



January 25, 2022 - RACOG Report

Presenters: Heidi Lehmann, Friends of the Black River

Black River Trail/Railroad Bed – Have heard from multiple community sources that Lewis County has re-engaged with the railroad company about the railroad tracks or are looking to re-engage. I was invited to a meeting with Sarah Bullock, Ron Trottier, and Tim (Last Name ?) about the plans for the pedal cars. Not much new from what the group already heard about from our meeting this past April at the Croghan Depot Museum.

Clean Energy Communities – ANCA has been working with communities on this initiative. Champion and West Carthage are going through Good Energy for their community choice aggregation and solar opt-in program. Lewis County has selected Joules Assets for their administrator for the program.

Fort Drum Internships – Josh Lumsden is the new intern working at the Tug Hill Commission. He will be working on the Black River website to begin with.

Friends of the Black River – At the group's last meeting, we had Chief Carr of the Hiawatha Nation sit in on the meeting and got a chance to talk with her. She is from Canada and said that the other chiefs would like to meet the group. Their ancestors we believe used to winter down near Castorland. The Tug Hill Commission has a new Fort Drum intern, who is currently working on getting all the historical sites up on the blackriverny.com website. He is also checking each site already on there for accuracy.

LED Lighting – Communities going through NYPA are currently in construction. The goal is to have them completed by the middle of February. They all should be able to receive the shared service funds through the county. I have continued to look into setting up an LED group for those that went through NYPA. I have done some research on what possibilities the group has in the future of doing their own regional RFP for maintenance.

RACOG Cooperative ZBA Lewis County – Have had a presentation done by the Tug Hill Commission about cooperative ZBAs, which can be seen on their YouTube channel. Right now, the town of New Bremen is interested in forming one. I am currently checking to see what interest there is from other Lewis County communities within RACOG, so I know whether to keep pursuing this.

RACOG Regional Promotional Video – There is interest from Scott Burto to have CGI do a promotional video of the region. There may also be an opportunity to involve the Jefferson Lewis BOCES visual communications class in it.

Walkable Communities (Complete Streets) – I have been working with Jefferson Lewis BOCES on the projects for the original group that went through the complete street program (Carthage, Copenhagen, and Deferiet). They are providing updated material costs on projects right now. I am also going to be sending a letter to them on what could be worked out related to this.

Websites – Moving RACOG websites to their own hosting site. Currently, the towns of Champion, Denmark, Lowville, Wilna and villages of Castorland, Copenhagen, and Deferiet utilize the RACOG website service.

ACTION ITEMS

Election of Officers – Need to elect new officers.

Action Needed: Board Vote

Associate Circuit Rider – Is this something that the board wants to look at it for this upcoming budget year?

Action Needed: Feedback from the board or approval to move forward

IT Contract – There are two proposed contractors for handling the maintenance and support of the RACOG websites.

Action Needed: Discussion and Board Vote

Budget – The approval of the board budget.

Action Needed: Discussion and Board Vote