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**TOWN BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday November 17, 2020**

A regularly scheduled Town Board Meeting was held on **November 17, 2020** in the Town Hall, 1 Town Hall Way, Ulster Park, NY with the following persons in attendance:

**Supervisor Shannon Harris  
Councilperson Evelyn Clarke  
Councilperson Jared Geuss  
Councilperson Kathie Quick  
Councilperson Chris Farrell**

**Administrative Recorder: Holly A. Netter, Town Clerk, RMC**

**THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN THE ESOPUS TOWN HALL. VISITORS WERE WELCOME TO JOIN IN THE AUDIENCE WHILE ADHERING TO SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. THE MEETING WAS LIVE-STREAMED ON THE "TOWN OF ESOPUS" FACEBOOK PAGE AND TELEVISED ON CHANNEL 23 PUBLIC ACCESS** Public comments was accepted in person, call [\(845\) 328-0483](tel:8453280483), or email [outreach@esopus.com](mailto:outreach@esopus.com)

7 members of the public were present.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG**

**PUBLIC COMMENT - each speaker had 3 minutes**

**Chris Marta** – resident of Sleightsburgh said he is looking forward to a reconciliation of all outstanding items provided in the letter from the Sleightsburgh Resident Association. Chris said there have been several documents provided in the past; the SRA response to the WAB recommendation 15 pages and bullet access list to make it straight forward. Propose to host a series of follow up meetings to deal with language in signage and where they should be posted. To have the meetings in collaboration with the Town, UC Sheriff's Department, residents, hunters and any other park uses that may be impacted.

**Andy Vanderpool** – not aware of what the gentleman was asking about but is under the impression that we have gone over everything that needs to be gone over for the spit for the past 1.5 years. If there is something new he is not sure why it is being brought up at this time. Would like this put behind once and for all and asked to Board to act accordingly.

**Paul Kennedy** - asked the Board to come to a good decision for the residents as well as other people who use the park. If decision is not made tonight keep things closed and have it so people cannot access at freewill.

**Rodney Swarz** – New Paltz resident. Likes to use the park year round, in the past had a key to kayak even in January never had any issue. Has been kayaking over 9 years and 1060 day trips averages 100 trips a year on the Hudson. Has never seen any problems at night when he has come back in 9-10 pm. Sunset is at 4:15; does not give much time, sun is in their eyes. Summer is too hot during the day like to be able to go out as the sun sets or after set.

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**Elizabeth Barnett** - submitted a document for the Board to review of 11 points of concern and she asked if the Board had received them. The Board had been provided a copy in their meeting packet.

Sleightsburgh park users concerns:

1. It's way too hot to kayak in the heat of the sun in the summertime.
2. Threat of fines and towing does not send a friendly message. [I've been to over 60 other launch sites –never seen anything like it]
3. Setting fixed deadline can cause more congestion at ramp.
4. It is not safe for anyone to rush when packing up a boat to get ready to travel on the road.
5. Coming back from Hudson River before sunset with sun in eyes makes it difficult to see boat traffic and obstacles and is harmful for eyesight [cataracts and other fish and damage possible]
6. Can't be on the river to see sunset colors which occurs just after sunset. The sign says dawn till dusk. But the guy who looks it up is instructed to lock it exactly at sunset.
7. Wind and waves usually are, later in the day. It's also calmer at sunrise.
8. It is safer for small boats and kayaks to start or stay in the Rondout rather than the Hudson.
9. Changes in weather can delay returning [thunderstorms, wind increases, etc.
10. Possible mild weather in winter makes both trips attractive.
11. If we get to Sleightsburgh and discover that the gate has been closed Sleightsburgh is closed, the following is a list of alternatives we have to suddenly choose and why these sites are not as safe as Sleightsburgh.

Launching in the river is a lot more dangerous than launching in the Rondout. Elizabeth said at one point the reservoir would not allow people to walk around the area after 911 and things change. Allowing access to legitimate users can actually be helpful because there are extra eyes and ears to help protect the area.

**Elizabeth Barnett** -Intersection of 213 and 32 very dangerous, she recently had an accident there. There is only 1 stop sign, there are no other traffic signals. She realizes that the Town does not have jurisdiction over those roads but felt the Town would have more influence with DOT. She gave three recommendations to make the intersection safer before someone gets killed;

1. Lower the speed limit through that area, which was done on Rt. 28
2. Add a traffic light
3. Make the intersection a 3 way stop.

Elizabeth said we shouldn't have to wait for someone to get killed before something is done.

