

## Member Communities

### Towns of

Adams  
Boylston  
Florence  
Harrisburg  
Lewis  
Leyden  
Lorraine  
Martinsburg  
Montague  
Osceola  
Pinckney  
Redfield

Rodman  
Turin  
West Turin  
Williamstown  
Worth

### Villages of

Adams  
Constableville  
Lyons Falls  
Port Leyden  
Turin



## Executive Committee

ROGER TIBBETTS, *Chair*  
DOUGLAS DIETRICH, *Vice Chair*  
CARLA BAUER, *Secretary*  
IAN KLINGBAIL, *Director*  
STEPHEN BERNAT, *Director*  
PAULETTE WALKER, *Director*  
FRAN YERDON, *Director*

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## CTHC Spring Dinner Meeting Minutes 05/16/2024

The meeting, held at the Steak and Brew restaurant in Turin, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman R. Tibbetts. Roll Call of Towns showed 14 towns and two villages in attendance for the meeting with representatives from Boylston, Harrisburg, Lewis, Leyden, Lorraine, Martinsburg, Montague, Osceola, Pinckney, Port Leyden, Redfield, Rodman, Town and Village of Turin, West Turin and Worth present. Also present as guests were six Tug Hill Commissioners, two members of the Tug Hill staff, and 11 other guests for a total attendance of 46 people. Introductions of attendees followed roll call was completed and then a break was then taken for dinner and the meeting was reconvened at 7:50 p.m.

**Minutes:** The minutes from September 21, 2023, were reviewed (see attached). A motion was made by D. Dietrich (Martinsburg) and seconded by C. Bauer (Redfield) to accept the minutes as presented. All were in favor.

**Reports: Financial Report** – A copy of the Financial Report as of May 15, 2024, was presented by Chairman R. Tibbetts (Rodman) for review by members (see attached). Year-to-Date Carryover: \$32,666.36; Receipts to Date: \$13,054.52; Distributions to Date: \$4,546.58; Current Net Funds Available: \$41,174.30. Following review, a motion was made by J. Wasilewski (Lorraine) and seconded by F. Yerdon (Osceola) to accept the report as presented. All were in favor. The proposed dues structure through 2030 was also presented for review by members (see attached).

**Election of Officers: Slate of Officers:** Roger Tibbetts, Chairman  
Doug Dietrich, Vice Chairman  
Carla Bauer, Secretary  
Stephen Bernat, Director  
Ian Klingbail, Director  
Paulette Walker, Director  
Fran Yerdon, Director

The Slate of Officers was presented as above. There were no nominations from the floor after three requests. A motion was made by T. Thisse (Martinsburg) and seconded by E. Hayes (W. Turin) to close the polls and have the Secretary cast one ballot for the slate of officers as presented. All were in favor.

**Speaker:** Linda Garrett of the American Farmland Trust spoke on solar projects and agriculture lands working together. The American Farmland Trust is a grassroots organization who works with farmers to protect farmland, help farmers keep their land and help them with good farming practices. Agriculture is a huge economic driver on Tug Hill and NYS as a whole. There are lots of threats to ag lands from development and they did a study which showed that 1from 2001 to 2016 in NY about 250,000 acres of farmland was lost to development. The study projected that from 2016 to 2040 another ~450,000 acres could be lost.

The population of farmers is aging with a median age of 57. This is when farms are most vulnerable, when existing farmers are ready to retire. They work to help connect farm owners looking to sell with people looking to farm. Other challenges facing farmers are extreme weather and the push from solar developers for leases on land. It is projected that 300,000 to 600,000 acres of land would need to be converted to meet the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals.

The American Farmland Trust have developed smart solar principals which allow solar while safeguarding land for use for farming. They are working with "Agrivoltaics" which allows for the simultaneous use of the land for solar projects and farming. If these projects are done right, they give the farmer two sources of income for the same land, and they need to be designed to be farmer-centric such as posts being higher and/or farther apart so equipment can still be used between the panels. She gave several examples of successful projects including one in New Bremen. There can be some zoning amendments that may be too restrictive and need to be changed for these types of projects to be viable (height requirements, setbacks, fencing etc.). They are working with NYSEERDA to get credits added to these type of projects to make them more appealing to developers. A power point of the presentation is available upon request and is posted on the CTHC website.

**Old Business:** Any old business - None

**New Business:** a) **Proposed Work Goals for 2024-** The proposed work goals for 2024 were presented, with some minor changes from the 2023 goals (see attached). A motion was made by B. Williams (Montague) and seconded by L. Wojnowski (Turin) to approve the goals as presented. All were in favor.

b) **Search for a New Associate Circuit Rider** – The search continues for someone to replace Beth Steria, who is working on a meeting-to-meeting basis while we look for a replacement. The word is out on the monthly announcements and is posted on the CTHC website, please pass the word.

**Any other new business** - None

**Tug Hill Commission topics:** K. Malinowski (THC) reported on the following subjects:

a) **Commission Staffing and Budget Updates** – the Commission members in attendance were introduced and new Commission member Bob Keller was welcomed. She reported that there had been a slight bump in the Commission's funding in the state budget. She also reported that Matthew Smith is leaving the staff to take a job closer to his home area and that they would be looking for a new planner.

b) **Upcoming Events and Plans** – the Commission's annual meeting will be held September 19<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the Association of Conservation Commissions annual conference. It will be held at a facility in Port Leyden. The speaker for the evening will be the

deputy commissioner of DEC. They will also be beginning work on their next strategic plan this summer as the current plan expires in December of this year.

**c) Minimum Maintenance Roads and other Legislative Updates** – The Lorraine MM roads bill was signed in December of 2023 and the chapter amendment the Governor wanted was approved this spring. The Montague MM Roads bill is still pending, with no news so far.

**Planning Updates** - Katie read an update from M. Johnson (THC Planning Director) on the planning work going on in the CTHC. Zoning work is going on in Florence, Lewis, Redfield, Turin, Worth, and a first-time zoning law in C'Ville and one starting soon hopefully in Williamstown; and they are working on a comp plan in Rodman. Things are very busy with the planning department.

**Supervisor's and Mayor's Topics:** None

With no other business before the Council, a motion was made at 8:39 pm by F. Yerdon (Osceola) and seconded by S. Bernat (Harrisburg) to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.