



[DRAFT] AUGUST MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 14, 2025

Agency Members, Designees, and Executive Staff Present:

Matt Tebo	Department of State, Presiding Member
Mark Hall	Member
Benita Law-Diao	Member
Art Lussi	Member
José Almanzar	Member
Ken Lynch	Member
Rush Holt	Member
Zoë Smith	Member
Dan Wilt	Member
Barbara Rice	Executive Director
Damion Stodola	Counsel

Absent and Excused

Steve Hunt, Empire State Development

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 9:34 A.M. and Matt Tebo, presiding member, welcomed the public, presenters, and staff.

2. WELCOMING REMARKS

Presiding Member Tebo made welcoming remarks, thanked former Chair John Ernst for his service, and welcomed new board members.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The presiding member recognized L. Scott Muller, a resident of Loon Lake who commented on a violation he reported to the Agency.

The presiding member recognized Bob Glennon, Protect the Adirondacks, who requested information regarding the Agency headquarters project.

The presiding member recognized Ron Konowitz, Adirondack Powder Skier Association, who requested ski touring trails be included in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan.

The presiding member recognized Dave Gibson, Adirondack Wild, who commented on conservation subdivision design principles.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Benita Law-Diao, seconded by Dan Wilt, the June 13, 2025 meeting minutes were unanimously approved without modification (Joe Zalewski, Rush Holt, and José Almanzar abstained).

5. RECUSALS

None

6. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Barbara Rice presented her report, highlights of which included:

- Thanking Matt Tebo for serving as the presiding member over the meeting.
- Welcoming new board members José Almanzar and Rush Holt.
- Congratulating Ashley Dougherty on her new role as Deputy Secretary for Environment in the Governor's executive chamber.
- Reporting on local government outreach with two trips last month. One to Westport to attend their ribbon cutting for the town's recently completed wastewater infrastructure upgrade which will protect Lake Champlain's water quality and support the town's economy. The project was funded with the help of grants and interest free financing provided by the DEC and EFC. This project was a great success and provides a model for how local governments can leverage state resources to tackle septic and wastewater challenges.
- In late July, meeting Warren County Board of Supervisors Chairperson, Kevin Geraghty, who is also the long serving Town of Warrensburg Supervisor and Warren County Planning Director, Ethan Gaddy about their ongoing Thriving Hamlets initiative, which builds on the Agency's own Hamlets 1, 2 and 3 assessment and review buildable land, infrastructure,

zoning regulations and environmental constraints within the county's twenty designated hamlets.

- Welcoming three new staff to the Legal Division: Nicole Persaud, the Agency's new Associate Attorney, Grace Sullivan, the Agency's newest Senior Attorney, and the transition of Paulina Kwasniak to the Environmental Program Specialist 1 Trainee position in the Jurisdictional Inquiry Office.
- Updating the public on the Agency headquarters project including the launch of an online dashboard that will include environmental site assessments, asbestos and lead surveys, and geotechnical reports. This dashboard will be a public easily accessible resource moving forward for project information.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN INTO COMMITTEES

On motion of Mark Hall, seconded by Dan Wilt, the Agency Board voted unanimously to adjourn to committees at approximately 9:56 A.M.

9. Committee Meetings:

9.1 State Land Committee

The committee meeting convened at approximately 9:56 A.M.

Committee Members Present: Ken Lynch (Committee Chair), Benita Law-Diao, Zoë Smith, Joe Zalewski (DEC)

Other Members and Designees Present: José Almanzar, Mark Hall, Ruh Holt, Art Lussi, Matt Tebo (DOS), Dan Wilt

Local Government Review Board: Gerald Delaney

Agency Staff Present: Barbara Rice, Damion Stodola, Megan Phillips, Charlotte Staats, Mitchell Jones

(1) Planning Division Report

Megan Phillips, Deputy Director of Planning presented the Planning Division report, highlights of which included:

- An update on the rail trail. Phase 3 construction is on time with a date for substantial completion this October. DEC and partners have been working to manage invasive species along the rail trail corridor.