**End of public comment**

**Zoom comments- none**

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**LABERGE GROUP - ADDENDUM 2020080-00**

Supervisor Harris reviewed a contract addendum from Laberge Group for provision of additional planning services associated with the Town Zoning update. This is for a small batch of zoning code changes that were outside the scope of the initial contract and established hourly rates for each service.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILPERSON JARED GEUSS TO APPROVE THE CONTRACT ADDENDUM NO 2020080-00 PER THE HOURLY RATE SCHEDULE PROVIDED IN THE ADDENDUM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILPERSON KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.**

**SRI FIRE SPRINKLER, LLC**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILPERSON CHRIS FARRELL TO APPROVE THE AGREEMENT WITH SRI FIRE SPRINKLER, LLC TO IDENTIFY AND RECORD ALL FIRE SPRINKLER UNITS IN TOWN HALL AND PROVIDE A LIST OF SPRINKLER HEADS PER NFPA-25 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$325.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILPERSON JARED GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.**

**GRANTS**

Supervisor Harris reviewed a grant application in the amount of \$8,000 prepared by County Legislator Laura Petit to fund efforts to achieve a Climate Smart bronze certification for the Town. Esopus is currently designated as a Clean Energy Community and has taken steps towards our climate smart certification. We need a dedicated person to complete the required data which will be selected by the Environmental Board.

**TOWN OF ESOPUS RESOLUTION  
APPROVING THE ESOPUS ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD  
'LOCAL CHAMPIONS' APPLICATION**

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Board of the Town of Esopus, in the County of Ulster, State of New York, as follows; that

**WHEREAS**, the Town Board believes that climate change poses a real and increasing threat to our local and global environments; and

**WHEREAS**, in December of 2017, the Town Board adopted the New York State Climate Smart Communities Pledge, comprised of the following ten elements:

- 1) Pledge to be a Climate Smart Community;
- 2) Set goals, inventory emissions, plan for climate action;

- 3) Decrease community energy use;
- 4) Increase community use of renewable energy;
- 5) Realize benefits of recycling and other climate-smart solid waste management practices;
- 6) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through use of climate-smart land-use tools;
- 7) Enhance community resilience and prepare for the effects of climate change;
- 8) Support development of a green innovation economy;
- 9) Inform and inspire the public;
- 10) Commit to an evolving process of climate action; and

**WHEREAS**, since adoption, the Town of Esopus Environmental Board has developed a Climate Smart Community Profile, established Esopus as a designated Clean Energy Community, and supported solar and geothermal projects in their municipality; and

**WHEREAS**, a pilot program called ‘Local Champions’ has been established by Lifeboats Hudson Valley to provide select funding municipalities for assistance in grant funding, technical assistance and peer-to-peer learning to aid in communities’ journeys to Climate Smart bronze certification; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Esopus Environmental Board seeks to establish bronze-level certification within the Climate Smart program and has expressed interest to the Town Board in applying;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Board approves the Environmental Board application for ‘Local Champions’ on behalf of the Town of Esopus.

**OFFERED BY:** Councilperson Chris Farrell  
**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Kathie Quick

Councilperson Evelyn Clarke	AYE
Councilperson Jared Geuss	AYE
Councilperson Kathie Quick	AYE
Councilperson Chris Farrell	AYE
Supervisor Shannon Harris	AYE

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

**Sewer Rate change** – following adoption of the Town 2021 budget, new sewer rates will be set at \$20.96 (previously \$19.96) for the first 4,000 gallons of water and \$5.24 (previously \$4.99) per 1,000 gallons thereafter.

**RESOLUTION**

**SEWER RATE**

**WHEREAS**, the law requires the cost of the operation and maintenance of the Port Ewen Sewer District to be paid by revenue derived from the sale of the service,

**WHEREAS**, this Town Board has adopted a Sewer District budget, for year 2021, based on a rate of a minimum charge of \$ 20.96 for the first 0 to 4,000 gallons and a rate of \$ 5.24 per 1,000 gallons thereafter, based on the water meter.

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the Town Board increase the rate charged for Sewer service from a minimum of \$ 19.96 for the first 0 to 4,000 gallons and \$ 4.99 per 1,000 gallons thereafter, based on the water meter, to a minimum of \$ 20.96 for the first 0 to 4,000 gallons and the rate of \$ 5.24 per 1,000 gallons thereafter, based on the water meter, with the new rate to be effective upon adoption of this resolution.

