

# MONROE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## In Attendance:

### EMC

At Large – Haines Lockhart  
At Large - Deb Muratore  
City of Rochester – Rosemary Jonientz  
Town of Chili - Larry Lazenby  
Town of Gates - Charles Johnson  
Town of Hamlin – Steve Rutherford  
Town of Henrietta - Bill Santos  
Town of Honeoye Falls - Andy Less  
Town of Ogden – Bill Parkhurst  
Town of Mendon- Carol Cloen  
Town of Penfield – Cynette Cavaliere  
Town of Perinton - Mark Gaul  
Town of Pittsford - Caroline Kilmer  
Town of Rush – Beth Hoak  
Ex Officio Alternate - Clement Chung; MCDES  
Ex Officio Alternate – Starr O’Neil; MCDPH  
Ex Officio Alternate – Steve Olufsen; Planning  
MC Legislator Majority - Susan Hughes-Smith  
MC Legislator Minority - Virginia McIntyre  
Recording Secretary – Liz Kaptein

### Guests

Finnegan Schleafer- West Irondequoit HS  
Colin Pieters-West Irondequoit HS  
Ethan Huynh- Gates Chili HS  
Madison Quinn - MCDES  
Nathaniel Jones - MCDES  
Sally Howard – Fed. of MC Environmentalists

## Meeting location:

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

## Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order at 4:02pm by Haines Lockhart

## Review of Minutes:

- Motion to approve May minutes by Bill Santos, seconded by Mark Gaul; all in favor.

## Meeting Topic(s):

Introductions and Roundtable discussion of Current Conservation Boards

- **Mendon** - Carol Cloen
  - Has been on the Conservation Board for one year and this is her first EMC meeting as Mendon rep

- Prioritizing getting town board to think more about environmental issues, they have been uncomfortable with conditioning permits and could be making more efforts towards conservation
- **Pittsford** - Caroline Kilmer
  - 2.5 years on Pittsford Conservation Board
  - Town created Climate Action Plan which was recently approved; interested in hearing about implementation of CAPs at town level
  - Fleet electrification
  - Member of the Water Education Collaborative (WEC), a local non-profit on water education
- **At Large** - Deb Muratore
  - 5 years on EMC
- **Ogden** - Bill Parkhurst
  - 12/13 Years on the Ogden Conservation Board;
    - Regularly share Env issues and topic with the board
  - Town Comprehensive Plan recently reviewed
  - Perc tests are being conducted in areas prone to ponding
  - Ogden is an Erie Canal Village. There is a lot of farming, but a lot of development. New development and plans being reviewed for solar farms and cell tower – unsure if citizens grasp what’s coming
- **Penfield** - Cynette Cavaliere
  - 1.5 years due to merger of Penfield Env. and Energy Boards but 10 years total prior on the EEOC
  - Priorities- updating town codes and developing sustainability procedures & preserving wooded and green spaces. Biggest struggle is the wooded E-Pods- no more tree inventory or requests for no tree removal. Removed due to implied overreach of policy on private property. They’re updating energy code and there’s also a public tree law now – it’s an ordinance that establishes tree management.
- **Honeoye Falls** - Andy Less
  - Chair for 20+ years. Board has taken a summer break (1<sup>st</sup> time) and is reconvening tonight. With EMC for 5 years
  - Continuing with climate action plan with HFL students; added a lot of components, such as fuel data, over the summer. Not ready for bronze status yet.
  - Had been applying for grants for wastewater treatment plant
  - Continuing to develop and revise their Parks Master Plan to update trails and parks footprint.
  - Trees
    - Updating Tree Master Plan
    - Working with Monroe Co. Soil and Water Conservation to plant trees
    - Continuing to apply for Tree City USA (must reapply yearly). Fourth year as designation
    - EPODS - Adding a subdivision to the village, but are having difficulty maintaining

