

Chemung County Energy Advisory Committee Up and Running

Clearinghouse for information and source of recommendations

by Sue Smith-Heavenrich

Broader View Weekly, May 20, 2010

Back in March, Chemung County Executive Tom Santulli announced he was establishing an advisory commission to delve into issues related to natural gas. At the end of April the group had their first official meeting, though some of the subcommittees had begun meeting earlier.

The commission's official title is the "Chemung County Executive's Advisory Commission on Natural Energy Solutions" and some of the issues they will be focusing on include: environment, water quality, public safety, impact on roads and economic opportunities.

The commission plans to meet monthly, says Chemung County Public Information director Karen Miner, "But these meetings are not open to the public. The group is an advisory committee. They don't make decisions; they only pass on recommendations to the county executive," Miner explained.

Once the subcommittees and commission forward their recommendations to Santulli, he will take them to the county legislature. The goal is for the commission to become a clearinghouse for information and a source of recommendations for countywide regulations related to gas drilling, such as road protection issues. Santulli told the press that the information gathered by the commission and its subcommittees will be made available to the public on the county's website (www.chemungcounty.com).

Despite closed meetings, the commission wants to make sure citizens have a way to share their concerns and ideas, Miner said. Jennifer Trimber, who is the contact person for the Chemung County Environmental Management Council will act as a contact point for the Natural Energy commission. Contact her by email at emc@co.chemung.ny.us. People might also wish to contact their local representatives on the commission.

Sidebar –

Members of Chemung County Executive's Advisory Commission on Natural Energy Solutions

There are nearly two dozen members sitting on the commission, and more involved in the subcommittees, notes Karen Miner. Andy Fagan, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chemung County executive director, co-chairs the commission with Mark Watts, Chemung County director of natural resources.

The other members on the commission are:

Thomas Argetsinger, Chemung County Sheriff's Office.

Andy Avery, director of public works for Elmira and Chemung County.

William Benedict, at-large member.

Roger Burlew, Erin town highway superintendent.
Jimmie Joe Carl, Chemung County Storm Water Coalition.
Richard Gunderman, Chemung County legislator.
Kevin Keeley, Chemung County Chamber of Commerce president.
Donald Kraft, Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 112.
Michael Krusen, Chemung County deputy executive.
Thomas Kump, Chemung County director of environmental health.
Karen Miner, Chemung County public information director.
Christopher Moss, Chemung County sheriff.
Randy Olthof, Chemung County planning commissioner.
George Richter, Chemung town supervisor.
Tom Santulli, Chemung County executive.
David Shafer, Arnot Health's Ctr for Occupational and Environmental Medicine
Michael S. Smith, Chemung County fire and emergency services director.
Gene Stow, Chemung County Farm Bureau.
Ashur Terwilliger, Chemung County Farm Bureau.
Lindsay Wickham, Chemung County Farm Bureau.
Lee Hanle Younge, Friends of the Chemung River Watershed.