**OFFERED BY:** Councilperson Chris Farrell  
**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Jared Geuss

Councilperson Evelyn Clarke	AYE
Councilperson Jared Geuss	AYE
Councilperson Kathie Quick	AYE
Councilperson Chris Farrell	AYE
Supervisor Shannon Harris	AYE

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

**SLEIGHTSBURGH SPIT PARK –**

A discussion of Town plan-of-action for Sleightsburgh Spit Park in response to recommendations from the Waterfront Advisory Board, letters from Sleightsburgh Resident Association, sportsmen, legal counsel and tonight’s public comments. Supervisor asked the Board for their comments and thanked everyone for their participation in the process.

Councilperson Chris Farrell said the intent when the Town originally took this property over was to open the space to as much recreational use as possible and provide access for boating, fishing and hunting of waterfowl. He said we should try to meet that goal. The idea of putting

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a gate in there is the best solution because we know who has the access to the park and we can control when it is open and closed. We are taking into consideration all of the recommendations that have been made by the Waterfront Advisory Board based on the mediation meetings. To install the gate and issue keys to the gate, will allow us control over who has the keys. It will allow us to control when it is up and down. Evening kayakers can go out in the evenings and let themselves out when they return. Hunters can get in at 4-5 am to duck hunt. Several good suggestions have been made by the WAB/mediation group.

Councilperson Farrell said he agreed with improved signage especially the one suggested at the top of the hill by the bus turn which will address the measurement of the boats and limit size of the vessels.

Councilperson Kathie Quick said as many people as possible should be able to enjoy the park. It is a beautiful park. Maintenance is needed in the southern side of park. We know who the people will be who have keys. Residents were justifiably concerned with strange people coming in and out of the park all hours of the night. We want our residents and people who are using it responsibly to have access to use it and enjoy it.

**Rodney Swartz** asked if the Town could charge for use. He said in Cornwall they have a process where you use your Smartphone and get a permit electronically and the police are notified so they know who is allowed to be there.

Councilperson Jared Geuss – We have met with the stakeholders, had the waterfront mediation and budgeted for the items. Councilperson Geuss said we do not have the specific details on the gate. He is working in conjunction with our security consultant. The gate needs to be basic and we do not want to waste money on features that we don't need. To address residents concerns, speed trailers have been budgeted. These are not specific for Sleightsburgh however Sleightsburgh will be one of the first places they are set up when they are obtained and will address issues of speeding in the neighborhood.

Supervisor Harris is working on signage wording with DEC and numerous agencies on exact wording so everything is covered and everyone knows the rules.

They have talked to the Parks department to develop a maintenance plan for the trails and getting some planting at the entrance. Councilperson Geuss said he agrees with Councilperson Farrell and the Waterfront Advisory Board; bringing people to the ramp but understanding the concerns of the residents. He said with the factor of the gate and security cameras we are heading in the right direction to effectively and safely open it up for everything it was meant to be.

Councilperson Kathie Quick likes the idea of rules so everyone knows what is and is not allowed. Limiting access to those who are supposed to be there will be a big improvement.

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Councilperson Chris Farrell said he was there about 20 times this spring/summer. He noticed it was very crowded during striper season but beyond that it has regular usage and was not over crowded. People were able to maneuver and get in and out. He did not see any bad characters or nefarious actions going on down there. Everyone who was there was there for some type of recreational purpose whether it was bird watching , kayaking, hiking on the trail, boating and fishing off the pier; no one was loitering around.

Councilperson Evelyn Clarke said the Waterfront Advisory Board's document was thorough and objective. She also liked Chris' highlights and how it was broken down into categories. She reviewed items on the list and felt they had been discussed with the exception of clarifying only water fowl hunting is allowed in the area. Gate will close at a certain time and people could get out. A lot of time has been spent discussing this and hoping it is amenable to everyone involved, but that is probably not going to happen nor will everyone be happy with every decision that we make. She said a decision needs to be made and stick to it.

Supervisor Harris said the SRA suggested clarified and interpretive language for the signage and she found it helpful, she said not every single word will be adopted outright but there is a lot of alignment with the Waterfront Advisory comments. Supervisor Harris also clarified that water fowl hunting is allowed in the area because the shooting occurs over water and does not follow the same 500 foot ruling for regular hunting. Signage to alert people that there is hunting during a specific period of time will raise awareness to other park users. Supervisor Harris said some items may be aspirational around lights near the ramp area because there is no electricity. We can work towards this recommendation or possibly utilize solar. Kathie Quick said we do not want to invite people in by entering from the creek side. Councilperson Farrell questioned the request for a camera by the launch; do we have the ability to do so? Power and Wi-Fi are needed; not sure that it would reach that far. Perhaps a camera on the opposite side of the creek may work.

