

8/3/2023 WS

Town Board Workshop Meeting

August 3, 2023

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 August 3, 2023, at 7:00 PM with the following persons in attendance:

**Supervisor Danielle Freer
Councilman Kathie Quick
Councilman Jared Guess
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 and leave a voicemail

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

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

SUPERVISOR FREER OPENED THE WORKSHOP MEETING AT 7 PM AND PROCEEDED WITH THE PLEDGE TO THE FLAG.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paula Van Aken 183 Lindorf St. & Sal Ferraro 185 Lindorf St. They have been experiencing large amounts of water pooling behind and between their homes. Video of the water flowing was shared with the Board members. They said the Highway Department did come out and they used the “jet”, which seems to have increased the amount of water flow somehow. There is a grate between the homes. The homeowners speculated that there may be a hole in the pipe. Paula Van Aken said there was a 4 in. pool of water behind her shed and Sal Ferraro has water running into his yard but thankfully is not coming into the house. However, he said the yard is so spongy he sunk into the ground. The Van Aken’s have been at their property since 1995 and Ferraro since 1999; neither of them have ever experienced the water issues they are having.

Supervisor Freer will have Superintendent Cafaldo come to look at the situation on Friday.

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Robert Nelson Lindorf St, Thanked Supervisor Freer for getting the pipe taken care of at Ross Park.

Linda Laestadius 374 Broadway, addressed her concerns about the Lighthouse Village Project and the effect it will have on her rights, as well as her neighbor Dylan Lacombe, to make improvements to their properties. If the project gets approved, the setbacks will change due to rezoning from GC1 to R12 and would have an impact on future building. She said she should not lose her rights on her property due to the change. Although she said the Code Enforcement Officer said he would make a note in the file because the applicant was creating a hardship for the 9W property owners so they should be grandfathered in. She does not feel it is enough. If approved, all abutting properties should be exempt from the new required setbacks. Linda and Dylan would like a letter stating such. There was a question of whether this would be documented on the maps, but she felt that a note in the system was not enough if it became an issue years from now. She would like the letter and verbiage documented on the maps.

Kristy Nelson Lindorf St Inquired about the overgrown pieces of property on Broadway as well as a property across from her on Lindorf St. that has a refrigerator/freezer dumped in the back of the property. Supervisor Freer said she would have Mark look into it.

Steven Cerini Mountainview Ave., reported that he has heard a lot of positive feedback relating to the Ross Park renovations and the new Hamlet signage.

SUPERVISOR FREER MADE A MOTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC COMMENT. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN LAURA ROBINSON AT 7:20 PM. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR: MOTION CARRIED.

UPDATES & DISCUSSION

John Burroughs Black Creek Trail Steering Committee Meeting

The John Burroughs Black Creek Trail (JBBCT) is a vision for a multi model recreational trail system that connects hiking, biking and paddling routes through the biologically diverse Black Creek Corridor within the Towns of Esopus and Llyod; paying tribute to the legacy of John Burroughs and the landscape which inspired him. The 11-mile corridor stretches from Illinois Mountain in the south to Black Creek Preserve in the north passing through over 2,000 acres of conserved land, including a portion of the Empire State Trail/Hudson Valley Rail Trail, Chodikey Lake and Black Creek State Forest, John Burroughs Nature Sanctuary with historic Slabsides Cabin at its core.

The JBBCT was formalized in 2017 through the work of key landowners/partners (John Burroughs Association, NYS DEC, Scenic Hudson, and Towns of Esopus and Llyod) and the original steering committee, with the aim to highlight the environmental, economic and recreational benefits that this trail system would leverage and to identify challenges and solutions required to complete the full trail.

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Through cross-team collaboration, Scenic Hudson staff has identified roughly five real property interests to pursue to ensure permanent access rights to access key private properties in the corridor. At present, two of those five interests are Scenic Hudson Land Trust (SHLT) board-approved and moving toward closure and one additional property is in active discussion. Staff is also working with NYSDEC to discuss potential property transfers in the corridor, where DEC would take fee ownership and SHLT would retain trail management responsibilities.

There are also plans to open the northern end up to Cedar Point Lookout and the Winding Brook Trail parking lot needs to be expanded. This is currently in review with the Planning Board.

The Esopus Barnes project is one of the properties in that area that could possibly give an easement so the connection can be made. It would also benefit and work with their plan for their site; their patrons would be able to access the trail.

