

EMC Final Minutes
Dec. 12, 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

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Attendance

Member		Seat	Member		Seat
Dan Antonioli	E	Village of Dryden	Brad Will	A	At-Large
Steve Bissen	P	Town of Dryden	Ingrid Zabel	P	Town of Ithaca
Louise Bruce	E	At-Large	Jack Zinda	P	At-Large
Christine Collins	P	Town of Ulysses	City of Ithaca	X	Vacant
Cait Darfler	P	Village of Trumansburg	Town of Enfield	X	Vacant
Edward Dubovi	P	Town of Lansing	Town of Newfield	X	Vacant
Peter McDonald	E	Town of Danby	<i>Anne Koreman</i>	P	<i>Legislative Liaison</i>
Steve Nicholson	P	Town of Caroline	<i>Karen Edelstein</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Vacant	X	Town of Enfield	<i>Thomas Hirasuna</i>	P	<i>Associate Member</i>
Susan Riley	P	At-Large	<i>David Weinstein</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Barry Siebe	P	Town of Groton	<i>Robert Wesley</i>	A	<i>Associate Member</i>
Ron Szymanski	A	Village of Freeville	Darby Kiley	E	Tompkins Co. staff
Elaine Tietjen	P	At-Large	Kristin McCarthy	P	Tompkins Co. staff

5 **Guests:** Siobhan Hull

6 **Call to Order** – Chair Cait Darfler called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.

7 **Agenda Review/Public Comment** – Abigail Conner’s TC Hazard Mitigation Plan Update was moved to
8 earlier in the agenda for scheduling reasons. No public comment.

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10 **Group Check-in: Icebreaker Activity** – Members shared their favorite breakfast experience.

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12 **Approval of Minutes** – The October 2024 draft minutes were approved (motion by Christine Collins,
13 second by Barry Siebe) as submitted. Motion carried.

14 **Report/Discussion: TC Hazard Mitigation Plan Update** – Abigail Conner, Planning & Sustainability Dept.
15 Abigail reported on the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, providing an overview of the current
16 multi-jurisdictional plan covering hazards, risk assessments, and mitigation strategies. The Q&A
17 discussion touched on topics such as drought definition, funding applications, and disaster
18 preparedness. Notably, the Hazard Mitigation Plan is required for municipalities to be eligible for state
19 and federal funding.

20 **Report/Discussion: EMC Five-year Strategic Plan**– Aubryn Sidle, Cornell University
21 Aubryn presented an overview of her upcoming Master of Public Administration course, which will
22 enable the EMC to develop a five-year strategic plan with student assistance. The curriculum will include
23 lectures, research, and collaborative work with EMC representatives. The strategic planning project will
24 also be discussed at the January organizational meeting to explore timelines and logistical
25 considerations.

26 **Executive Committee Report** – Cait reported on the upcoming implementation of the newly passed
27 EMC bylaws on Jan. 1, reminding members to renew their memberships or update their seat
28 information by this date. The committee also approved a student member application from Ace
29 Dufresne. Additionally, Cait reported on the NYS DEC's negative declaration on Cargill's mine storage
30 permit modification, prompting the committee to draft a letter outlining their concerns.

31 **Action: Election of 2025 Vice Chairs**

32 Steve Nicholson, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the 2025 vice chair slate (Steve
33 Nicholson, Susan Riley, Ingrid Zabel). Nominations were solicited from the floor, but none were offered.

34 **Action:** Steve Nicholson made a motion, which Christine Collins seconded, to elect Steve Nicholson,
35 Susan Riley, and Ingrid Zabel the 2025 vice chairs of the Tompkins County Environmental Management
36 Council. Motion carried.

37 **Municipal Reports (as needed)**

38 Barry shared his concerns about a recently approved solar project in Groton, wondering how to engage
39 his town board on environmental issues. Steve Bissen suggested forming a local conservation advisory
40 committee to enhance the board's receptiveness. Cait emphasized building relationships with board
41 members and using examples from other municipalities to demonstrate potential benefits. Ed from
42 Lansing shared his experiences with the Lansing CAC, highlighting challenges in addressing complex
43 issues like the Cargill mine.

44 **Staff Report (as needed)** – None

45 **Legislative Liaison Report (as needed)** – Annie Koreman provided a legislative liaison update, covering
46 various topics. The Industrial Development Agency is considering changes to its solar developer tax
47 abatements to incentivize sustainable practices and discourage environmental harm. Annie also
48 mentioned the recent debate at the Legislature over a Natural Capital Infrastructure grant for the
49 preservation of a parcel within the Sage Preserve. Cait inquired about the County's role in supporting
50 municipal open space inventories.

51 **Committee and Task Updates (as needed)**

52 Steve reported that the UNA Committee is finalizing revised maps with consultants, to be presented for
53 approval and consideration by the entire EMC in February. Elaine updated on the environmental
54 organization directory, which has been delayed due to the County communications director's departure.
55 The directory's focus is currently on design and technical aspects, with plans to share the finalized list
56 with relevant organizations for review.

57 **Member Announcements** – Barry updated the group on his initial research into solar distribution in New
58 York State, noting that a state plan is in development, focusing on the Hudson River Valley. The group
59 discussed reaching out to NYSAC for assistance, and Steve mentioned that NYSAC's website is being
60 updated, with a new launch scheduled for March. The January EMC organizational meeting will take
61 place in person at the Tompkins Center for History and Culture in downtown Ithaca from 4 to 6 PM, with
62 a Zoom option available upon request to Cait.

63 **Adjournment** – Chair Cait Darfler adjourned the meeting at 5:30pm.