



**ONEIDA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

Boehlert Center at Union Station
321 Main St., Utica NY 13501
Phone: (315) 798-5710 Fax: (315) 798-5852

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
James J. Genovese II
Commissioner

Climate Smart Communities Task Force Meeting #5 - Minutes

August 13, 2025 at 3:00 PM

Oneida County Department of Planning

Conference Room, 3rd Floor

Union Station 321 Main St.

Utica, NY 13501

Introductions and Attendance

Chris Henry	Assistant County Engineer, Oneida County Department of Public Works
Daniel Sharfaz	Energy & Environmental Issue Leader, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Lucas Russel	Community Energy Advisor, Cornell Cooperative Extension
Nicole Bourgeois	Oneida County Water Pollution Control
Kristin Campbell	Chief Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Amy Heiderich	Senior Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
Grace Whiffen	Planning Specialist, Oneida County Department of Planning
Hanna Sauberan	Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning
JP Dillon	Planner, Oneida County Department of Planning

The meeting opened at 3:03 PM by Kristin Campbell, speaking on behalf of the Climate Smart Communities Task Force Coordinator, James Genovese. Everyone introduced themselves and the agency or department they represent.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory- Oneida County Government Oneida County Governmental Operations

- JP Dillon gave an update on where he is with the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. The GHG inventory is moving along well, and data gathering is almost finished. He received an updated spreadsheet from MVEED which he will add into the Inventory. He also received some of the DPW fleet and needs to reach out to the Sheriff's department and some other departments to find out the vehicle fuel usage for the County to get GHG calculations. Other facets of the GHG inventory are moving along well and data gathering otherwise is almost finished.
- Nicole Bourgeois asked JP Dillon if John Waters gave him the energy information for Water Pollution, Dillon responded that he can't remember if he has the info but will email Nicole once he checks.
- It was decided that it would not be too difficult to calculate scope 3 emissions for Oneida County. This includes, in this case, employee commutes. The group

decided that it would be easiest to formulate an employee commute survey and send it to all county employees. From there, we can extrapolate average numbers.

- JP Dillion believes there are examples of surveys available.
- It has not been decided if a community GHG inventory will be feasible.

Green Revolving Fund Research

- Grace Whiffen researched Green Revolving Funds since they were brought up in the past since the county has about \$80,000 from National Grid incentive reimbursements for installed energy efficient equipment and from the NYSEERDA Clean Energy Communities program. She discovered that the majority of institutions with Green Revolving Funds are universities, with few examples of counties or municipalities having Green Revolving Funds. After reviewing the findings, the priority would likely be creating an internal revolving fund based on our calculated savings. This method may be difficult and may conflict with taxpayers' desire to see their savings rather than reinvest them, but a GHG inventory could assist in calculating the potential savings.
- Lucas Russel and Daniel Sharfaz discussed NYSEERDA community campaigns, how that could be a source of funding for the revolving fund. They are also looking at a grant for farmers for barn fans, but they worry about investment for farmers (if they get solar panels & how to store the energy that is excess). They also talked about how National Grid Small Business Services program which can cut business' energy cost by up to 30% if they use 250 kw or less. Oneida County uses far more energy than 250 kw, so is not eligible for a lot of these incentives.
- Kristin let CCE know that we are signed up for Property Assessed Clean Energy (P.A.C.E) which is operated by the Energy Improvement Corporation (EIC) and provides long-term financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects on commercial and non-profit building owners.

Update on Actions and points towards Bronze Certification

- Hanna Sauberan gave an update on the progress towards bronze certification. We have 16 completed actions, 116 points out of 120. Also, we have 2 out of the 3 Priority Actions completed. Once the Government Operations GHG Inventory is completed, it should push us over the total points requirement as well as being a priority action so that the requirement would be completed. We may need to look at completing other actions, so we have a cushion in case they deny some of the points.

- Since Oneida County's solar projects are from 2014, they may no longer be eligible.
- Water Pollution and DPW gave some examples of projects they are doing right now that could be helpful with getting us to the Bronze Certification.
 - Nicole Bourgeois let us know that Water Pollution is trying to get UV sanitation, so they stop using chlorine. They have also been approved to buy more land for a resiliency tank near the Sauquoit Creek Pump Station building. Water Pollution Control also said that there is a project on the Barns Ave. Pump Station which will include HVAC & Boiler.
 - DPW is building a database of the conditions of equipment and what needs to be updated, when it needs to be updated and how long the equipment will last. Since there are incentives through National Grid. Amy Heiderich asked if they could send her invoices and spec sheets of what they have updated so she can send it in for National Grid.
 - DPW will be replacing the windows at the County Office Building within the next few years. They would like to know what the requirements will be upfront from National Grid for incentives or rebates.

Next meeting October 8, 2025 @10:00

Adjournment