

**PUBLIC HEARING ON LOCAL LAW 13 of 2021
November 4, 2021**

**Supervisor Jared Geuss
Councilman Evelyn Clarke
Councilman Laura Robinson
Councilman Kathie Quick
Councilman Chris Farrell**

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

THIS MEETING WAS held VIA ZOOM , TELEVISED LIVE ON CHANNEL 23 PUBLIC ACCESS and LIVE-STREAMED ON “TOWN OF ESOPUS” FACEBOOK PAGE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: call (845) 328-0483 to leave a voicemail or email outreach@esopus.com for assistance.

Proposed Local Law 13 was introduced on October 7, 2021 and Noticed in the Daily Freeman on October 17, 2021. The proposed law was available for review at www.esopus.com

SUPERVISOR JARED GEUSS, MADE A MOTION TO OPEN THE PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED LOCAL LAW, TO BE KNOWN AS LOCAL LAW #13 OF 2021, ENTITLED A LOCAL LAW OF THE TOWN OF ESOPUS, ULSTER COUNTY, NEW YORK TO OPT OUT OF ALLOWING CANNABIS RETAIL DISPENSARIES AND ON-SITE CONSUMPTION SITES AS AUTHORIZED UNDER CANNABIS LAW ARTICLE 4. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jessica Smith, Ulster Park - asked the Board NOT to opt out. Tax revenue will be split -75% stays with the Town 25% goes to County. Potential loss of significant revenue. Opting out would mean having to hold public referendum to opt back in, which would cost a lot of tax dollars. Zoning regulation can be put in place and onsite use can be prohibited. She reminded the Board that personal views are irrelevant. There is potential loss of \$100,000 worth of tax revenues. Asked the Board not to opt out.

Supervisor Geuss said if the referendum was placed on the 2022 general election ballot, it would not cost the town anything.

Jessica responded – loses 9 months’ worth of momentum waiting for the November 2022 ballot and businesses will find other places to go. She said congestion in Port Ewen was brought up as a concern in the past and she encouraged the Town Board to look out of the box.

“Business happens beyond Port Ewen; Esopus is ginormous.” The Board can control where these establishments can operate.

Kim Carrigan, Ulster Park – Asked the Board NOT to opt out. Agreed with Jessica Smith’s comments. She said it was a huge opportunity for the Town, tax opportunity is impressive. The Town would have total control. These businesses are well managed and controlled. There are regulations on what people can purchase. We are talking about working adults and senior citizens seeking relief for their health issues. There is no resale to kids. Huge business opportunity for our municipality. Asked the Board to consider not opting out,

Nancy Ryan, Ulster Park via zoom – Asked the Board NOT to opt out. Forfeiting a lot of money over time if we opt out. She agreed with the other public comments. The Town already has many not-for-profit parcels off the tax roll. Over time people who are a fixed income regardless of their age will have a difficult time paying their taxes, this revenue would help keep taxes affordable. She agreed with other public comments that we should “do it from the get go”. If Kingston and New Paltz opt in - waiting to have a referendum on the ballot will make the Town miss out on the customer base.

Supervisor Geiss said he had voted for the opt out. He explained “when businesses were contacted back in 2018 and during the comprehensive plan process, it was never brought up and legalization was being talked about but there was never a need or want at that point”. Jessica Smith said now its legal and it’s happening so regardless of what was discussed back then it’s happening now. Supervisor Geuss said that is why he wants to hear more public opinion on the matter and suggested continuing the public hearing.

Councilman Quick said she thinks they need to hear opinions from the Economic Development Committee.

SUPERVISOR GEUSS MADE A MOTION AT 7:15 PM TO HOLD OPEN AND CONTINUE THE PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED LOCAL LAW #13 OF 2021 TO NOVEMBER 18, 2021 AT 7PM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

*Respectively Submitted,
Holly A. Netter
Town Clerk, RMC*