

TOWN OF ESOPUS  
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD MEETING – VIA ZOOM  
OCTOBER 21, 2020 MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mark Ellison, Chairman  
Christopher DeCicco  
Noel Russ  
Susan Barbarisi  
Cynthia McVay  
Stephen Cerini  
Don Carragher

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Legislator Laura Petit  
Outreach Coordinator Alex Dean  
Secretary Lisa Mance

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Regular Business**

Chairman Ellison entertained a Motion to approve the September 16, 2020 Minutes. Upon Motion of Noel Russ, seconded by Member Cynthia McVay, the Minutes, as corrected, were approved.

**Membership Status** -There were currently two (2) member vacancies on the Board and to the regret of the Environmental Board, Member Susan Barbarisi would be vacating her position at the end of the year. Members urged Laura Petit to apply to fill a vacancy. Chairman Ellison proposed sending out the Town’s Application to Serve to all Members to have available if possible candidates were approached.

**Ulster County EMC** – Mark Ellison was not able to attend the meeting but had provided the September Minutes to all Members.

**Esopus Environmental Conservation Board –**

Chairman Ellison had emailed a draft of the proposed Plan to Councilperson Quick for feedback from the Supervisor and/or Councilpersons for the Environmental Board to then finalize. It was Chairman Ellison’s understanding that providing the draft was for further input and/or recommendations to be made and that the document was a “work in progress.” Chairman Ellison read the response e-mail from Councilperson Quick.

Thereafter, the document had been shared with the Chairperson of the Planning Board. Planning Board Attorney Kyle Barnett had prepared a letter in response which was forwarded to Supervisor Harris and said letter was read during the prior evening’s Town Board meeting. Chairperson Ellison read the letter. The EB Members stated the document should have been reviewed as a draft and that the EB had not voted on the final version of the Plan. Member Russ provided the process that took place in New Paltz between the Planning Board and the ECB and the wording of the current draft had been misconstrued. Members agreed that a conversation with Councilperson Quick should take place prior to preparing a response.

Member Carragher noted that if the ECB were to go further, it would need the support of the Town Board. There were 2 issues not embraced – one being the involvement in pre-submission meetings held

prior to applications being placed on the Planning Board Agenda. Chairperson Ellison confirmed with Member Russ that the intent was to be able to provide comment relative to environmental issues involved with particular applications and not every application would require comment. Chairman Ellison noted that the PB had requested comment from the EB twice in the years he had served on the EB. The final conclusion was that the wish for the ECB was to be helpful during the process and not to serve as a hindrance. Members were in agreement that a conversation needed take place between the liaison and the Supervisor to obtain an understanding prior to providing a formal response to Attorney Barnett's letter and moving forward with the Board's objective. It was noted that at the prior meeting, final comments had been requested to be submitted by September 23, 2020. Member Barbarisi stressed the importance of looking into adopting proposals in line with the Comprehensive Plan moving forward. It was agreed that the EB meet on November 4<sup>th</sup> to follow-up.

Supervisor Harris joined the meeting. Chairman Ellison requested clarification regarding the Planning Board Attorney's response to a document that should have been considered as a draft prior to being reviewed by the Planning Board and Chairman Ellison wished to obtain clarification as to what the role between the proposed ECB and the Planning Board may involve. Supervisor Harris provided a prospective as to what the efforts of the proposed ECB could entail and how it may be integrated with the various Boards and the implementation of possible recommendations. Supervisor Harris suggested that a Natural Heritage Plan or similar plan could be developed by the EB to help it moved forward with its concerns. It was suggested that a "roadmap" could be developed as a foundation for future development and not impede on the individual Boards' review. Member Barbarisi inquired as to what measures could be taken to enhance what transpires between the various Boards and not be duplicated. Supervisor Harris noted that the PB had specific required training relative to Environmental issues.

Member Russ commented on the process he had previously experienced in the Town of New Paltz and that it wasn't the intent of the present EB proposal to be created to add an additional step. He provided his experience in the process. Supervisor Harris suggested that the focus could be made in the expertise of the Environmental Board and to develop a plan that could be used by all Boards. Member Russ suggested that a liaison from the EB attend the Planning Board meetings. Member McVay stated herself and Member Cerini had attended a recent Planning Board meeting.

Supervisor Harris stated that every Board had a plan that provided guidance (plan, legislation or code) with the exception of this Environmental Board. The Supervisor made reference to the Heritage Plan developed by the Conservation Advisory Board in the Town of Marbletown which served as the basis for that Board to articulate on a development project in that Town. Supervisor Harris also suggested that the EB Members be involved in the updates currently being made to the LWRP of the Waterfront Advisory Board.

Chairman Ellison stated that the EB would look to hold a meeting on November 4, 2020 and to further review the Master Plan.

### ***New Business***

Proposed case study was tabled.

Chairman Ellison had provided links o the Esopus Riverfront Access and Connections Study.

Member Cerini wanted to draft an Environmental Board newsletter and requested information and ideas from Members that was newsletter worth. Member Carragher offered to write piece relative to the Climate Smart initiative. Member Cerini was looking to have something drafted for next EB regular meeting.

***Climate Smart Task Force***

Member Carragher stated that there was no data to add to the matrix and he asked that everyone familiarize themselves with the Climate Reality Initiative. He further indicated that the the purpose of the November 4<sup>th</sup> meeting should be to wrap up the ECB proposal.

Upon Motion of Member Cerini, seconded by Chairman Ellison, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted November 12, 2020

Lisa Mance, Secretary

Approved: November 18, 2020