



Adirondack Park Agency

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor
BARBARA RICE
Executive Director

AGENCY MEETING MINUTES November 13-14, 2025

Agency Members, Designees, and Executive Staff Present:

Mark Hall	Chair
Benita Law-Diao	Member
Art Lussi	Member
Jose Almanzar	Member (remote)
Steve Hunt	Empire State Development (remote)
Ken Lynch	Member
Rush Holt	Member
Zoë Smith	Member
Matt Tebo	Department of State (remote)
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 1:02 PM by Mark Hall, Chair.

2. WELCOMING REMARKS

Chairperson Mark Hall welcomed the public, presenters, staff, and board members, and made welcoming remarks.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The chair recognized Dave Gibson, Protect the Adirondacks who commented on transparency as it relates to Regulatory Programs.

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4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Dan Wilt, seconded by Benita Law-Daio, the October 9, 2025 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

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:

- Congratulating the 22 new and re-elected officials who will be leading the Park's communities starting next year. Thanks and acknowledgment went out to those who are leaving at the end of the year for their partnership.
- Noting the passage of Proposition One which addressed some standing issues with 323 acres of state land at the Mount Van Hoevenberg Olympic Sports Complex in Lake Placid and ensures that eventually, the forest preserve will be expanded by an additional 2,500 acres.
- An update regarding the headquarters project, Keith McKeever and Ben Brosseau presented the project to the Saranac Lake Village Board at their meeting on October 27. The presentation was well attended, and they received some good questions. They are working with our partners at OGS and Colliers to coordinate a public information session.
- Welcome new staff Sarah Dowie, who has joined us as receptionist.
- Congratulations to our Excelsior Fellow, Amara Mitchell, for passing the NYS Bar Exam on her first try!
- Thanks to Ben Brosseau for all of his contributions to the Agency and well wishes in his new role at Paul Smith's College.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN INTO COMMITTEES

On motion of Benita Law-Daio, seconded by Zoë Smith, the Agency Board voted unanimously to adjourn to committees at approximately 1:13 PM.

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9. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

9.1. Regulatory Programs Committee

The committee meeting convened at approximately 1:13 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Dan Wilt (Committee Chair), Art Lussi, Ken Lynch, Matt Tebo (DOS)

Other Members and Designees Present: Jose Almanzar, Rush Holt, Steve Hunt (ESD), Benita Law-Diao, Zoë Smith, Joe Zalewski (DEC)

Local Government Review Board: Gerald Delaney

Agency Staff Present: Barbara Rice, Damion Stodola, John Burth

9.1.1. Regulatory Programs Division Report

John Burth, Deputy Director of Regulatory Programs, presented the Regulatory Programs Division report, highlights of which included:

- As of the end of October, the Regulatory Programs team has received 331 permit applications, down from 385 at this time last year. 256 permits have been issued which is on par with the 251 issued at this time last year. The team also received 124 pre-applications, slightly up from the 115 received by October of last year.
- 64 major projects have been completed, which is similar to the 66 completed at this time last year. 6 emergency authorization certificates have been issued which is down significantly from the 27 issued at this time last year.
- Deputy Director Burth reviewed the ways the Regulatory Programs Divisions is contributing to the Agency's transparency, highlighting the options for finding and submitting information and requests, the ways major projects and major subdivisions are emphasized, options for providing public comment, how all file materials are available on the Agency website for projects that will be presented to the Board, and how each month the permits issued are added to our website.

9.1.2. P2021-0276 – Michael Hopemeier, Unconventional Concepts – Town of Lewis, Essex County

John Burth, APA presented Hopemeir's proposed weapons range for testing the internal ballistics of cannon barrels in the Town of Lewis and recommended the project proceed to a hearing based on hearing criteria in the Agency's regulations and presented a proposed draft project hearing order..

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On motion of Dan Wilt and seconded by Art Lussi, the Regulatory Programs Committee unanimously recommended to the full board that this project be moved to a hearing.

