

Broome County Energy Advisory Board Minutes:
February 12th, 2008

The Broome County Energy Advisory Board met on Tuesday, February 12th, 2008 in the Legislative Conference Room, Sixth Floor, Edwin L. Crawford County Office Building, Binghamton, New York.

The Committee was called to order at 6:10 PM by Chairman Chris Burger. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes of last month's meeting. Roughly half of the members were absent due to the inclement weather conditions.

The Chairman asked for a report from the Transportation Subcommittee. The Subcommittee reported that it had not met this month. The consensus of the board is that more people are needed on this committee, as it is the board's smallest subcommittee. It was suggested that the subcommittee contact the Broome County Transportation Committee and start a discussion about the county vehicle fleet.

The Chairman asked for a report from the Facilities Subcommittee. The Facilities Committee has prepared and sent a list of questions pertaining to county facilities to Mike Lynch and Pat Brennan, and have set up a preliminary date of February 20th at 5:00 PM in the Legislative conference room to meet with Mr. Lynch and Mr. Brennan to discuss the questions they had sent them

The Chairman asked for a report from the Land Use/Energy Subcommittee. The committee reported that they had met and had discussed the possibility of a waste to energy facility in Broome County. Jammie Simonds and others reported that waste to energy facilities are being used in 15 places across New York State, can greatly reduce landfill waste, and are on the EPA's alternative energy list. Other members were concerned about the environmental affects of such a facility. Everyone agreed that this is an issue that needs much more discussion. The Chairman reminded the committee that final recommendations from the committee will occur at the end of the year and must be supported by a majority of the committee. Jason Garnar asked the committee to investigate the feasibility of constructing a low-head hydroelectric generation station at Rock-Bottom Dam in the City of Binghamton. Alan Hertel discussed the possibility of Broome County being a pilot county for NYSEG to test their new residential measuring technology. The Committee thought this was an excellent idea and Alan will pursue this with the Public Service Commission. There was also a short discussion regarding street lights and who is responsible for them.

There was a discussion about the story in the newspaper about the Energy Advisory Board. It was decided that in the future either Chris Burger or Jason Garnar would speak to the media on matters pertaining to the board.

Jason Garnar asked the committee for their opinion about Broome County possibly exempting residential solar energy systems from local sales tax in order to encourage more people to purchase them. Currently, NY State exempts their portion of the sales tax

from these systems, and they have given the option to counties to do the same. This will require legislative approval from Broome County. The Committee thought this was a good idea and supported this proposal.

Jason Garnar also talked about Katrina Neiss, who is interning with the board this semester via Broome Community College. Jason encouraged subcommittees to enlist her help when needed.

Amelia LaDolce introduced herself to the Committee. Amelia is the new sustainable development planner for the City of Binghamton and is interested in attending future energy advisory board meetings in order to collaborate on projects and share information. Amelia and others talked about the possibility of the City and the County applying for grants through the Federal and State government for energy-related projects. LEED accreditation and green building was also discussed.

There being no further business to come before the committee at this time, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:15.