- green space in center of subdivision. Found a work around. Used Forestry Master Plan and arborist to see if it fell into the Woodland EPOD code
    - Interested in hearing about recycling and composting/Impact Earth, as well as vegetable and community gardens
- **Gates** - Charles Johnson
  - 2 years on the Conservation Board
  - Gates is a bronze level Climate Smart Community, but working towards silver
  - Farmers market was created
  - Added 23 more trees this year
  - Want highway department but citizens largely oppose (15 acre proposed location)
- **Monroe County Legislator, Minority Caucus** - Virginia McIntyre
  - Also the Chair of the Gates Conservation Board
  - Earth day celebration- brought in green companies to promote sustainability, Trying to put together an “Ecofest”, a clean energy community event with composting demonstrations/workshops,
  - Have been working with Finger Lakes Mgmt Council, Taylor heating and cooling, NYSERDA to provide information for community at next farmers market. Trying to maintain momentum and ensure community involvement.
  - Controversy over whether people want trees on their property. Very polarizing. Need to educate the value of trees.
  - How to get people to bike more in Monroe county and promote Canal use; “Reconnect Rochester”
  - Going to promote buy green, buy local initiatives. Decreases emissions and supports local farmers
- **Rush** - Beth Hauk
  - On Conservation Board for 2 years
  - Looking at site plans (mostly single family homes), septic (most of Rush is on septic), and stormwater runoff
  - Challenge to get Town Board and Highway Dept. to listen to environmental input
  - Rush Recreation and Park Association now has a [website](#)
  - New parcel along the Genesee
    - Worked with MC Soil and Water to plant 200 native trees; 150 more being added this fall
    - Large Grassland bird habitat - working with Rochester birding groups
  - High involvement in development of tree committee
    - Trying to gain status as Tree City [Tree City USA at arborday.org](http://TreeCityUSA.org)
  - NYSERDA-Empower Incentives [EmPower+ - NYSERDA](#)
    - Get rebates on decommissioning oil/upgrading heating/cooling.
    - Can have rep come and present (Crossfield Heating and Air Conditioning did all the legwork for Rush)
  - Work with Genesee Riverwatch
  - Discussed Hundred Acre Nature Park
- **Perinton** - Mark Gaul
  - 4 years on Conservation Board, which is the 3<sup>rd</sup> longest serving member of 7 members

- Majority of time consumed with review of site plans and SEQR
- Administering Town's easement program
  - Encouraging open space with tax breaks, as well as tax breaks for agriculture
  - Serve as environmental resource for Town Board, Planning, and Appeals boards
  - Successes:
    - Town enabled Erie canal overly district- stricter regulations for the area to preserve the canal (200ft on each side)
    - High Acres landfill – Board is responsible to oversee operations. Had meeting in August.
    - Don't have capacity for CAP or Tree City status, but has a Sustainability Committee.
- **Monroe County Legislator, Majority Caucus** – Sue Hughes-Smith
- **Hamlin** - Steve Rutherford
  - On Conservation Board for 11 years, Monroe County Fish Advisory for 10 years, and EMC for 8 years
  - Lakeside Sewage open and operating
  - No dredging in Sandy Creek yet near Brockport Yacht Club entrance; NYS wants to rip out and replace retaining walls and repair jetties by 2026
  - Reviewing and conducting site visits for land use developments
  - Moratorium on solar panel/farm development until long term practicality is established- lifespan of panels, elimination of e-waste from landowners
  - Conservation board in charge of tree planting. Receive stipend of \$3,500 per year to spend on projects, including give out thousands of native species trees to the public on Labor Day. Using remainder of funds to plant trees around town
  - New energy-smart Town Hall building was constructed
- **Henrietta** - Bill Santos
  - 34 years on conservation board, has been on the EMC since the 90s.
  - Updating Town's Landscape guidelines
  - Town is renovating golf course and connecting trails within the town (E. River Rd trail, River Trail)
    - Lehigh valley trail - new housing development being built with connections to trail.
  - Electric Collaborative when through – citizens increase in green electricity opt-in
  - Act as the EMC representative on the Monroe County Planning Board, a citizen and staff based committee which reviews the Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
  - Nominating and Community Liaison Chair
- **Chili** – Larry Lazenby
  - On Conservation board for 45 years
  - Going through a lot of building reviews, as there are lots of new development in Chili
    - Ensuring appropriate landscaping is being put in.
    - New developments require 1 tree per household
    - In order to circumvent tree requirement for companies like Wegmans- 1% of development cost is to be donated to tree committee.

- Town implementing new Tree Policy and putting in new trees for Davis Park.
  - Have had difficulty getting summer help
  - Finding trees dying because they were weed whacked through the bark (not because of disease). Using expandable trunk guards to protect new trees.
  - Best practice for new caliper of trees is 1.5" for survival rate, not 2.5" caliper as previously thought. Implementation immediate for all new trees.
- Over last 6 months, lost 2 members on conservation board. Training new members has taken a lot of focus away from other issues
- Three high schools involved as part of EMC student pilot project – Gates Chili, W. Irondequoit, and soon to be Churchville-Chili.
- **Rochester** – Rosemary Jonientz
  - On Rochester Environmental Commission Board
  - Reviews SEQR and new zoning plans. Recently had public hearing for new city dvpt plan
- **W. Irondequoit H.S.** - Colin Pieters and Finnegan Schleafer
  - Has been on EMC for 4 months
  - Works with the school's Green Team and provides EMC information to the club. Also works on spreading the information to others.
- **Gates-Chili H.S.** - Ethan Huynh

