

TOWN OF ESOPUS  
ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD MEETING – VIA ZOOM  
MARCH 17, 2021 MINUTES – 7:00 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mark Ellison  
Christopher DeCicco (7:32 p.m.)  
Stephen Cerini  
Noel Russ  
Stephen Cerini  
Cynthia McVay  
Stephen Cerini

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Matt Rogers, Nicole Allen &  
Dave Gilmore of LaBerge Group  
Legislator Laura Petit (7:17 p.m)  
Council Person Kathy Quick  
Outreach Coordinator Alex Dean

Chairman Ellison called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

Upon Motion of Mark Ellison, seconded by Noel Russ, the January 2021 Minutes were approved.

Matt Rogers provided introductions. LaBerge team were addressing the Environmental Board to gauge interests of the EB and where the EB currently stood relative to the Climate Smart initiative and if assistance and or grants were available.

Chairperson Ellison had provided February 2018 Climate Smart profile for Esopus to Matt Rogers and Laura Petit had been working on it for the past year.

Dave Gilmore provided actions that would help to achieve Climate Smart certifications. Potential interests of the community were being researched. Legislator Petit noted that Esopus was a Clean Energy Community and had received a 5K grant. Mr. Gilmore noted that Clean Energy initiatives for high impact actions and points had been achieved and essentially, different high impact actions that vary in points which can be garnered in two ways – action grants and point-based grants:

- Undertaking certain actions could provide for action grants - \$5K
- Cumulatively obtaining 3000 points – \$10K
- Another 1000 points qualifies for opportunity of amount 10 communities that can get \$20k
- Possibly one of 4 in the region for \$70k

Esopus has unified solar permit, energy code enforcement training, LED streetlights and the benchmark – remaining items that are high impact actions are pace financing, property assessment clean energy financing, clean energy upgrades, clean heating & cooling demo, 100% renewable energy; achieving CRC Bronze level, development of community campaigns (repair café & solarize campaign) helps qualify for additional grant.

Additional opportunities available through CSC through consolidated funding application process and implementation (NRI or Open Space development) funding can be sought to advance action completion within Climate Smart Community.

Mr. Gilmore noted that initiative to lower costs for municipalities and providing cleaner energy. Purpose of benchmarking would be to get a handle on costs.

Mark Ellison would contact Outreach Coordinator for vouchers for cost for LED lighting.

Matt Rogers – focus discussion on options for EB to pursue to become eligible for grants and also, from a financial aspect . Mr. Rogers indicated LaBerge could provide recommendations. Mr. Gilmore requested that the EB provide input as to what it wished to achieve in terms of resiliency or mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.

Chairman Ellison noted that the pandemic halted the progress being made and the Chairman of the Climate Smart Committee had stepped down.

Mr. Gilmore recommended a National Resource Inventory and an Open Space Plan. He noted that Esopus had also conducted stormwater studies and those studies could be incorporated into a vulnerability assessment. Matt Rogers stated that work being conducted by the WAB for the updating of the LWRP could assist the EB in achieving benchmark without duplicating efforts.

*Dave Gilmore – Ways to continue and next steps?* Matt Rogers would coordinate with Nicole Allen and Dave Gilmore to develop a general recommendation on items to move forward to:

- Improve the Town's environmental status;
- achieve points to qualify for grant; and
- fiscal components.
- LaBerge could draft Estuary grant if the EB wished to apply.

Chairman Ellison asked if deadlines could be provided so the EB was aware of requirements and Matt LaBerge would provide.

### ***Regular Business of Environmental Board***

***Minutes*** - Approval of February 17, 2021 Minutes were tabled.

***Membership Status*** – no new updates

***UC EMC*** – January Minutes had been provided

### ***Hudson 7 – CHPE Project***

No new concerns had been raised and letter had not been drafted with regard to the CHPE project.

### ***Environmental Board Info***

Complete flyers and obtain plants for May 22, 2021 Environmental Board swap, education and giveaways at the Transfer Station confirmed.

“Bat-o-ween” may be appropriate for the Esopus Recreational Committee. Mark Ellison offered to discuss with the Recreation Department to work in conjunction with it. Steve Cerini would provide information and contact to Mark.

Laura Petit would like EB to work with Planners (if they became involved). She indicated that if she could get a commitment from the EB, she would like to work with more community events.

**Goals & Visions of 2021** - Mark asked thoughts be forwarded to him and the item would be on the April Agenda. Laura Petit agreed to highlight the goals and visions taken from the Comprehensive Plan and screen shared the portion of the Comprehensive Plan relative to the goals of the EB. Laura Petit asked if LaBerge Group could be involved with developing the Open Space Plan and NRI. Members agreed that use of LaBerge would be more productive and what the cost involved for LaBerge to draft a grant would be. Cynthia McVay asked if LaBerge could be asked if they drafted grant if there was a possibility for them to be paid from the grant.

**Webinars & Training** - Upcoming opportunities were shared by Mark Ellison and he asked members to provide any information of any upcoming webinars.

**Climate Smart Task Force** - Laura Petit agreed to serve as the Chairperson of the Climate Smart Task Force. Her focus was organizing events and public outreach as well as the data entry necessary for the Climate Smart Matrix.

Chairperson Ellison motioned to name Laura Petit as the Climate Smart coordinator, seconded by Member Noel Russ and the affirmative vote of all Members, Laura was appointed.

Laura screen shared the Climate Smart Community Profile and Chairman Ellison asked all Members to review to determine what had been completed and provide to Laura prior to the next meeting. Steve Cerini noted that Members had been previously been assigned tasks to contribute towards points but no actions had been taken.

Laura stated she would generate the Climate Smart Profile and the different actions for certification and asked if anyone was interested in a particular task to please advise. Achieving certification allows for the Town to gain a status, ie "bronze" which opens the door for grant opportunities.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted April 12, 2021

Lisa Mance, Secretary

Approved April 21, 2021