

Esopus Environmental Board Notes
February 19, 2025

Present:

Mark Ellison
Jenna Ice (acting Chairperson)
Noel Russ
Chris DeCicco (via Zoom to observe)

Excused:

Nina Nichols
Jo Mispel

Meeting commenced in the Community Center at 7:08 p.m.

Old Business:

Membership –

Jo Mispel had been approved by the Town Board as a Member. Lindsey DeCicco would be requesting consideration as a potential member. The secretary was requested to ask if the Environmental Board could have two (2) alternates.

Last Frost Fest/Sapling Giveaway – There had been a request for Red Maple saplings. There was concern relative to obtaining saplings if they were distributed via the Department of Environmental Conservation. Mark Ellison would investigate obtaining the appropriate insurance for the event. There was a need for vendors and the EB Members would work collectively. The event was scheduled for May 17, 2025. Promote Repair Cafes and Last Frost Fest on social media.

New Business:

Focus and Goals – Mark Ellison would circulate items discussed during brainstorming (to discuss when full Board could be present). Jenna Ice wished to focus on social media.

Keren Orr (of the Davey Resource Group?) joined the meeting at 7:33 p.m. via Zoom. She inquired what the Town may have that may be a good contender for the Community Reforestation Grant. Ms. Orr would need specifics for locations and issues within the Town for her input to be productive. Jenna Ice queried whether Sleightsburg Spit could be considered. Chris DeCicco noted there were areas with major infestation of invasive species that could be useful for the grant although Ms. Orr stated to qualify, it needed to also be reforested. Noel Russ requested Ms. Orr to provide information regarding projects that had qualified. She stated that they had been working with a cemetery that had a wetland feature which had an upland forest which was comprised of invasive species and work was planned to remove the invasive species in the first phases and then return to plant approximately 2,000 tree plantings (18 acres of land). The grant is more focused on the amount of trees being planted rather than acreage for reforestation. Jenna surmised whether the reforestation program would be of interest to Joan Burroughs. Noel Russ' wife was on the John Burroughs Foundation and he would inquire.

The Grant deadline was March 12th and required a DEC representative to provide a report. Keren Orr would conduct a site visit of a location if one was determined. Keren Orr would email more information relative to the Grant requirements and Noel Orr would provide to Joan Burroughs. Partnering with Burroughs Foundation would alleviate the necessity for Town Board approval. Jenna Ice requested she

be able to join the site visit if and when scheduled. An email with the link to the Burroughs site would be forwarded to Karen.

Noel Russ called Joan Burroughs to ask if the reforestation program was of interest and placed her on speaker to discuss Urban Forestry Grant. Ms. Burroughs stated there was always an interest to remove invasive plants and reforestation plantings needed to be appropriate. A concept and site visit the following week would be needed to meet the deadline for the grant application to be submitted. Ms. Burroughs inquired what was the goal of the Esopus Environmental Board. Noel Russ read the mission statement of the Environmental Board. Joan Burroughs asked what past success of the Davey Resource Group. Jenna Ice offered to forward information on the Group to Joan Burroughs. Joan Burroughs requested the EB work with Arborist Tom Lewis and she would reach out to see what day would work to visit the property.

Climate Smart Task Force – Jenna Ice

The Hudson House was installing EV charging stations and Jenna Ice had obtained contact information to speak with the owners.

Jenna Ice had met with CEO Jaffee and Town Clerk Netter to review items and gather information for the matrix which she was attempting to complete to submit on behalf of the Climate Smart Task Force with the goal of garnering Bronze Certification for the Town.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Mance, Secretary
Dated: February 19, 2025
Approved: March 19, 2025