

**TOMPKINS COUNTY Climate and Sustainable Energy Advisory Board**  
**Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 4:00-6:00PM**  
**Final Minutes**  
**Meeting Facilitator: Andrea Aguirre**

**Attendance**

Member	Member	Staff
Andrea Aguirre	P Rebecca Evans	P Terry Carroll P
Jaden Beck	P Guillermo Metz	P Hailley Delisle P
Louise Bruce	P Alex Rakow (associate)*	A Kristin McCarthy P
Sara Culotta	P Martha Robertson	P
Veronica Pillar*	P Sarah Schnabel	P
Brian Eden	P Irene Weiser	P
Danielle Eiseman	P	

\*Non-voting member

**Guests:** Savannah Vega, Hilary Swarthout (spelling), Nick Goldsmith, Sara Hess

**1. Call to Order/Agenda Review** – Facilitator Andrea Aguirre called the meeting to order at 4:04pm. She provided an overview of the agenda, to which there were no changes.

**2. Approval of Minutes** – The draft March 26, 2024, minutes were approved (motion by Martha Robertson, second by Sara Culotta) as submitted. Motion carried.

**3. Public Comment** – None

**4. Member Updates** – Members reported on several topics, including the Earth Day event on the Commons, Ithaca's draft downtown plan, the Seneca Meadows final scoping document, Cornell on Fire, the Climate Superfund, various pieces of climate state legislation, and PFAs. Additionally, Louise shared updates from the Recycling Partnership's community outreach initiative, which focuses on household recycling behaviors, and Sara also relayed news about NYSERDA funding opportunities, including rebate programs for home energy and solar initiatives.

**5. Chair Report**

Sara expressed her gratitude to members for utilizing the agenda item request form but suggested confirming speaker availability in advance when proposing presentations. She also briefly discussed the meeting facilitation schedule, confirming that Sarah Schnabel will host the next meeting, which will likely include an update on board priorities as an agenda item.

**6. Staff Report**

Hailley provided updates on several initiatives. The County expects to receive three EV Arcs, all-in-one solar battery charging stations, in June, to be deployed across county facilities. The Electric Vehicle Charging RFP is under review, while the Induction Cooktop Program is ongoing, albeit delayed due to a

full bid process. Additionally, staff is working on an Electricity Emergency Response Plan to address power outages.

**7. Report: Discussion on Last Month's Activity** – Louise Bruce

Louise led a discussion recapping the insights gleaned from the group's deep dive in March on shaping the board's priorities for future work, focusing on maximizing the impact of remaining 2024 meetings. That discussion yielded four key themes: funding for building decarbonization, climate resiliency, thermal energy networks, and codes and planning. Funding for building decarbonization emerged as the top priority, with the County potentially playing a navigator role to connect individuals with funding opportunities and facilitate access to funds for local building owners and occupants. The County's role would involve bringing in expertise and funding, rather than just providing knowledge. The group proposed determining the right priorities and approach by applying the lenses of mission alignment and the CASE strategy to the four themes. This could involve direct support to municipalities, updates to codes and planning (including building code updates, gas planning, and transportation planning), and curating information for legislators to support informed decision-making.

**8. Presentation: TC Green Capital Plan** – Terry Carroll

Terry reported on the County's Green Capital Plan, which was initiated in 2018 with a significant funding commitment. The plan has faced challenges due to the pandemic and rising costs but has also attracted additional funding opportunities. Phase 1 has seen costs increase due to scope changes, inflation, and other factors, but is expected to result in significant greenhouse gas emission savings. Terry discussed the need to replace aging HVAC systems in several buildings and the possible implementation of geothermal and solar projects, including a geothermal system at the Emergency Response building. The group also discussed the need for increased funding for heat pump projects and lobbying for additional regulations allowing the use of alternative systems for heat pumps, and explored potential funding sources such as federal incentives, utility rebates, and the Clean Energy Communities program.

**9. Discussion: Urging TC Legislature to Comment on Final Proposed 2024 State Building Code**

– Brian Eden

Brian presented a report on the International Code Council's (ICC) role in developing building codes and the impact of the 2024 state building code on energy efficiency. The 2024 code is expected to be delayed until 2025 due to the ICC's failure to deliver the code on time. The report and subsequent discussion highlighted the need for elected officials to be involved in the process, as the current code has removed provisions that would facilitate electrification, and the importance of codes in driving ambition. The discussion concluded with an understanding that someone with expertise should be found to take on this role, and offline conversations would continue to explore this further.

**10. Discussion: A Robust Ithaca Energy Code Supplement Is Essential to Achieving the County's Energy Strategy Goals** – Nick Goldsmith and Brian Eden

Brian Eden introduced Nick Goldsmith, who reported on the Ithaca Energy Code Supplement and its relation to the County's Energy Strategy. In his report, Nick emphasized the importance of adopting a robust energy code to achieve the ambitious goals of the City of Ithaca's Green New Deal. The energy

code supplement was a long project that took six years to develop, from inception to adoption in both the city and town. Nick Goldsmith provided a detailed account of the process, which involved engaging a consultant team, conducting a green building policy report, and developing a code supplement draft. The report included an existing building survey, a look at various green building technologies, and an analysis of social factors such as cost and accessibility. The discussion touched on multiple topics, including the importance of technical support, addressing greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, and the need for ongoing attention to this issue, as well as potential county involvement and the impact of the 2025 New York State Energy Code. Goldsmith attributed the success to the transparent process and clear communication throughout. The meeting concluded with a plan to follow up on these topics in future discussions.

**11. Meeting Wrap-up**

Andrea thanked everyone for attending.

**11. Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 6:00pm.