

Switzkill Farm Board Meeting

Town of Berne
PO Box 57
Berne, NY 12023

Date: April 4, 2017

Board members present: Ted Kunker, Richard Ronconi, Mark Hohengasser, Charles Burgess, Lee Jones, Kathy Brown (secretary) and other interested citizens.

Ted Kunker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Review of Minutes: The minutes from March 7, 2016 were reviewed and approved.

Public Comment: Chris Rabes, a graduate from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, said he would like to volunteer at the property. Mr. Angard said that the new Thacher Park visitor center will have its grand opening on May 4th.

Correspondence: None

Old Business:

Town Board Update: Mr. Kunker reported that the Town has ordered 12 round tables and 120 chairs for the lodge. He also reported that a birthday party for approx. 100 people is on for 4/8 at the property.

Grants Committee: Mr. Ronconi said that he discussed the McHenry Award program with SUNY Cobleskill officials who were unaware of the program. They will consider it for next year. Mr. Hohengasser and Mr. Kunker will work on an application for a recreational trails grant.

Treasure's Report: Mr. Jones passed out a Switzkill Farm income/expense report (see attached). Propane and electric costs were discussed. He said breakdowns for separate buildings would be helpful. Mr. Jones said the Farm was -\$3558.46 overall, which could be offset from summer revenue.

Working Group on Land: Mr. Kunker reported that the County was up to the property trimming trees. Mr. Hohengasser said that he is working with the Albany County Community Service Board in getting people to help with SF related projects. He said he'll contact local schools and colleges for additional volunteers. Mr. Hohengasser said he plans on holding more frequent volunteer events (trail building) and needs additional crew leaders.

ADA Compliance Update: Mr. Kunker suggested to Mr. Hohengasser that he use weekend volunteers to help install the handicap ramp.

Calendar Update: Ms. Poole said she met with Town Clerk Anita Clayton and discussed changing the calendar format from a grid/calendar to a listing of events. And that private events be listed as such and not include personal information.

Friends of Switzkill Farm Update: Ms. Harlow will be able to begin work on the Friends group when school ends sometime in June.

New Business:

Audobon Membership: Tabled

Security System: Mr. Kunker said that monitoring is needed due to a few past incidents. The Town is looking into installing a system.

2017 Program Update: Mr. Kunker reported that Tim Albright was on hand to speak and give a demonstration on fruit tree pruning. He said there were approx. 35-40 people in attendance. Mr. Ronconi said there are ten blue-bird houses in storage that could be installed along a blue-bird hiking trail.

Blood-tracking dog event: April 27-30, approx. 150 people to be on the land with tracking dogs.

Mountain Bock: Mr. Burgess described the event as a celebration of spring and farming in the Hilltowns. Mountain bikes, locally brewed beer and goats will be featured. Tentatively scheduled for May 7th. A \$125 fee for usage/clean up will be requested.

Trail Map: Mr. Hohengasser passed out a new topographical trail map of SF (see attached). Mr. Jones moved to change the scale from feet to miles. Mr. Ronconi seconded and the motion carried, 6-0.

Forever Rural: Mr. Burgess told Board members that Forever Rural has on its books, \$1099 in donations for SF that can be used to offset future expenses.

At 8:16 p.m. Mr. Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hohengasser seconded and the motion passed, 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Hill Brown
Switzkill Farm Board Secretary