Scenic Hudson has also been talking with the Town about hosting their Sojourner Truth pop up trail in Esopus at some point in 2024.

YMCA Summer Camp Funding

Supervisor Freer said it was agreed upon and explained in the Summer Camp letter to residents that the “Town is to offer a monetary discount of *at least \$100 per child per session* registered for YMCA CAMP”.

To date, 6 families (9 children in total) have enrolled their children in camp sessions. Of those 6 families, four enrolled for more than one session, but were only awarded \$100. To cover the “per session” discount, these families would/should be entitled to a total of \$1,200 additional reimbursed funds.

Considering the \$900 which is already committed, plus the additional \$1,200, it would bring the total to \$2,100.00. The budget line for the camp is \$10,000.

Supervisor Freer opened a discussion addressing the “at least \$100” per session”. She said she believed that if we raise the discount from \$100 to \$200 per session, bringing the total to date up to \$4,200 spent. Originally the Board erred on the side of caution when setting the discount at \$100 instead of \$200 because it was unknown at that time how many campers would be applying for the discount.

Councilman Clarke asked if anyone had received feedback from the families that were using the YMCA program. Councilman Laura Robinson said Ross Park has been busy and many families are happy that they are able to go there during the day, which was not permitted when the camp was run in Esopus.

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Councilman Clarke said the Town made a generous offer to provide discounts for the residents.

COUNCILMAN KATHY QUICK MADE A MOTION TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT TO \$200 PER SESSION FOR THE SCHOLARSHIPS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN EVELYN CLARKE. ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR: MOTION CARRIED.

PEFD STORMWATER EASEMENT REQUEST NEXT STEPS AND SCHEDULE WALKTHROUGHS.

Supervisor Freer said she would schedule a walk through with the PEFD engineers and have the property marked out for those who were unable to attend. This will help clarify the location of the retention pond and fencing as well as how our property line will be affected if there is a desire to widen the roadway in the future.

REQUEST FOR COURT CLERK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO AUTHORIZE MARIANNE WELLS TO ATTEND THE NYS MAGISTRATES COURT CLERKS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 9/17/2023 – 9/20/2023 AT THE TURNING STONE RESORT IN VERONA, NY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$895.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN ROBINSON. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

NYSAOTSOH CONFERENCE

SUPERVISOR FREER MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT MIKE CAFALDO TO ATTEND THE 94TH ANNUAL NYS ASSOCIATION OF TOWN SUPERINTENDENTS OF HIGHWAY(NYSAOTSOH) CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 26-29, 2023 AT THE TURNING STONE CASINO & RESORT VERONA, NEW YORK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$700.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR.

CLIMATE SMART COMMITTEE PE 9 EDUCATION /WEB DEVELOPMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO APPROVE THE QUOTE FOR WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT FROM MIKE RICE TO ALIGN WITH OUR TOWN'S COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$600. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

Town Clerk Holly Netter pointed out that in an emergency people may not have access to power at home or the internet but may be able to access information on their mobile phone. She recommended Mike Rice make the app mobile friendly, so it is easy for people to find and use.

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Town Hall ADA Compliant Door Quote and Discussion

Dan Vedder tried to obtain quotes to install an accessible electronic double door which is ADA compliant. Only one company gave a quote, Rest Assured Alarm Systems Inc at a rate of \$21,500 to install the double door with the wireless inside and outdoor release button. Town Clerk Netter is checking to see if there is anyone listed on the state contract list.

LAWN MAINTENANCE

As a follow up to the discussion held last meeting regarding property maintenance, Code Enforcement Officer Mark Jaffee wrote violations to property owners regarding lawn maintenance. There were a lot of complaints regarding the old post office. It has since been mowed but others were concerned that it was good for the pollinators and if there was milkweed it is good for the butterflies. There was a discussion about the law as it is written and the determination was made that the existing code needs to be followed. Grass longer than 10 inches needs to be mowed, properties from curb to sidewalks can be no more than 6 inch high and growth cannot impede the sidewalk. There are options for those who may not want to mow such as creeping thyme and pollinators can be planted in a neat, cultivated area. The Tree Taskforce will now be asked to provide guidance.

HIGHWAY TRUCK PURCHASE

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO AUTHORIZE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT MIKE CAFALDO TO PURCHASE A 2023 RAM 5500 REGULAR CAB 4X4 60CA IN THE AMOUNT OF \$74,070.00 (WHITE TRUCK), RUGBY 9' MASON DUMP BLACK, HITCH PLATE, MANUAL TARP \$14,070.00, DEALER FEES \$222.50 FOR A TOTAL OF \$88,362.50. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN GEUSS. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

** The truck is on the lot and available immediately, the current truck has a rotten oil pan. The larger trucks are still not built. Mike said he still has enough money to purchase the two larger trucks that are not built yet.

