

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF ESOPUS
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD
December 5, 2007**

PRESENT: Bob Santiago, Emily Pereira, Andy Bicking, Michelle Higgins, David Higgins, Tim Allred, Eli Schloss, Laura Petit, Zachary Petit

ABSENT: Kathy Quick Louise Ferrente, Corrine Brown, Joan Cipher,

Chairman Santiago called the meeting to order at 7:15PM

REPORTS

Chairman Santiago reported that \$367 was left in the budget for 2007. Bicking felt if they were taking taxpayers' money, then the Committee should set very definite goals for 2008. He asked if some of the budget funds could be used for training and seminars.

Santiago asked for recommendations for Committee appointments. He said that Quick, Brown, Bicking, and Higgins terms ran through 2008. Cipher had submitted a letter of resignation. Ferrente, Young, and Santiago terms were up December 31, 2007. He said that due to personal commitments, he could not remain on the Committee but would like to stay involved.

MOTION was made by Robert Santiago to recommend Andrew Bicking as 2008 Environmental Committee Chairman. Second by Michelle Higgins. All present in favor.

Pereira asked if Julie Melancon, previous member of the WAB, still had information on the website development project. She said that topics of public interest and events should be posted.

Santiago said it was important to work with the WAB and to be non-political. He has worked through five Town supervisors and would like the Committee to continue working cooperatively. Bicking said it was discussed at the last Committee meeting that they work cooperatively with Park and Rec, and with organizations like Scenic Hudson. Santiago said he would also like to see the seniors get more involved. He felt they were an untapped resource.

Santiago also recommended that the Committee keep an eye on the aggressive development in the area. Higgins thought that these issues should be forwarded to the Committee for comment.

Bicking felt that their should be a concerted campaign effort to educate the public on recycling and other environmental issues through public events. He said they should create a short term goal for this (six months) and a long term goal (12-24 months) Santiago said that the Town Board members are approachable, and should be contacted.

Waterfront Advisory Board – no report

NEW BUSINESS

Petit recommended that a member from the Esopus Environmental Committee be appointed to the County Environmental Management Council. She said the County EMC should have at least one representative from each town Environmental Committee and had additional openings for at-large members.

Santiago would like to see the Committee continue community events. He said that the tree giveaway and fall festival were very well received. He also felt that the Port Ewen bridge was an eyesore and would like to see the Committee get involved. Higgins remarked that the Ulster County transit authority received funding and it should be used to paint the bridge. Santiago said that the bridge was visited by President Grover Cleveland in 1908 and its one hundred years anniversary was coming up. Petit asked if the anniversary of the bridge could be tied into the quadricentennial celebration coming up. Bicking wondered if any of the 8 billion dollars slated for highways and bridges may be used for the Port Ewen bridge.

The Committee had discussion on spending the \$367 left in the budget. Petit suggested that recycling bins be purchased to place next to the new trash cans in Town. Allred agreed that at least one bin should be purchased and placed by the Town Hall.

Higgins suggested buying some environmental books and donating them to the library. Bicking asked if a list of items could be put together. Allred suggested that the Town adopted a carry in-carry out policy at the Town parks. He also suggested that the Town change the name of the transfer station to Town Recycling Center and place signs at either end of 9W to announce it. He said signs should also be placed by Floyd Ackert Road. He felt this would encourage residents to think about recycling first. Higgins said that education was very important too. Allred asked if the Town would be willing to do a mailing informing residents of hours of operation and recycling instructions. He felt if the Town was running the transfer station at a deficit then it should be encouraging its residents to reduce waste.

Santiago said Bicking may want to discuss this further at a future meeting. He remarked that a link to a website would come in handy for education too.

Higgins said she would like to see the Committee donate a tree to the Town. Bickings said that he wasn't sure if the Committee could donate a tree but they may be able to make arrangements to plant one. David Higgins said he was concerned about the CO2 cans from the new paint ball facility in town.

MEMBERSHIP

Bicking asked if the two members from the public may be interested in sitting on the Committee. Schloss said he was interested. Allred said he wasn't sure if he had the time to commit and would like to see if the Committee is truly committed to making changes. Santiago said that the Committee does work very hard moving to educate the public.

Allred said that Esopus had the longest stretch of property along the Hudson. He felt if Scenic Hudson wanted to partner with the Town, it would be to its economic benefit. He also remarked that Scenic Hudson's brochure was outdated and there were many more walking and biking

paths. He said that the Committee should set goals to preserve open space and provide the Town with suggestions on future development.

Bicking agreed that the Committee needed to set goals. Petit suggested that a Town Chamber of Commerce or businessman's association may be the way to get information out to tourists. Bicking agreed that a business type entity may be the way to get information out. He said he would like to see specific assignments delegated and liaisons be formed with different elements of the County.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

Prepared by Laura Petit, Secretary