

Esopus Environmental Board Minutes
December 21, 2022 Meeting Via Zoom

Present:

Mark Ellison, EB Chairman
Laura Petit, Climate Smart Chairperson
Nina Nichols
Lee Gough
Ellie Gartenstein

Town Board Liaison Kathy Quick

Excused: Noel Russ & Cynthia McVay

Meeting commenced at approximately 7:03 p.m.

Old Business:

Minutes – October and November 2022 Minutes were approved.

Membership – Christine Baker (invited by Nina Nichols) was welcomed as a potential member and would be provided an application to serve in January.

UC EMC Minutes would be provided to Members when Mark Ellison received the minutes.

Repair Café – Next event was to take place January 28, 2023 at the Ascension Church in West Park. Details would be provided at the January 2023 Environmental Board meeting. Nina Nichols was providing contact information for an individual to possibly conduct silk screening. Laura Petit stated that music may also be a possibility.

New Business:

Meeting Dates – Tentative 2023 meeting schedule had been provided. A change in the meeting date had been considered but it was determined that it would be difficult to schedule a meeting on any other day of the week. The Environmental Board meeting date would remain the third Wednesday of each month. The Members also preferred to continue meeting via Zoom.

Budget Report – Mark Ellison had compiled a record of the budget. Laura Petit inquired if there were plans on spending, noting that there was approximately 12K in escrow and not utilizing the money appeared disingenuous to the public. She suggested the possibility of providing screenings for sustainability movies and the creation of more pollinator gardens. Mark Ellison noted that the escrow funds had been tagged for the installation of EV charging station(s).

Pollinator gardens – Placing gardens at the base of the hamlet signs had been considered. Mark had taken photographs of the hamlet signs that had been erected. Difficulty posed was that some locations were not on Town property. Some of the hamlet signs were located within the NYS DOT right-of-way. The tree and shrub brochure had been provided to select items. Lee Gough supported selecting native plants that could be incorporated into the pollinator gardens. Mark suggested discussion for locations take place at the January 2023 meeting. Mark Ellison was aiming to have plants selected to purchase out of the 2022 budget to prepare to take action in 2023 and determine backup locations for gardens. Lee Gough inquired if riparian plantings along the Plantasiekill was a possibility or if the lands along the stream were private property. Laura Petit stated that packets should be purchased for Earth Day event

as well. Mark Ellison would look into purchasing the riparian packet, pollinator packet, pussy willow, flowering dogwood, red maple, and black cherry which would come to \$275.00. Laura Petit suggested adding witch hazel. Lee Gough encouraged purchasing the ruffled grouse packet. Chris Decicco stated considering locations of plants and proximity to areas which may be salted. Mark Ellison would investigate source for junipers. Would discuss in detail in January or February when and where plants may be distributed.

Climate Smart Task Force –

Charging Stations – Laura Petit hadn't heard results of grant awards but Governor Hochul had issued a press release. Laura stated she would contact NYSERDA. Alternatively, a station could be taken out of the existing escrow.

Climate Smart Action Steps – Laura Petit had received article on solar and farming workshops. She had gotten through the first action steps. A clean procurement and policy was ready to put into a packet. Gashouse emissions was involved and could use assistance. The fleet inventory needed more work. Mileage for the Town vehicles was needed and a spreadsheet had been created. Document will be in a shared file and Elle would take a look. Once the fleet inventory had been completed, goal should be to include EV vehicle in the fleet.

Submissions take place 3 times a year and looking towards the Spring submission would allow for time to develop policies and present to the Town.

Leg. Manna Jo Greene's Zero Waste Implementation Plan was presently being rewritten at the County level and had not been passed by the Ulster County Legislature.

Mark/Laura would reach out to Angelina Brandt at the Resource Recovery Agency for composting information prior to discussing with Town Supervisor.

Chris DeCicco was willing to work on the Environmental Board website for the Town.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa K. Mance, Secretary

Dated: February 14, 2023

Approved: February 15, 2023