#### **Committee Reports:**

- **Program and Presentations**
  - Outline for presentations established
    - October - Trout Unlimited on Irondequoit Creek Conservation Efforts
    - November – Field trip at RTS with tour and presentation on RTS Zero Emission Strategies
    - December - Cornell Co-operative Extension on Agriculture and Farmland Protection
  - Have tentatively decided last meeting in may will be a potluck (likely May 21)
    - Please reach out to Haines know if your municipality would like to host
    - Will be dish to pass format
- **Nominating and Community Liaison**
  - Meeting 9/25 at 4pm @ 111 Westfall and via zoom – working on draft letter to send to towns and municipalities for upcoming 2 year term.
    - Trying to get membership confirmation for EMC by January 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Looking to figure out how to get more student participation from other school districts, however only 4 member spots allowed for students. Possibly a student committee? Would like to engage students for input on the process.
  - Looking to update EMC Liaison list. Let Bill know if you know of any local volunteer groups that should be on the list
  - Starr working with County Legislative Office to determine if need Oath of Office form completed for EMC municipal members. If yes, will bring notary to future EMC meeting

- **Natural Resources**
  - No updates. Will schedule for October

**Monroe County Staff Reports:**

- Madison Quinn (MCDES Sustainability Coordinator)
  - CAP Phase II approved. Now working on implementation
  - Initiating climate vulnerability assessment and working on Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Plan (CARP)
    - Wants to engage with student Environmental clubs and partner with municipalities
  - Working on NYSERDA Clean Energies Community designation grant
    - Website: [Clean Energy Communities Program - NYSERDA](#)
    - No matching funds required
    - Monroe County close to getting to next level
    - Rob Richardson, [rjrichardson@gflrpc.org](mailto:rjrichardson@gflrpc.org), at G/FLRPC is the Clean Energy Communities Coordinator for our region
  - NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities Program
    - Website: <https://climatesmart.ny.gov/>
    - Matching funds required
    - Rachel Scudder, [rscudder@gflrpc.org](mailto:rscudder@gflrpc.org), at G/FLRPC is the Climate Smart Communities Coordinator for our region
  - Coordinators will help you work through and apply for each
- Clement Chung (MCDES)
  - Open house at Van Lare had record participation with over 60 people registered. Could consider a tour as a future EMC meeting
  - DSHES granted the County \$16 million towards emergency generators at Van Lare. NYSERDA clean energy communities- close to unlocking more funding.
  - Conservation Field Days – MC participating in Ellison Park (put on by Monroe County Soil & Water)
  - Looking at the timing of operating the Ecopark – using traffic counters to determine peak times/traffic
- Starr O’Neil (MCDPH)
  - Rochester Embayment AOC delisting will be October 8<sup>th</sup>
  - Wetlands Advisory group first meeting in October
- Steve Olufsen (Planning and Development)
  - New Brochure is out for Fishing Board. Advertising has been successful for Monroe County fishing tourism.
  - Fall Land Use training program- 4-9pm at MCC October 3<sup>rd</sup>  
<https://www.monroecounty.gov/planning-training>

### **Other Business/Announcements**

- Haines thanked Ryan Parra-Merrell for his outstanding efforts as Recording Secretary and welcomed the new Recording Secretary, Liz Kaptein.

### **Privilege of the Floor**

- Question was asked regarding onboarding documents for new Conservation Board members
  - Bill Santos (Henrietta) has large manual
  - Larry Lazenby (Chili) has formal full outline of Conservation Board responsibilities
- Sally Howard – Two upcoming conferences in Rochester on water
  - 2024 Great Lakes Coastal Symposium, October 7-9  
<https://www.greatlakescoastalassembly.org/symposium.html>
  - 2024 Great Lakes Commission Annual Meeting, October 8-10<sup>th</sup>  
<https://www.glc.org/meetings/annual>
- Nate Jones recently bought house in Fairport and is looking to become part of the Perinton Conservation Board
- Larry Lazenby
  - Fire at SunKing facility in Brockport; this was the facility EMC toured last year.
  - RGE using rescue goats to maintain vegetative growth around solar/utilities.
  - Consider having WM or Casella present on Recycling Overview as possible joint RAC/EMC meeting.

### **Adjourn:**

- Meeting was adjourned at 5:41 by Haines Lockhart