

**Town Board Meeting
May 20, 2021**

A regularly scheduled Town Board meeting was held at the Esopus Town Hall 1 Town Hall Way Ulster, Park NY. The meeting was also available via zoom, live streamed on Facebook and televised on local access channel 23 on Thursday May 20, 2021 at 7:00 PM with the following persons in attendance:

**Supervisor Jared Geuss
Councilman Kathie Quick
Councilman Chris Farrell
Councilman Evelyn Clarke
Councilman Laura Robinson**

Recording Administrator Holly A. Netter, Town Clerk, RMC

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paul Kennedy, Sleightsburgh Resident – Last time he attended a vote was taken on the opening and closing time for the park. He would like to see some of the other items be addressed or at least a time line of when they would be addressed. He would like to see improved parking and opening up some other areas of the park.

Jay Van Vliet, Sleightsburgh Resident – Wanted to clarify that no one down in Sleightsburgh changed the lock. He didn't know where the information came from. Jay said his fence is not on Town property. He talked to the Code Enforcement Officer, Highway Superintendent and Town officials and said it is on his property. We are not being bullies. He wants the Board to address these concerns so misinformation stops.

Legislator Laura Petite -She still receives calls on security issues in Sleightsburgh and oversized boats. Signage is still not clear law enforcement is not able to enforce town code. Signs need to say violators will be prosecuted. Also there is an issue with the gate not always closing at night.

Laura also received a call regarding Connelly. There has been a fence put up at the end of First Street, there is blackout drapery around fencing and razor wire on top. Camping is occurring disrupting the neighborhood.

Environmental Board will be having a Sapling Giveaway at the Esopus Transfer Station Saturday May 22 10am-2pm. They will also have a guest speaker taking about planting for pollinators.

The local Girl Scout group has bat houses, bluebird houses and a Pocket Library that they would like to put before the Board for consideration.

Sharron Jones Sleightsburgh Resident Rules need to be set and come to a conclusion. A vote was taken and Sharron said she does not understand why the decision is not permanent. It's quiet down there now.

The residents are looking for the Town to step up and manage the park so it safe to use. Paths are not safe; they need to be cleaned up. If someone wants to go out and watch the sunset or have dinner there are 11 ramps on the Hudson River. Go to one of the other ramps pay a fee, launch and come in whenever you like - give the residents a break with the night life.

Lynn Johnson, Port Ewen Resident has a rental property in Connelly- She is concerned about speeding cars on Plantasia and First Street. She doesn't know if the Town can lower the speed limit, install stop signs or speed bumps to help with the matter. She has almost been hit twice by cars flying out of marinas. She questioned whether RVs were allowed in the marinas. They black topped at 9 pm at night, people couldn't get into the marina so they were sleeping in cars on First ave. She has heard there is a party on 5/29 with a big band and asked how late is something like that allowed to go on in a residential neighborhood?

Steven Lewis Sleightsburgh Resident, Thanked Jared and Alex for trying to get the gate working properly, they appreciate it. He hopes the Board sticks to the hours that they voted on and agreed to in April. He said as far as he is concerned there is no such thing as a trial vote – you either vote or you don't. It was his understanding that the topic was closed in terms of hours. In regard to special access at the Spit, he thinks it presents a whole other set of issues. Shaupanek Ridge gives keys out via a lottery system. Just giving random keys out to whoever is potentially giving out favors.

Chris Mart Sleightsburgh Resident - Thrilled a decision had been made the first week of April. He advised the Board to consider the precedence they would set if you redo the vote. Eleven months of conversations have gone on and all sides were given the opportunity to share their opinions and concerns. Chris building on the comments made by Steven Lewis, if there is a lottery for access it should be for all town parks otherwise it is favoritism and speaks to special interest.

Elizabeth Barnett Riverview Resident-Has been using the ramp and has not seen any issues. Last year on the 4th of July people from out of town were rude to the lady on the corner. Three days later we were asked to turn the keys in. Now the gate is locked and you will be arrested if you are in there after 9pm. She has now been walking on North Broadway and said the cars flying through the neighborhood are not going to the park, they have to be residents. If anything was going on bad there would be a police report. Have there been any police reports on bad things going on? She is a tax payer and said my money don't count as much as the lady up on the hill and people who live in the Sleightsburgh Spit area? Why aren't my taxes as good her taxes? What's the policy?