- State Land staff have received 24 state land consultations to date this year, most recently for trail work including re-routes and installation of stepping stones in the Ha-de-ron-dah Wilderness, removal of culverts and installation of fords and bridges in the Moose River Plains Wild Forest, replacement of a ski lift at Gore Mountain Intensive Use Area, and relocation and replacement of a ticket booth at the Fish Creek Pond Campground.
- As part of DEC and APA efforts to support visitor use management on the Forest Preserve, APA GIS and state land staff have been working to update a survey to assess impacts of primitive tent sites. Primitive tent site data collected from 2015 to present has been compiled into one data set. Staff worked on alternatives to help display information when connection to Wi-Fi or cellular data is not available, and APA and DEC worked together to field test the revised survey.
- State land staff participated in two focus group sessions led by the DEC last month to inform the development of their statewide mobility device policy. That work continues to advance on a parallel track with our Master Plan amendments package.
- DEC and the Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation are accepting public comments on the draft scoping document for the 2026 update to the NYS Open Space Plan. Several important statewide initiatives enacted since the 2016 Plan will significantly inform the pace and focus of land conservation in New York State over the next five years.
- The Local Government Services team has responded to 90 variance referrals so far this year. The team also visited the Towns of Day, Edinburgh, and Newcomb in July and Chesterfield yesterday to discuss implementation of their Approved Programs.
- The invitation for bids to host the 2026 Adirondack Planning Forum is now available in the NYS Contract reporter. The conference is scheduled for May 6 and 7, 2026, interested parties should submit their bids to the APA's administrative office no later than 3:00 PM on September 5.
- GIS and RASS intern Haberle Conlon will be wrapping up his work toward the end of this month. During his time with the Agency he developed an improved workflow for our wetland biologists to collect field data using ESRI applications; provided support for deep water marsh mapping surveys on five Adirondack lakes; and delivered base maps and applications to support state land planning and management initiatives.

(2) Proposed Final Adirondack State Land Master Plan Amendments

Agency staff provided responses to questions received from board members at the prior board meeting during the overview of the proposed final 2024-2025 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan amendments package.

(3) Proposed Luzerne and Lincoln Pond Campground Unit Management Plans (UMPs)

DEC staff member Oliver Miller briefed the State Land Committee on public drafts of the Lincoln Pond Campground and Luzerne proposed Unit Management Plans.

APA staff member Mitchell Jones briefed the Committee on the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan criteria for intensive use areas and requested the Committee recommend to the full board a motion to authorize a joint public comment period with the DEC for each draft plan.

On motion of Zoë Smith, seconded by Benita Law-Diao, the State Land Committee unanimously recommended the approval to proceed with a joint public comment period with the DEC for the Luzerne and Lincoln Park Campground UMPs to the full Agency Board.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Committee adjourned at approximately 12:16 P.M.

9.2 Legal Affairs

The committee meeting convened at approximately 12:16 PM.

Committee Members: Art Lussi (Committee Chair), Ken Lynch, and Zoë Smith

Other Members and Designees Present: José Almanzar, Mark Hall, Rush Holt, Benita Law-Diao, Matt Tebo (DOS), Dan Wilt, Joe Zalewski (DEC)

- (1) Damion Stodola, General Counsel, briefed the committee on the cross-functional work of the legal division for the agency, including the public facing work of the JIF team, highlighted the growth of the legal division, thanked Executive Director Rice for advocating for adding staff to the division, and welcomed the new staff to the division and promotions within the division.

- (2) Matt Brown, EPS2, provided a general overview of the Jurisdictional Inquiry (JIF) Office, the most recent statistics, and the process followed upon the receipt of an inquiry.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Committee adjourned at approximately 12:50 PM.

The Board returned to Full Agency at approximately 12:50 PM.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1. State Lands Committee (Ken Lynch)

The committee received a Planning Division Report from Megan Phillips and a presentation for information regarding questions received during the last board meeting overview of the 2024-25 Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan amendments, as well as a summary of proposed changes from the draft to the final package.

On motion of Ken Lynch, seconded by Benita Law-Diao the Board unanimously moved to authorize a joint public comment period with the DEC for the proposed draft Unit Management Plans for Luzerne and Lincoln Park Campgrounds.

10.2. Legal Division (Art Lussi)

The committee received a legal division report and an informational presentation from Matt Brown regarding the jurisdictional inquiry process.

11. INTERIM REPORTS

The Administration, Economic Affairs, Enforcement, Local Government Services, Park Ecology, Park Policy and Planning, and Regulatory Programs committees did not meet this month.

G. Delaney welcomed new Board members.

12. MEMBER COMMENT

R. Holt expressed gratitude for having been asked to join this Board.

13. OLD BUSINESS

None

14. NEW BUSINESS

None

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

The presiding member recognized Ron Konowitz, Adirondack Powder Skier Association. who thanked the Agency staff for moving forward with the 2019 ski touring guidance and asked that the Adirondack Powder Skier Association be included in future planning.

The presiding member recognized Claudia Braymer, Protect the Adirondacks!, who welcomed new Board members and expressed agreement with earlier comments regarding large scale subdivisions and commented on committee meetings.

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

Presiding Member Tebo noted that the next meeting will be September 11, 2025.

On motion of Matt Tebo, and seconded by Art Lussi, the meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 1:03 PM.

Matt Tebo, Presiding Member