9.1.3. Old Business

None

9.1.4. New Business

None

Committee adjourned at approximately 2:27 P.M.

On motion of Benita Law-Diao, and seconded by Ken Lynch, the first day of the meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 2:27 PM.

The Agency reconvened on November 14, 2025 at approximately 9:00 A.M.

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9.2. State Land Committee

The committee convened at approximately 9:01 AM.

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

Other Members and Designees Present: Jose Almanzar, Mark Hall, Rush Holt, Steve Hunt (ESD), Art Lussi, Matt Tebo (DOS), Dan Wilt

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

9.2.1. Planning Division Report

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

- Congratulations to Amara Mitchell, our Excelsior Fellow for two key milestones, passing the New York State bar exam on the first attempt, and becoming a resident of Saranac Lake.
- More than 50 people attended the Agency's public hearing for the proposed amendments to the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Map in the Town of Lake Luzerne on November 6. The Agency continues to accept written comments on this proposal through November 17.
- Geographic Information Systems staff are preparing to deploy the new server in the upcoming weeks after months of hard work.
- State Land staff are involved with various stages of review for intensive use area unit management plans including Moffitt Beach, Lewey Lake, Sacandaga and Rogers Rock.
- State Land team members are also reviewing State Land consultations for projects including trail construction in the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest and Rollins Pond Campground to facilitate new connections to the rail trail, as well as site preparations for removal of an existing dam at the La Bier Flow in the Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest.
- The team also participated in the DEC/APA Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting last week and is working with Department staff to review their draft statewide mobility device policy before it is released for public comment.

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- The Local Government Services team have responded to 150 variance referrals in 2025 so far and reviewed 7 total amendments to Agency Approved Local Land Use Programs this year. They also attended the NY Planning Federation conference in Lake Placid last month, and exhibited at the Potsdam Local Government Conference. Next month, staff will provide a joint training with Warren County planning staff for planning and zoning board members.

9.2.2. Luzerne Campground & Lincoln Pond Campground Proposed Final Unit Management Plans

Oliver Miller, DEC, presented a summary of the public comments, the State's response, and changes made to the proposed to the final management actions based on the public comments.

Mitchell Jones, APA, presented the State Land Master Plan (SLMP) considerations for intensive use areas and draft resolutions for the proposed unit management plans.

On motion of Ken Lynch and seconded by Benita Law-Diao, the State Land Committee unanimously recommended approval of the draft proposed resolutions to the full Agency board.

9.2.3. Old Business

None

9.2.4. New Business

None

Committee adjourned at approximately 10:09 AM.

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THE BOARD RETURNED TO FULL AGENCY
AT APPROXIMATELY 10:09 AM.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1. Regulatory Programs (Dan Wilt)

The committee reviewed project 2021-0276, for a howitzer testing range in the Town of Lewis in Essex County.

On motion of Dan Wilt, seconded by Zoë Smith, the board unanimously voted to move the project to a hearing.

10.2. State Land Committee (Ken Lynch)

The committee received a planning division report from Deputy Director Megan Phillips and a presentation regarding proposed final UMPs for Luzerne and Lincoln Pond Campgrounds from the DEC's Oliver Miller and the APA's Mitchell Jones.

On motion of Ken Lynch, seconded by Benita Law-Diao, the board unanimously voted to approve resolutions as presented.

11. INTERIM REPORTS

The Administration, Economic Affairs, Enforcement, Legal, Local Government Services, Park Ecology, Public Awareness and Communications, and Park Policy and Planning committees did not meet this month.

G. Delaney noted that the Common Ground Alliance was meeting today.

12. MEMBER COMMENT

None

13. OLD BUSINESS

None

14. NEW BUSINESS

Pursuant to the Delegation Resolution the Chair, Mark Hall, presented revised committee assignments. The Board unanimously concurred with the Committee assignments.

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15. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

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

Chair Mark Hall noted that the next meeting will be December 11-12, 2025.

On motion of Dan Wilt, and seconded by Benita Law-Diao, the meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 10:29 AM.

Mark Hall, Chairperson