Jared Geuss said the final rules have not been set; it will be further discussed at another meeting. Currently the hours are 6 am – 9 pm .

Trish Miliken Sleightsburgh Resident wants to address the last person statements. People are traveling at a high rate of speed after dark to see if they can get in the park, it's not neighbors. She just wanted to clear that up.

Shannon Jones Sleightsburgh Resident- Can you please put an emergency number at the gate and launch ramp. If they come in broken down they can call the emergency number to get help.

Steven Lewis Sleightsburgh Resident the amount of taxes you pay should not have anything to do with the access you have to utilities, they are owned by the town.

Rod Schwarz – uses Sleightsburgh Park as a kayaker. Thought the rules were reasonable from November and was able to access in winter time. Their issue is trying to get back in from the Hudson without the sun in their eyes; it's often after 9 pm. He said he understands the people living down there do not like the cars driving by but as far as he can see it is a public street anyone has the right to drive in that neighborhood.

Nick Bailos Sleightsburgh Resident-has video cameras and can see drug and prostitution. Duck hunters can go somewhere else; we are not going to live according to those people. Five o'clock in the morning boats come down. He would like to have sportsmen's home addresses to go around and see how they feel with people coming by every day. They should not have special access.

MS4 REPORT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR GEUSS TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE 2021 MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SYSTEM ('MS4') REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN CHRIS FARRELL. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.

RIVERVIEW CEMETERY

RESOLUTION APPOINTING A TRUSTEE FOR THE RIVERVIEW CEMETERY LOCATED IN PORT EWEN OF THE TOWN OF ESOPUS IN ULSTER COUNTY, NEW YORK

Supervisor Geuss introduced the following resolution, which was seconded by **Councilman Evelyn Clarke** who moved its adoption:

WHEREAS, there had been established in the town an organization known as Riverview Cemetery Association, Inc., whose association maintained the public cemetery known as the Riverview Cemetery on Route 9W in Port Ewen, Ulster County, New York and owns real property in said Town, and

WHEREAS, on July 21, 2020, the Town of Esopus, pursuant to Section 1506(j) of the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, accepted the conveyance of the Riverview Cemetery premises and transfer of assets; and

WHEREAS, Ric Heins, formerly a member of the Riverview Cemetery Association, Inc. Board of Trustees has contacted the Town with interest in continuing his position as a trustee and manager of the funerary proceedings of Riverview Cemetery,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That Rick Heins is hereby appointed as a Riverview Cemetery Trustee for the Town of Esopus effective immediately, and is authorized to proceed as needed.

The foregoing resolution was voted upon with all councilmen voting as follows:

Councilman Laura Robinson	AYE
Councilman Evelyn Clarke	AYE
Councilman Kathie Quick	AYE
Councilman Chris Farrell	AYE
Supervisor Jared Geuss	AYE

TOWN HALL REOPENING

Supervisor Geuss said the Board was ready to proceed with reopening the Town Hall. He would be comfortable with a self screen station with log in sheet and masks for those who need them. Visitors would then proceed to their intended office. A lot of the foot traffic is expected to be for the court. There has been a lot of frustration on Court matters and complaints with not being able to reach the clerks. Councilperson Chris Farrell asked how many hours the court clerks were working. Supervisor Geuss said he would have to check but it varied due to court being canceled and rescheduled.

Supervisor Geuss said he would like to see everyone get back work with a full time schedule for all staff. He added, “not to say that we haven’t been operating great on limited schedules via laptops, staggered office hours etc.; making the best of the situation”.

Supervisor Geuss said he thinks it’s time for town employees; full week, all departments, all staff. Self screening/ log book with vaccinated individuals will no longer needing to wear masks.

Councilman Laura Robinson asked about rental of the Community Center. Town Clerk Holly Netter said the room has been being used, adhering to all COVID guidelines. She participates in a weekly call with the County and protocols have been in place to ensure the safety of employees and patrons. Policy and procedures have been adjusted working with the renters to ensure COVID guidelines were met. She said she was proud of the way the rentals have been handled and it has been rented without incident.