The gate would be programmed to be time appropriate, try to align the gate month by month according to what sunrise and sunset would be. Terminology of Dawn to Dusk will be used. Having hours still allows the card holders to come in earlier and leave later. Gate programmed for egress up to 11 pm, suggestion made for allowing 1 – 1.5 hours after sunset to get out coinciding with the seasons. An example was given 11 pm works for warmer months during the summer but may not be necessary for other months when sunset is 5 pm. The point was made if they have a card we know who will be exiting. People could get in after sunset with a key/card. Councilperson Chris Farrell said he would not want to prohibit key holders from accessing after sunset; he gave an example of Rodney who likes to go out kayaking after sunset colors don't come out till after sunset. We want to provide access to park for the people who are using it for appropriate usage. Supervisor Harris said she opposed entrance after dusk and said they can get in before it closes then have access to egress. More discussion occurred and Councilperson Farrell repeated he would not want to prohibit key holders from entering after sunset who are using it for appropriate usage.

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\*\*Minor modifications: dawn to dusk and aligning gate closure programmed to coordinate with times for dawn to dusk on a month to month basis. Any signage is subject to approval by whatever agency DEC, Sherriff or Municipality so we do not lock ourselves to wrong signage as well as any seasons which are subject to change with DEC regulations.

**COUNCILPERSON CHRIS FARRELL MADE A MOTION TO ADOPT THE WATER FRONT ADVISORY BOARDS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SLEIGHTSBURGH SPIT PARK WITH SOME MINOR MODIFICATIONS SUCH AS DAWN TO DUSK, LANGUAGE ON THE SIGNS ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY SHERRIFF, DEC AND MUNICIPALITY. COUNCILPERSON JARED GEUSS SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.**

**UPDATES**

**Next Town Board meeting** – The next meeting will be Tuesday, December 1. Public hearings will be continued on laws #5 - # 13. Hearings on proposed local law #10 will stay open until Tuesday, December 15. Awaiting County and Local Planning Board feedback .

**Call for Volunteers** – Open positions on the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Board and Environmental Board. Please volunteer today to make a positive impact in your community.

**VOUCHERS & PAYMENT OF BILLS**

**BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS**

**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 budget adjustments and the adjustments have been examined and approved by the Town Board.

**Therefore, Be It Resolved,** that the following budget adjustments be approved for payment:

**BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FOR NOVEMBER 2020**

<b>AO 0599.000 Fund Bal</b>	<b>AO 1420.400</b>	<b>\$ 5,504.60</b>
	<b>ATTORNEY CONTRACTUAL</b>	
	<b>AO 1620.405</b>	<b>\$ 478.33</b>
	<b>BLDG TELEPHONE &amp; FAX</b>	
	<b>AO. 5182.401</b>	<b>\$ 258.16</b>
	<b>ESOPUSOL</b>	

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS.**

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**OFFERED BY:** Councilperson Kathie Quick  
**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Jared Geuss

Councilperson Evelyn Clarke      **AYE**  
Councilperson Jared Geuss      **AYE**  
Councilperson Kathie Quick      **AYE**  
Councilperson Chris Farrell      **AYE**  
Supervisor Shannon Harris      **AYE**

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

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF BILLS November 2020**

**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	201503 - 201550	\$60,949.46
HIGHWAY FUND	202218 - 202239	\$98,254.49
STREET LIGHTS	206009	\$ 5,577.95
PORT EWEN SEWER FUND	203122 -203130	\$ 13,884.71
PORT EWEN WATER FUND	204236 - 204260	\$ 25,082.49
CAPITAL	200002-200004	\$ 3,074.63
Water Treatment		
TOTAL		\$ 206,823.73

**A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT OF VOUCHERS.**

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**OFFERED BY:** Councilperson Evelyn Clarke  
**SECONDED BY:** Councilperson Kathie Quick

Councilperson Evelyn Clarke	AYE
Councilperson Jared Geuss	AYE
Councilperson Kathie Quick	AYE
Councilperson Chris Farrell	AYE
Supervisor Shannon Harris	AYE

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILPERSON CHRIS FARRELL TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:00 PM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILPERSON JARED GEUSS. ALL TOWN BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VOTED IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.**

*Respectively Submitted,*

*Holly A. Netter  
Town Clerk, RMC*