



**DRAFT AGENCY MEETING MINUTES
February 19, 2026**

Agency Members, Designees, and Executive Staff Present:

Mark Hall	Chair
Benita Law-Diao	Member
Art Lussi	Member
Steve Hunt	Empire State Development
Ken Lynch	Member
Rush Holt	Member
Zoë Smith	Member
Matt Tebo	Department of State
Dan Wilt	Member
Joe Zalewski	Department of Environmental Conservation
John Burth	Deputy Director of Regulatory Programs
Matt Robinson-Loffler	Associate Counsel

Absent and Excused

Jose Almanzar	Member
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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 9:35 AM by Mark Hall, Chair.

2. WELCOMING REMARKS

Chairperson Mark Hall welcomed the public, presenters, staff, and board members, and made welcoming remarks. Chairperson Hall reminded everyone this year's Adirondack Planning Forum is scheduled for May 6 and 7. Chairperson Hall also expressed condolences for the passing of Margo Ernst, who had been a leader in philanthropy in the Adirondack park.

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3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Rush Holt, seconded by Dan Wilt, the January 22, 2026 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

5. RECUSALS

Rush Holt recused himself in the Board's consideration of applicant's appeal of the ALJ's ruling granting full party status to Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve in P2021-0276.

6. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In the absence of Executive Director Barb Rice, Deputy Director of Regulatory Programs, John Burth gave Director's report, highlights of which included:

- Welcome our newest staff member, Mary Newman Fox, who has joined our Comms team as Assistant Public Information Officer.
- Congratulating the Village of Saranac Lake on another successful Winter Carnival which involved many of our staff and their families this year. Regulatory Programs' own Milt Adams, long-time volunteer, was carnival king this year. Carnival court included Mike Warner's granddaughter, and Kate-Lyn Knight's son. Mike Martin's nephew and Kyle Martin's niece both served as pages representing the elementary schools.
- Wrapping up the winter Olympics, the APA recognized the outstanding efforts of all the Olympians and especially our own local Olympians: Jonny Gustafson from Massena, Sean Hollander, Emily Fischnaller, and Tate Franz from Lake Placid, Sophia Kirkby from Ray Brook and a special shout out to Gore Mountain Ski Patroller and Para Alpine participant Kelsey O'Driscoll.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN INTO COMMITTEES

On motion of Rush Holt, seconded by Benita Law-Daio, the Agency Board voted unanimously to adjourn to committees at approximately 9:47 AM.

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9. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

9.1. Public Awareness and Communications Committee

The committee convened at approximately 9:56 AM.

Committee Members Present: Benita Law-Diao (Committee Chair), Rush Holt, Steve Hunt (ESD), Dan Wilt

Other Members and Designees Present: Mark Hall, Art Lussi, Ken Lynch, Zoë Smith, Matt Tebo (DOS), Joe Zalewski (DEC)

Local Government Review Board: Gerald Delaney

Agency Staff Present: John Burth, Matt Robinson-Loffler, Keith McKeever

9.1.1. Communications Report

Keith McKeever, Director of Communications provided the communications report and introduced Community Spotlight, Village of Speculator Mayor Jeannette Barrett.

9.1.2. Community Spotlight – Village of Speculator, Hamilton County

Jeannette Barrett, Mayor of Speculator presented an overview presentation and discussion regarding the Village of Speculator.

9.1.3. Old Business

None

9.1.4. New Business

None

Committee adjourned at approximately 10:55 AM

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9.2. Regulatory Programs Committee

The committee convened at approximately 11:04 AM.

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

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

Local Government Review Board: Gerald Delaney

Agency Staff Present: Matt Robinson-Loffler, John Burth, Devan Korn

9.2.1. P2025-0122 – Homestead Development Corp. – Town of North Elba, Essex County

Devan Korn, APA presented a review of the permit application involving the construction of 22 dwellings and an associated access road extending from Algonquin Drive in the Town of North Elba, Essex County.

On motion of Art Lussi and seconded by Ken Lynch, the Regulatory Programs Committee unanimously recommended the approval of the application to the full board with recommended conditions.

9.2.2. P2021-0276 – Unconventional Concepts

The Board heard options regarding the Sponsor's appeal of the ALJ's Determination granting Party Status to the organization Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve.

On motion of Art Lussi and seconded by Dan Wilt, the Regulatory Programs Committee unanimously voted to recommend the upholding of Adjudicatory Law Judge Greenwood's determination granting Party Status to the organization Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve.

9.2.3. Old Business

None

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9.2.4. New Business

None

Committee adjourned at approximately 12:28 PM

Board adjourned for Lunch at approximately 12:28 PM

THE BOARD RETURNED TO FULL AGENCY
AT APPROXIMATELY 1:32 PM.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1. Public Awareness and Communications (Benita Law-Diao)

The committee received a presentation from the Mayor of Speculator, Jeannette Barrett spotlighting the Village of Speculator in Hamilton County.

10.2. Regulatory Programs (Dan Wilt)

The committee reviewed project application P2025-0122 from the Homestead Development Corp for the construction of 22 dwellings and an associated access road in the Town of North Elba in Essex County.

On motion of Art Lussi, seconded by Ken Lynch, the board unanimously approved the application as presented with recommended conditions.

The committee also reviewed a request from project P2021-0276 sponsor's appeal of the Adjudicatory Law Judge's determination to grant party status to Adirondack Wild: Friends of the Forest Preserve.

On motion of Matt Tebo, seconded by Zoë Smith, the board to unanimously voted to uphold the decision of the Adjudicatory Law Judge; Rush Holt having recused on this topic.

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW BOARD

G. Delaney noted that they are continuing to work on road salt reduction efforts at the Local Government Review Board.

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12. MEMBER COMMENT

None

13. OLD BUSINESS

None

14. NEW BUSINESS

None

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

- None presented.

[Link to video and audio recordings of this meeting available on website:
www.apa.ny.gov]

Chair Mark Hall noted that the next meeting will be March 19-20, 2026.

On motion of Art Lussi, and seconded by Dan Wilt, the meeting was adjourned without objection at approximately 1:38 PM.

Mark Hall, Chairperson