



Adirondack Park Agency
[FINAL] SEPTEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 12, 2024

Agency Members, Designees, and Executive Staff Present:

John Ernst, Chairperson

Mark Hall, Member

Benita Law-Diao, Member

Art Lussi, Member

Ken Lynch, Member

Rebecca Miller, Empire State Development

Zoë Smith, Member

Matt Tebo, Department of State

Dan Wilt, Member

Joe Zalewski, Department of Environmental Conservation

Barbara Rice, Executive Director

Damion Stodola, Counsel

Absent and Excused

Local Government Review Board Present

Gerald Delaney, Sr., Executive Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum of board members being present in person, the meeting was called to order at approximately 9:32 AM and Chairperson Ernst welcomed the public, presenters and staff.

2. WELCOMING REMARKS

Chairperson Ernst noted that the second phase of the rail trail is now open, and bids will be going out shortly for the launch area of the third phase. Ernst also noted that it was encouraging to see in a recent Adirondack Explorer Almanack article that the Lake George Park Commission and Lake George Association working together to review research and science around the long-term response of native plants after the application of ProcellaCOR. Reports indicate that their findings matched – with no traceable chemical in the water within 24 hours of application.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair recognized Ron Konowitz, Adirondack Powder Skier’s Association. Konowitz commended the group on the proposed State Land Master Plan (SLMP) amendments and asked that the Adirondack Powder Skier’s Association be included in the Amendment process going forward.

The Chair recognized Claudia Braymer, Protect the Adirondacks, who noted they would like the comment period for the SLMP amendments extended from 60 to 90 days.

The Chair recognized Dave Gibson, Adirondack Wild, who referenced a recent NCPR story regarding water body carrying capacity while indicating they would like to see action on waterbody carrying capacity in the near term.

4. APPROVAL OF JULY 11, 2024 AGENCY MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Dan Wilt, seconded by Mark Hall, the July minutes were unanimously approved without modification with Zoë Smith, Joe Zalewski and Rebecca Miller not voting having been absent at the July meeting.

5. RECUSALS

None

6. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Barbara Rice presented the Executive Director Report, highlights of which included:

- Acknowledgement of the passing of Chuck Vandrei, the DEC's Historic Presentation Officer.
- Review of summer storms which lead to the approval of 11 emergency projects so far this year, the most the Agency has ever seen.
- Follow-up news about this year's ProcellaCOR applications – applicants are reporting the treatment has removed Eurasian watermilfoil infestations and dissipated quickly with no measurable impacts to native vegetation.
- Continued work to roll out the Agency's Government Transparency Initiative Plan, which has led to an increased social media presence leading to more public engagement. Staff are also working on a revamped website to provide a digital resource for people to learn about the agency, submit applications, and provide a user-friendly online experience.
- A review of recent staffing updates including the promotion of Molly Jordan to Mapping Technologist 3, and the addition of new staff members Charlotte Staats, Natural Heritage Trust State Land Planner, and Paulina Kwasniak, Receptionist.
- Thanks and acknowledgement for the work done by summer interns: Lydia Harvey, Tom Shafer, Mistaya Smith and Emily Pulicini.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN INTO COMMITTEES

On the motion of Art Lussi, and seconded by Joe Zalewski, the Agency Board voted by unanimous agreement to adjourn to committees at approximately 9:51 AM.

State Land Committee

The committee meeting convened at approximately 9:52 AM.

State Land Committee Members: Ken Lynch, Chair, Benita Law-Daio, Zoë Smith, Rebecca Miller.

Other Members and Designees Present

John Ernst, Matt Tebo (DOS), Art Lussi, Dan Wilt, Randy Young (DEC)

Local Government Review Board Present

Gerald Delaney, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present

Barb Rice, Damion Stodola, Megan Phillips, Mitchell Jones,

(1) Planning Division (Megan Phillips)

Megan Phillips, Deputy Director of State Lands and Planning provided an update on recent Planning Division activities, highlights included:

- New staff member Charlotte Staats was welcomed as a National Heritage Trust state land planner to the Planning Division.
- Mistaya Smith, community design intern completed projects in the Towns of Keene and Hague, she is tentatively slated to present her work to the October meeting of the Agency board.
- The Planning Divisions GIS Intern, Emily Pulcini, will be staying on, earning course credit toward her undergraduate degree at Paul Smith's College.
- Congratulations were made to Molly Jordan on her recent promotion to a Mapping Technologist 3.
- State Land staff has been active in consultations with the DEC and ORDA for projects related to the UCI downhill mountain bike races at Whiteface, trail turnpiking in the Pigeon Lake Wilderness, lots of culvert replacements and unit management planning for Debar Mountain Wild Forest Pepperbox Wilderness, and John Brown Farm.
- State Land staff continue to work with the DEC on the High Peaks visitor use management framework project and the Trail Stewardship Working Group.
- The Local Government Services team has processed 81 variance referrals from Agency approved local land use programs (ALLUPs) so far in 2024. They've also been meeting with town supervisors, enforcement officers and zoning administrators to assist with implementation of ALLUPs and ensure that they have the training they need.
- Robyn Burgess, from the Local Government team will be presenting on zoning in the Adirondack Park at the NY Planning Federation Conference in Lake Placid later this month.

