

Esopus Environmental Board Minutes
July 20, 2022 Meeting Via Zoom

Present:

Chairman Mark Ellison
Climate Smart Chairperson Laura Petit
Chris DeCicco
Ellie Gartenstein
Noel Russ
Lee Gough (7:26 p.m.)
Unknown caller

Also Present:

Town Council Kathy Quick
Town Council Liaison Evelyn Clarke

Meeting commenced at 7:11 p.m.

Mark Ellison introduced guest speaker Nick Hvozda, Director of the UC Department of the Environment. Laura Petit turned the meeting over to Director Hvozda. Ulster County had installed EV charging stations available to the public, employees and fleet vehicles. Future plan is to install stations dedicated to fleet use. Director Hvozda covered requirements for the “make ready” development. Central Hudson’s Light Duty Make Ready rebate program had funds available, depending on the characteristics of the station, that will pay 50% to 100% of the make-ready costs but a vendor approved by Central Hudson must be used. Difference between percentage that could be covered is based upon whether use will be private or public, the type of plug being installed and being a disadvantaged community or located in an environmental justice area would be incentivized. The County has not utilized this program. Contractor would need to break out costs and complete on-line application for Central Hudson. EB Member was having difficulty obtaining information for Central Hudson. Liaison Clarke stated that a paper version may work and that the Town wasn’t utilizing the on-line access.

Mark Ellison inquired if a joint venture with the Ulster County Sheriff’s Department could be undertaken since a sub-station existed within the Esopus Town Hall.

Once the makeready work has been completed, the station needs to be purchased and installed. Ongoing costs including paying for the electricity and networking. Stations could be operated without connecting to the network but most grant programs (NYS DEC, Central Hudson, etc.) require reporting on the portal as part of the terms of the grant. NYSERDA does have a rebate program called “Charge Ready New York” that pays \$4k per port but the program is out of money currently but may be refunded in the future.

OLD BUSINESS:

May Notes – Upon Motion of Laura Petit, seconded by Lee Gough and all in favor, meeting notes as amended were approved.

June 2022 Notes – Upon Motion of Chris DeCicco, seconded by Mark Ellison, the meeting notes as amended were approved.

Board Membership – Mark Ellison would speak to potential candidate Clyde Tompson and there were no other potential candidates recommended.

UC EMC Update – Minutes of June 2022 had been circulated by Mark Ellison.

Repair Café – Next repair café to be held on August 27th and may include previous three participants and asked for any suggestions for additional participants.

Carex Frankii Survey – Count had taken place and there appeared to be an increase in the numbers and growth in a new location. Mowing had taken place prior to the counting that had impacted the count in the eastern location on the Spit. Lee Gough provided identification of other plants that were observed.

Chris DeCicco left the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Connelly Community Garden – No new locations that had been volunteered were viable. Lee Gough stated that she and Nina Nichols had still been looking into options but there were issues with Riker Park that remained unresolved and would need to be investigated further.

Mark Ellison wouldn't be available on August 17, 2022 and asked if anyone could chair in his absence or if the meeting could be cancelled. Alternatively, re-schedule or attend the August 29th UC Municipal Environmental & Climate Committee Roundtable to take place on August 29th. The Members agreed in lieu of the regular August meeting, Members could attend the Roundtable on August 29, 2022. Mark Ellison asked everyone to complete the survey prior to the 29th and requested Laura Petit to put the survey together.

Mark Ellison noted that there was an event being hosted at the Red Maple Vineyard in West Park on August 23, 2022 addressing the management of the Spotted Lanternfly. Mention was made that the event may be placed in the Town's events calendar. Lee Gough suggested providing information to residents about the Spotted Lanternfly and its dangers.

Laura Petit relayed information provided by Lee Gough relative to the trees along Route 9W. Lee had prepared an inventory with locations of trees along Route 9W and recommendations. Laura Petit would provide the inventory to everyone and intended to speak with someone from the Highway Department prior to approaching the Town Board.

Contact from the Cornell Cooperative Extension had contacted Mark to request that he and Laura meet with her regarding the Climate Smart Matrix. Mark will be attending the meeting next Wednesday (August 27th) and would keep everyone posted.

Climate Smart Task Force – Laura Petit

EV Charging Stations – Proposal to the Town will be needed and need to determine how many would be requested. Nick Hvozda advocated utilizing Central Hudson Grant for make-ready costs reimbursement. Highway Department may be able to provide in-kind services. Mark Ellison had suggested Sojourner Truth parking site for an additional station. Rifton Fire Department had requested a station. Ellie supported location at the Sojourner Truth Park site. Mark Ellison stated an informational packet may be created to provide to businesses to assist in locating additional station locations. Laura Petit concluded

Ross Park, Sojourner Truth and Town Hall would be suggested. Ellie stated that the size of Sojourner Truth Site may require legislation to restrict parking in EV station for non-electric vehicles.

CCE –Meeting to finalize steps moving forward (sustainability implementation steps to create document with polices/resolutions) which was needed to submit documentation for the Bronze Certification.

Climate Smart Action Steps

Fleet Inventory – Mark Ellison asked that the documentation be provided early September 2022.

EV Charging Stations – NY Stretch Code adopted by the Town resulted in the Environmental Board obtaining \$5,000.00. Laura Petit hoped those funds could be used to purchase one EV Charging Station.

Resolution Adopting Green Fleet Policy – need fleet inventory prior and infrastructure in place to support fleet.

Interpretive Greenway Grant Signage at Lighthouse Park and Sleightsburgh – Laura Petit presenting to the Town Board on Thursday evening (July 21st). Laura Petit screenshared renderings of the signs. Laura would forward additional sign renderings to Members as well as the presentation to the Town. Request had been put in for a \$23k project and Greenway would cover \$10K. Additional resources would need to be investigated for funds.

Laura asked for volunteers, pamphlets, honey vendors and any other ideas that would benefit the Honeybee Jubilee. Input would need to be provided via email.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Mance, Secretary

Approved: October 19, 2022