

River Area Council of Governments
March 16, 2021

Members present: J. Der, B. Ferguson, W. McIlroy, S. Storms, K. Vogt,
C. Terrillion, T. Widrick, and J. Zando

Others: M. Dietrich and K. Tennant

Chairman McIlroy called the virtual Zoom meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Motion by J. Zando, seconded by S. Storms to approve the minutes of February 17, 2021 as presented. Ayes-7, Nays-0. Motion carried.

M. Dietrich introduced K. Tennant, Chief Custom Borders Protection Officer, who discussed opportunities for Canadian businesses to set up in the United States via north country ports of entry. The Thousand Islands port of entry is undergoing a major construction project that will shorten wait times at the border significantly and thereby enhance business opportunities and related employment.

Members asked if the rules for crossing the border now require a COVID-19 vaccination. Mr. Tennant stated that at this time the border remains closed to non-essential travel and a negative COVID-19 test is required for those that do cross. No new rules regarding vaccination have been adopted to date.

M. Dietrich questioned how far into the State businesses are willing to locate. Mr. Tennant stated that businesses consider State and local incentives. He suggested attending trade shows and marketing our area to attract companies. Officer Tennant advised that border protection is ready to offer assistance with border crossing issues.

M. Dietrich stated that most participating municipalities have completed their NYPA program updates. In response to a question, B. Ferguson reported that the T/Champion completed their LED projects in Great Bend and at the Town Highway Garage.

Old Business

Motion by B. Ferguson, seconded by J. Zando to approve the RACOG By-Laws as amended in regards to quorum, voting representatives, and voting ties. Ayes-7, Nays-0. Motion carried.

The IMA has been revised to include the V/Lowville. Each municipality needs to authorize their chief elected to execute the agreement.

New Business

Board members agreed to invite ANCA to share information regarding Clean Energy Community Grants at the April meeting.

M. Dietrich asked if there was interest in rescheduling the RACOG Economic Visioning Summit in the autumn. The Board agreed to consider the date pending State guidance.

In the absence of a representative from V/West Carthage, there was no discussion regarding the 2021 Twin Village Pool operations.

M. Dietrich suggested forming a Black River Corridor working group to focus on the river and old railroad bed recreational opportunities. B. Ferguson and W. McIlroy stated that the Metropolitan Planning Organization is already studying trail extensions and have the funding necessary to do it.

M. Dietrich reported that the Tug Hill Commission will be discussing hardware improvements that towns and villages may want to consider to facilitate Zoom meetings.

Motion by B. Ferguson, seconded by J. Zando to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

Christina Vargulick
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RACOG Secretary