



TOMPKINS COUNTY  
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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**RESOLUTION Number 01 - 2011: Reorganization of Membership Seats on the Tompkins County Environmental Management Council**

1. WHEREAS, Environmental Management Councils were enabled by New York State's Environmental Conservation Law, which states, "The council shall consist of one member of each city, town, and village conservation advisory council within the county," and
2. WHEREAS, Tompkins County Environmental Management Council (EMC) was created by Resolution 103 of the Tompkins County Board of Representatives in 1971, amended by Resolution 476 of 1990, and restructured by Resolution 295 of 1999, and
3. WHEREAS, Resolution 295 of 1999 established one seat for each of the county's sixteen municipalities and twelve at-large seats, plus allowed for vacant municipal seats to be filled by an at-large applicant for one year at a time, and
4. WHEREAS, when Tompkins County became a chartered county in 1970, it abolished the board of supervisors system of governing and created a legislature to ensure equal representation for county residents, and
5. WHEREAS, the EMC seeks broader participation from residents throughout Tompkins County, and
6. WHEREAS, the EMC has experienced a high vacancy rate in municipal seats, ranging from 3 to 8 over the last nine years, and currently 10 of 16 municipal seats are vacant, and
7. WHEREAS, the EMC currently has only 15 voting members and its ability to serve the county is dependent on active and robust membership, and
8. WHEREAS, the EMC's primary responsibility is to advise the county legislature on a variety of environmental matters affecting the preservation, conservation, and ecologically suitable use of the natural resources of the County, now therefore be it

RESOLVED that the EMC requests that the Tompkins County Legislature restructure the EMC membership seats by amending Resolution 295 in the following manner with respect to Membership and Term,

- a) Authorizing each member of the Tompkins County Legislature to appoint a suitably qualified resident of their legislative district to the EMC. Appointees will be expected to report on environmental issues in their respective districts;
- b) Terminating EMC membership based solely on municipal boundaries;

- c) Providing seats for all municipalities, whether village, town, or city, that have a conservation advisory council or conservation board, per NYS ECL;
- d) Creating four voting seats for members of non-profit organizations with environmental interests, with recommendations for appointments to be made by the EMC pursuant to EMC bylaws;
- e) Authorizing the EMC, per EMC bylaws, to appoint environmentally focused candidates for the remaining vacant and unfilled seats, as at-large voting positions. Representational priority will be given to the county's youth, business, educational, and underrepresented municipal constituencies.
- f) Maintaining two year staggered terms, where roughly half of all seats expire on the last day of even numbered years and half expire on the last day of odd numbered years.
- g) Maintaining total membership of voting members at no more than 28;
- h) Maintaining the Legislature's existing responsibilities in appointing all members.

Date: September 14, 2011

Voting In Favor: 9

Voting Against: 1

Abstentions: 1