It was determined all employees will return to a full schedule and the Town Hall operating hours would revert back to 9am – 4 pm, Monday – Friday. People coming in to conduct business will be required to sign in and self screen. Masks are to be worn by anyone who is unvaccinated.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN CHRIS FARRELL TO RESUME TOWN HALL PRE COVID HOURS 9 AM – 4 PM EFFECTIVE MAY 24, 2021. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SUPERVISOR GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

PICKLE BALL @ ROSS PARK

There was a discussion of making permanent pickle ball courts on one side of the tennis court at Ross Park. We will look into making minor repairs and having the courts laid out and permanently painted. If there are interested parties wanting to form a league, the Town would create signage to advise the public that the courts would be in use on a given night for the league.

SALE OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY

The New building for the Parks & Recreation Department is almost complete. There was talk previously to sell the old building once the new building was complete and set up. Supervisor Geuss said he would like to continue to work on the sale of the prior Parks & Recreation building by the rail road track.

Councilman Chris Farrell asked if Shannon had the old building appraised; it was not appraised.

Councilman Evelyn Clarke asked about working through Economic Development to see if they could target buyers for it.

MISCELLANEOUS

LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST FROM THE HUDSON RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK TO AUTHORIZE SUPERVISOR JARED GEUSS TO SEND THE DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE WATERSHED BASED LAND USE LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE TRAINING PROGRAM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN FARRELL. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

REQUEST FOR COURT CLERK TRAINING

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR GEUSS TO AUTHORIZE MARIANNE WELLS TO ATTEND THE NYS MAGISTRATES COURT CLERKS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 9/12/2021 – 9/15/2021 AT THE DESMOND HOTEL IN ALBANY NY. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN CHRIS FARRELL. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

The Environmental Board Would like the Boards approval to use the following new mission statement:

“Promote the conservation protection and enhancement of the Town of Esopus’ natural resources, and ecosystems through education and collaborative action”

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK TO APPROVE THE NEW MISSION STATEMENT AND TO UPDATE THE WEBSITE. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CHRIS FARRELL; ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR; MOTION CARRIED.

Updates:

Now Hiring – 4 open positions: (2) Seasonal Maintenance Workers, (1) Fire Inspector and (1) Building Department Clerk. Visit www.bit.ly/EsopusEmployment for more information. Posted to indeed and received some applications.

Upcoming Events

Esopus Environmental Board Saplings Giveaway @ Esopus Transfer Station, Saturday 5/22 @ 10AM-2PM

American Legion Memorial Day Service @ Riverview Cemetery, Monday, 5/31 @ 10:00 AM

Summer Camp – registration open, early-bird discounts available to Town residents until Monday, 5/31; Additional discounts available for families with multiple campers registering.

Lynn Johnson had a fundraiser and was able to obtain \$1,100 to allow for 5 - \$220 scholarships. Anyone who is in need there will be a lottery on May 24th held at Mario’s at 5:30pm. All children in attendance will receive a free slice of pizza sponsored by Mario’s.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS MAY 2021

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Esopus, County of Ulster as follows:

WHEREAS, the Town of Esopus has been presented with vouchers for payment and these vouchers have been examined and approved by the Town Board,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following vouchers be approved for payment:

GENERAL FUND	211200 - 211258	\$75,058.62
HIGHWAY FUND	212061 - 212085	\$140,140.01
STREET LIGHTS	216003	\$6,240.00
PORT EWEN SEWER FUND	213043 -213056	\$ 6,336.90
PORT EWEN WATER FUND	214086 -214113	\$ 43,020.08
Water Capital	21005- 210006	\$17,496.25
Rec Escrow	217000	\$9,729.46
TOTAL		\$305, 765.42

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT OF VOUCHERS.

OFFERED BY: Councilman Chris Farrell
SECONDED BY: Councilman Laura Robinson

Councilman Laura Robinson	AYE
Councilman Evelyn Clarke	AYE
Councilman Kathie Quick	AYE
Councilman Chris Farrell	AYE
Supervisor Jared Geuss	AYE

ALL TOWN BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VOTED IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR GEUSS AT 8:16 PM TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING A PARTICULAR EMPLOYEE WORK HISTORY. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN CHRIS FARRELL TO COME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:45 PM AND WAS SECONDED BY SUPERVISOR GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

ACTION:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILPERSON CHRIS FARRELL TO APPOINT MARK JAFFEE AS INTERIM FIRE INSPECTOR FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR WITH A STIPEND OF \$7,000. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY LAURA ROBINSON. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR JARED GEUSS TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:57 PM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectively submitted,

Holly A. Netter
Town Clerk, RMC