(2) Cranberry Lake Campground Unit Management Plan Amendment (Oliver Miller, DEC, Josh Houghton, DEC, and Mitchell Jones, APA)

Oliver Miller, Department of Environmental Conservation, and Kevin Prickett (stepping in for Mitchell Jones), Adirondack Park Agency presented the summary of public comments received and staff recommendations related to conformance to the State Land Master Plan regarding the proposed amendment to the 2016 Cranberry Lake Campground UMP. On motion of Zoë Smith and seconded by Joe Zalewski and Benita Law-Daio the committee by unanimous agreement forwarded a recommendation to the full board for approval of a resolution finding the 2024 UMP Amendment for the Cranberry Lake Public Campground is in conformance with the

general guidelines and criteria of the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

- (3) Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan Amendment Package (Mitchell Jones (APA), Matt McNamara (APA), Kevin Prickett (APA), Megan Phillips (APA))

The above referenced Adirondack Park Agency staff presented a summary of the 2024 package of proposed amendments to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. On the motion of Benita Law-Daio and seconded by Zoë Smith the committee unanimously voted to recommend a resolution naming the Adirondack Park Agency as the agency of record for the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process and proceeding with public hearings and a public comment period.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Committee Adjourned at approximately 11:26 AM.

Executive Session/Lunch

There was no executive session.

Park Policy and Planning Committee

The committee meeting convened at approximately 12:47 PM.

Park Policy and Planning Committee Members Present:

Benita Law-Daio (Chair), Mark Hall, Ken Lynch, Rebecca Miller (ESD)

Other Members and Designees Present:

John Ernst, Art Lussi, Zoë Smith, Matt Tebo (DOS), Dan Wilt, Randy Young (DEC)

Local Government Review Board

Gerald Delaney, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Barb Rice, Damion Stodola, Megan Phillips, Kevin Prickett, Mitchell Jones, Matt McNamara

(1) Hudson River Black River Regulating District Overview (John Callaghan, HRBRRD)

John Callaghan, the Executive Director of the Hudson River Black River Regulating District presented an overview on the Regulating District's authority, history and projects to the committee including where it intersects with the Agency's jurisdiction.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Park Policy and Planning adjourned at approximately 1:19 PM

Park Ecology Committee convened at approximately 1:20 PM

Park Ecology Committee

Park Ecology Committee Members Present:

Zoë Smith (Chair), Benita Law-Diao, Rebecca Miller (ESD), Joe Zalewski (DEC)

Other Members and Designees Present:

John Ernst, Art Lussi, Ken Lynch, Matt Tebo (DOS), Dan Wilt.

Local Government Review Board

Gerald Delaney, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Barb Rice, Damion Stodola, Dr. Elizabeth Schuyler

(4) Park Ecology (Dr. Lizz Schuyler)

Dr. Lizz Schuyler, Supervisor – Natural Resource Analysis, reported that the Lake George Park Commission (LGPC) and Lake George Association (LGA) are embracing a collaborative future following the use of ProcellaCOR. Independent testing provided by LGA and the Jefferson Project showed it to have behaved exactly as it should have in agreement with results found by the LGPC. Dr. Schuyler then introduced today's

speaker for the following presentations:

- 100 Years of Natural Resource Decision Making in the Park (Professor Stacy McNulty, Ph.D. – SUNY ESF)

Professor Stacy McNulty, Ph.D., SUNY ESF (Huntington Forest campus in Newcomb) provided a presentation to the Board on a History of Adirondack Natural Resource Policy Decisions.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Committee Adjourned at approximately 2:20 PM.

The Board returned to Full Agency at approximately 2:21 PM

9. Committee Reports

State Lands (Ken Lynch)

- On motion of Ken Lynch and seconded by John Ernst the board unanimously voted to approve a resolution that the proposed amendment to the 2016 Cranberry Lake Campground UMP is in conformance with the State Land Master Plan (SLMP).
- On motion of Ken Lynch and seconded by Benita Law-Daio the board unanimously voted to approve a resolution naming the Adirondack Park Agency as the Agency of record for the SEQRA and the procession to the public hearing and public comment periods.

Park Policy and Planning (Benita Law-Diao)

- The committee received a presentation from John Callahan regarding the Hudson River Black River Regulating District.

Park Ecology (Zoë Smith)

- The committee received a presentation from Dr. Stacy McNulty regarding the last 100 years of Adirondack natural resource policy decisions.

10. Interim Reports

The Administration, Economic Affairs, Enforcement, Legal Affairs, Local Government Services, Public Awareness and Communications, and Regulatory Programs Committees did not meet this month.

11. Member Comment

G. Delaney noted he expects there will be a spirited debate related to the proposed State Land Master Plan amendments. Delaney also thanked Dr. Lizz Schuyler for her report and expressed gratitude that the LGPC and the LGA are working together.

12. Old Business

None

13. New Business

None

14. Public Comment

- Jackie Bowen of the Adirondack Council noted that he recognized the visitor use management language in the SLMP. Bowen noted an opportunity for a goal around carrying capacity, clarifying language on eBikes. Bowen went on to recommend removal dates for non-conforming structures, and resources for the DEC to remove those structures or the dates to be reincorporated. Lastly Bowen noted they would prefer a two rounds of public comments and a 90 day public comment period, as well as recommendations for public hearings to be held south and west of the Adirondack Park for people in all parts of the State to weigh in.
- Dan Plumbley of Keene, expressed concern regarding the visitor use management plan in the SLMP would control numbers, he would like to see the Agency look again at a permitting process.

[Link to video and audio recordings of the full Agency presentation to be added.]

Chairperson Ernst noted that the next meeting will be October 17, 2024.

The meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 2:34 pm.

John Ernst

John Ernst, Chairperson