

**Town Board Workshop Meeting
February 3, 2022**

A regularly scheduled Town Board Workshop meeting was held in person at the Esopus Town Hall, 1 Town Hall Way, Ulster Park, NY. on Thursday February 3, 2022, at 7:00 PM with the following persons in attendance:

**Supervisor Danielle Freer
Councilman Kathie Quick
Councilman Jared Geuss
Councilman Evelyn Clarke
Councilman Laura Robinson**

Recording Administrator Holly A. Netter, Town Clerk, RMC

4 ways to give public comment:

In person at meeting

Phone – 845 331 0676

Email – lreynolds@esopus.com with subject line “Public Comment” and meeting date

Mail – Town of Esopus PO BOX 700 Port Ewen, NY 12466

Public Comment

Steven Cerini – Acknowledged the Highway Department for doing a great job handling the storm and all the damage.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC COMMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN JARED GUESS. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

UPDATE ON PETITION FOR A PUBLIC REFERENDUM ON LOCAL LAW #13 OF 2021 CANNABIS OPT-OUT

A petition with 502 signatures requesting a permissive referendum on Town of Esopus Local Law 13 Cannabis Opt Out was submitted to the Town Clerk, Holly Netter on January 31, 2021. The petition needs to be verified and a certified copy given to the Town Board within 30 days; March 2, 2022. Town Clerk Netter has been working with the attorney for the town and Board of Election for guidance with the process. Procedures on FOILS were also reviewed by the clerk.

MOTION TO APPROVE TOWN AGREEMENT WITH TEVAS

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK TO AUTHORIZE SUPERVISOR FREER TO SIGN THE ANNUAL TEVAS CONTRACT AS WRITTEN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN JARED GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

REVIEW PROPOSED CYBER POLICY PROPOSAL FROM MARSHALL & STERLING

The Board was given information relating to the existing status of cyber security here at the Town and recommended upgrades to the system. Supervisor Danielle Freer is working on getting training for the employees. Funding for the additional security can come from contingency.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO SIGN THE CYBER SECURITY PROPOSAL FROM MARSHALL & STERLING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,489.30. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN LAURA ROBINSON. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED NOISE ORDINANCE

Supervisor Danielle Freer said she had heard that noise ordinances in other towns are extremely hard to enforce. Esopus does not have their own police force and the Sheriff's office has a wide territory to cover. The Sheriff's do not own their own decibel reader to measure sound. There are many variables that come in to play when trying to prove a noise issue out – distance/where the reading was taken. Many times, by the time law enforcement arrives to the scene, noise has ceased and there is nothing that can be done. She does not feel comfortable having our Building Department Employees help to enforce, as the ordinance is currently written. Supervisor Freer said the noise problems in Port Ewen vs Esopus are different. One blanket approach may not work for everyone.

Councilman Quick said there needs to be something in place so people don't harass their neighbors with the noise since they know there is nothing they can do about it. Nor should they be able to use the law against a neighbor just because they don't like them. There needs to be something in place for residents while trying to protect the businesspeople. There have been a lot of complaints over the years and the Board has been working for a few years to come up with a solution.

Supervisor Freer said there is so much that goes into trying to prove someone was at fault and if found guilty the fine is only \$250. The town is spending taxpayer money on revision after revision with no enforceable solution.

Councilman Kathie quick said she thinks they should concentrate on problem areas of the law. Councilman Evelyn Clarke said there are a lot of changes that have been made from the original law. Councilman Quick and Clarke have offered to reach out to Sheriff Juan Figueroa to see if a noise ordinance is needed before they come out and what is enforceable.

Supervisor Guess said he was concerned with how we enforce it. He shared sections of the NYS penal code 240.20 that should allow the Sheriffs to handle disturbing the peace calls between neighbors. A Noise Ordinance will not fix neighbors clashing with each other.

Supervisor Freer said she would like to stop spinning and move forward one way or the other at the next meeting. This has been in discussion for over two years. Edits to the existing law should be sent to her by 2/10. If the Board is satisfied, they can draft an introduction and set a public hearing date for a future meeting or they can table the law.

DISCUSSION REGARDING ARPA PLANNING

An electronic 437-page document was shared with the Board, along with the latest guidelines for the ARPA funding. Tourism and Water Infrastructures are among the eligible categories for spending. Money was budgeted for park equipment and new pavilions which is not covered under this funding. She asked the Board members to go back to the Boards, which they are the liaison for, and have them put together a “wish” list. The lists will be prioritized, and the Board can see what may be able to be covered from this funding.

Installation of the Tourism Signage will begin in the spring and will serve as a “spring has sprung” moment for the Town to celebrate.

A signboard to let the community and tourists know what is going on in town was mentioned. Supervisor Freer said maybe we could use the library sign to promote events. Councilman Clarke said she felt water was more important than tourism.

