's back-and-forth and Ed Dubovi explaining concerns about TeraWulf's
33 aggressive tactics including legal proceedings and complex LLC structures. Peter McDonald noted 1,500
34 letters submitted against the project and harassment of residents and elected officials. Barry Siebe
35 raised concerns about power consumption and grid weakness, while Kathleen Yen suggested focusing a
36 potential EMC letter on fiscal and infrastructure constraints.

37 **Presentation/Discussion: Draft Structure Proposal** – Cait shared a comprehensive slideshow outlining
38 the EMC's strategic structure moving forward, emphasizing that in Tompkins County's crowded
39 environmental landscape, the EMC's unique advantage is its direct relationship with the County
40 Legislature and cross-county municipal network, positioning it as an environmental information hub.
41 The proposed structure includes two standing committees (Community Outreach and Legislative Affairs)
42 and two working groups (EMC Member Engagement and Unique Natural Areas), with all voting
43 members expected to participate in either a committee or working group. Legislative Affairs year one
44 tasks could include attending PEEQ meetings, researching state bills, and building tracking systems,
45 while Community Outreach priorities could include continuing the Green Scene e-newsletter, identifying
46 annual tabling events, deepening partnerships, and potentially one new initiative. Cait stressed the need
47 to recruit more members to fill open seats, noting that more members means less burnout and
48 increased capacity. Peter praised the vision and mentioned partnership opportunities with Sustainable
49 Finger Lakes, while Elaine shared the idea of creating new programs, such as connecting graduate
50 students to high schools. The group discussed committee accountability to the full EMC and agreed to
51 continue discussions in December before voting on leadership. January will feature an in-person
52 organizational meeting where committees will develop 2026 work plans, while the December meeting
53 will remain virtual.

54 **Legislative Liaison Update (as needed)** – Annie Koreman reported she had no major updates and noted
55 that the December meeting would be her last as County legislator.

56 **Staff Report (as needed)** – No report was given.

57 **Member Updates** – Members reported on the Town of Dryden's memorial planting for Bob Beck,
58 Danby's Conservation Advisory Council presentation on bird banding, Climate Reality Finger Lakes
59 activities Village of Lansing's hyacinth plantings and new park plaque, Cayuga Lake Watershed
60 Intermunicipal Organization's drinking water protection plan update, winter stormwater training
61 sessions, and the Water Resources Council's draft TMDL fact sheet for municipalities.

62 **Adjournment** – Vice Chair Susan Riley adjourned the meeting at 5:26pm.