MOTION TO SET FIRST 2024 BUDGET MEETING

A MOTION WAS MADE BY SUPERVISOR FREER TO SET THE FIRST BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING FOR SEPTEMBER 7, 2023, AT 5 PM PRIOR TO THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR: MOTION CARRIED.

LIAISON LIGHTNING ROUND

Supervisor Freer: Working with Matt Rogers and hoping to have the first presentation for the public at the September 21, 2023 Town Board meeting.

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Highway Department

Union Center Road closure It has been determined by the Ulster County Department of Public Works that the embankment on Union Center Road in the Town of Esopus requires repair. The construction is anticipated to begin on August 8, 2023.

The Ulster County Department of Public Works is performing the repair work. To accomplish this work, it will be necessary to close a portion of Union Center Road in the Town of Esopus to all thru traffic effective August 8, 2023. The closed section of the roadway will be between the intersections of Hardenburgh Road and Poptown Road.

Traffic may use Union Center Road northwest for 2.5 miles to S.R. 213 north for 0.9 miles to New Salem Road/ Salem Street east for 2.8 miles to S.R. 9W south for 3.5 miles to Ulster Avenue west for 0.2 miles to Union Center Road west for 1.5 miles.

The longevity of the job is unknown but estimated to be a few weeks.

Town Clerk - Holly Netter made the Board aware that there have been some residents who have been complaining on social media about the fees associated with the online credit card payments. Many people do not realize laws are in place that prohibit the Town from absorbing the cost of the credit card payments. This service option was made as a convenience however no one is mandated to use the system. For those who want the convenience of paying online, the fee is passed on to the customer. The option of placing payments in the drop box on the exterior of the building has become quite popular. Town Clerk Netter said she is researching out to other companies to see if there is a better option. She explained not every provider has the capacity to work with the unique needs of municipalities. The company must be able to charge the fee in a separate transaction and not deposit the net amount to an account. There are also four separate accounts she is dealing with for DECAL, Clerk, Transfer Station and the Water & Sewer.

Councilman Quick:

Zoning Board - 8/15 there is 1 decision for an area variance.

Assessor's Department – working on Tax certioraris and SCARs that are coming in

Councilman Clarke:

Environmental Board – repair café August 5th 10am -2pm Ascension Church West Park

The EV Charging Station location was brought up. The Environmental Board would like to see it in front of the building. Supervisor Freer explained that the type of charging stations we were receiving were not the type people would be searching for like a gas station. It is believed they would need a whole new power source and run off a separate box for that type. These would

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be the type a person would plug into while they were attending a meeting. Supervisor Freer said she hopes to be able to tap into the existing work that is being done for the Ulster County Sheriff's. If we can utilize the same company and basic location the company would be able to run electricity to both places in the parking lot and could save money on the installation. She invited Councilman Clarke to join her for a meeting with the County on Monday August 7 at 11 am to determine what is available and what it means for Esopus. There is also a perk that the company will be an approved vendor of the County and we can piggyback on pricing, so we do not have to go out for a bid. This company will also assist behind the scenes with paperwork necessary for the grant.

Councilman Robinson:

Parks & Rec - August 12th Family Fun Day Ross Park, Free Face painting, DJ, Food.

Movie night on 7/22 had a big turn out; plenty of things to keep the kids busy before the movie; families had a great time.

New basketball backboards and hoops have been installed at Cas Landi Park.

UPCOMING KEY DATES – MORE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE:

8.5 ESOPUS REPAIR CAFE AT ASCENSION CHURCH HOSTED BY ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

8.9 ESOPUS SENIORS TRIP – ERIE CANAL CRUISE

8.12 ESOPUS FAMILY FUN FEST HOSTED BY PARKS & RECREATION 11AM-3PM

8.17 NEXT TOWN BOARD MEETING

9.3 ESOPUS HUDSON RIVER TUGFEST AT THE HUDSON HOUSE DISTILLERY 1PM-4PM

9.4 TOWN HALL CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY

9.7 NEXT TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP

ADJOURNMENT

SUPERVISOR FREER MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN KATHIE QUICK AT 8:33 PM. ALL MEMBERS PRESENT WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

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