MS4 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Salvatore Morrello, PT Building Inspector is working on the Stormwater Management Plan to bring the town into compliance but needs expertise from Tighe & Bond. Tighe & Bond had previously assisted the Town in applying for a grant which was received for mapping. Tighe & Bond came up with a proposal for the scope of work with a fee of \$12,500. The proposal includes data and record review, development of a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) and assisting the Town in responding to the Notice of Violation letter received in November. Dan Valentine, Senior Project Manager for Tighe & Bond felt they will not reach or exceed the \$12, 500 fee.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO SIGN THE CONTRACT WITH TIGHE & BOND FOR THE MS4 MANAGEMENT PLAN SCOPE OF WORK PROPOSED IN THE AMOUNT OF \$12,500. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

COMMITTEE AND BOARD VOLUNTEER PROCESS AND APPLICATIONS

Several people have submitted applications for various volunteer board positions. It was suggested that the liaison touch base with the chairs of the various boards to encourage them to reach out to the interested parties, invite them to a meeting, interview the candidates and make recommendations to the Town Board of who they would like to see fill the positions. The Town Board will then interview their top candidates and make the appropriate appointments as needed.

PARK AND PAVILION FEES

Councilman Geuss gave an update on the three new pavilions being installed this year. The first will be in Connelly at Rikers Park, Freer and Lighthouse Park will need some additional prep work. Once the pavilions are ready, they will be made available to rent. Further research regarding fees and port a potty will need to be done.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEDIA POLICY

Supervisor Freer is working on revising the Social Media and Policy. She encouraged Board members to review and submit edits. An updated version will be redistributed to employees and all volunteer board members. Everyone will have to sign the policy and be held to the same standard.

LIAISON LIGHTNING ROUND

SUPERVISOR DANIELLE FREER:

Highway Department is requesting a credit card to buy parts. This is so they can get parts quicker and cheaper as needed. Bookkeeper Deb Kane is looking into the application process. Councilman Kathie Quick asked who would have access to the card. Mike and 2 others potentially the foreman & Karen.

Councilman Geuss said it would be smart idea for Water and Sewer as well. There also needs to be a procurement policy to attest what was purchased, when and why it was needed for verification. This can be tracked through an excel spread sheet and submitted with vouchers.

Justice Court: We have been exploring the best route to fill the vacancy. A few moving parts – new candidates have emerged, in talks with OCA on their appetite for an extension for

Judge Wiers and what that would entail. Will have an update and plan for next steps by next meeting Councilman Jared Geuss:

Transfer Station is looking into a small-scale compositing option in conjunction with the UCRRA.

Planning Board had a 2-lot subdivision – nothing major to report.

Water/Sewer Board – Water Superintendent Nick Butler is looking for someone else to do the billing 3-5 hours a billing cycle. Lisa Mance is interested in taking on the duties if approved. Pump at Connelly station needs to be replaced; money is in the budget.

Councilman Evelyn Clarke:

Economic Development Committee is ramping up. Looking to spruce up their brochure, website (Mike Rice) and exploring how best to handle EBA social media page. They are also working on a newsletter. **A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER FOR THE EDC TO HAVE MIKE RICE UPDATE THE PROPERTY LISTING SUBMISSION FOR THE WEBSITE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$60. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN ROBINSON. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.**

Environmental Board – Two people attended their meeting and submitted applications, they are excited to get on the board. River Sweep – May 7th 9am – 12 pm Sleightsburgh Park. Laura Petit is working on the sapling giveaway. Willow Trees need to be replaced at Freer; should look for flowering trees to replace them.

Sojourner Truth Walk – 2/19 Supervisor Freer has promoted the event on the website www.esopus.com so people can access the details.

COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK:

ZONING BOARD- one applicant looking for variance for setbacks on Connelly Rd. Applicant was asked to try to minimize size.

WATERFRONT ADVISORY BOARD- LWRP update online esopus.com hope to have another in person display in May when weather is better.

ASSESSOR'S DEPARTMENT- Taxable status deadline – they are reminding people of their exemptions and key coding renewals for all exemptions. They are also adding home improvements to the property inventory

COUNCILMAN LAURA ROBINSON:

PARKS & REC – Next meeting 2/21/22. Laura Petite talked to Jack Saalwatcher who stated he would no longer be running the meeting. Next function planned is the Easter Egg Hunt.

PARKS, BUILDING & GROUNDS- Laura Petite and Supervisor Freer met with Dan Vedder to go over what is happening with parks, building and grounds. Dan has been working on winter projects to get ready for the spring.

TAX COLLECTOR – In Bernice’s absence Trish has been working on the land tax payments and everything is going well.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER AT 9:35 PM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

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