

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

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Attendance

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

5 **Guests:** Hunter Barlow, Sawyer Dickinson, Siobhan Hull

6 **Call to Order** – Chair Cait Darfler called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

7 **Agenda Review/Public Comment** – No public comment was made. Later, the meeting's order was
8 adjusted, moving the bylaws discussion and vote before the executive committee report to avoid losing
9 quorum due to early departures.

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11 **Group Check-in: Icebreaker Activity** – Members broke into small groups and shared their number one
12 recommendation about Tompkins County.

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14 **Approval of Minutes** – The July 2024 draft minutes were approved (motion by Peter McDonald, second
15 by Chris Collins) as submitted. Motion carried.

16 **Presentation/Discussion: Finger Lakes PFAS Project: targeted water sampling to identify PFASs in the**
17 **Finger Lakes** – *Brune Boukobza and Laura Akey, Cornell University*

18 Brune Boukobza and Laura Akey, Cornell University undergraduate researchers, presented their ongoing
19 project investigating per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the Finger Lakes region. PFAS, found
20 in household and industrial products, are nicknamed "forever chemicals" due to their resistance to
21 degradation, and exposure has been linked to health problems. The EPA has established maximum
22 contaminant levels for some PFAS in drinking water. The project found low PFAS prevalence in the
23 region, except near potential sources. During Q&A, the audience inquired about PFAS behavior in the
24 environment, particularly its interaction with soil and water, with the presenters noting ongoing
25 research in this area. Questions also arose about decreasing PFAS levels, which the team clarified may
26 indicate dilution or transformation rather than removal. Concerns were raised about potential loopholes
27 in regulations based on dilution, highlighting limitations in current concentration-based regulations. The
28 presenters encouraged further collaboration and welcomed suggestions for additional sampling sites.

29 **Final Discussion/Action: Approved Revised EMC Bylaws** – Cait Darfler

30 Cait informed group that the County legislative clerks reviewed the bylaws and found them to be in
31 good order, with one point requiring further legal clarification regarding how to handle minors joining as
32 voting members. A minor amendment was proposed to require interested student member applicants
33 to submit a letter of interest explaining their involvement in the community. Cait explained a
34 restructuring resolution would be submitted with the bylaws to the County for approval, all of which
35 would go into effect Jan. 1, 2025. A table outlining how these changes would affect board seat
36 assignments was presented, with some members needing to reapply and others transitioning from
37 village municipal seats to at-large seats. The bylaws and restructuring resolution will be submitted to the
38 Planning, Energy and Environmental Quality legislative committee for consideration and then to the
39 County Legislature for final approval. Elaine expressed appreciation to those who worked on revising the
40 bylaws, and Cait thanked everyone for their hard work.

41 **Action:** Chris Collins moved, with a second by Dan Antonioli, to take the bylaws off the table for
42 discussion and adoption, Motion carried.

43 **Executive Committee Report** – Cait Darfler

44 Cait welcomed new members Ed and Barry, leading the group in a round-robin introduction and sharing
45 session. Members discussed a wide range of topics, including bee pollination, solar farms, carbon
46 emissions, sustainable initiatives in the Finger Lakes region, climate-resilient communities, waste
47 management, moss and microclimates, Cornell Nature RX, the Ithaca Green New Deal, recycling and the
48 circular economy, and more. Cait also announced that the Oct. 10 meeting would focus on board
49 business, and the UNA public meeting is scheduled for November. To ensure a smooth transition for
50 new members, Cait assigned mentors from the existing membership and encouraged everyone to
51 review the new member onboarding FAQ.

52 **Municipal Reports (as needed)**

53 No reports were given due to time constraints.

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

55 No reports were given due to time constraints.

56 **Staff Report (as needed)** – No report was given due to time constraints.

57 **Member Announcements** – Steve N. reminded the group about the upcoming NYS Association of
58 Conservation Commissions conference. He shared a link to the conference in the chat, noting that the
59 virtual portion will take place on Wednesday, followed by field trips on Thursday and Friday.

60 **Adjournment** – Chair Cait Darfler adjourned the meeting at 5:27pm.