

Switzkill Farm Board Meeting

Town of Berne
PO Box 57
Berne, NY 12023

Date: May 2, 2017

Board members present: Ted Kunker, Richard Ronconi, Mark Hohengasser, Mark Sengenberger, Lee Jones, Diane Kingston, Karen Schimmer (Town Board Liaison), Kathy Brown (secretary) and other interested citizens.

Ted Kunker called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Review of Minutes: The minutes from March 7, 2016 were reviewed. Mr. Jones moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Sengenberger seconded, and the motion passed, 6-0.

Public Comment: Roger Chrysler commented on farm road condition and the recent blood tracking event.

Correspondence: none

Old Business:

Town Board Update: Ms. Schimmer reported that the tables and chairs arrived. She said traffic cones and parking signs have been ordered. She also passed out maps of the property which will be available to the public. Menus from local eateries will be made available at the lodge.

Grants Committee: Mr. Kunker said that several grants will be open soon and that the committee will be working on applications.

Treasure's Report: Mr. Jones passed out the monthly income/expense report. He had a question about when the Rigpa rent officially began. He requested separate power bills for each building.

Working Group on Land: Mr. Hohengasser reported on the Mountain Bock festival sponsored by the Carey Institute. He said he is working on opening up a link trail between SF and Cole Hill; a letter of agreement is needed. He will be creating a flyer regarding Saturday volunteer trail work. He passed out NYS Dept. of Health tick warning signs to be put up on land.

ADA Compliance Update: Mr. Sengenberger said the ramp still needs to be attached to the lodge. Timothy Lippert stated that he measured the width of Game Farm Rd. from County Route 1 to the lodge and in places it is too narrow (minimum 26' needed) and too steep in others.

Calendar Update: Ms. Poole said she released a new version of the calendar with a new page listing the events as either public or private.

New Business:

Donation: A wood chipper was donated to SF by Karen and Ray Schimmer.

Audobon International Membership: Ms. Schimmer said that two educational outreach projects will be emphasized; development of a nature trail (possibly a blue-bird walk) and creation of a wetland protection system or shoreline buffer.

Security: Mr. Kunker suggested that due to recent events at the lodge, anyone visiting will need to use a sign-in sheet upon entering and state reason for visit.

Bluebird Houses: Mr. Ronconi said that there are ten bluebird houses available for using on the property. He said he found wooden posts to use. There was discussion as to where to locate the houses on the property. Mr. Ronconi said he'll meet with the Millers about setting up a bluebird program for the public.

BioBlitz (June 10, 9-4): Ms. Schimmer reported that there will be eight categories of identification with experts leading each group of volunteers. T-shirts will be available to participants. Ms. Kingston will work with Karen on the design. HESO offered to have telescopes available after dark. Mr. Lippert offered to help with food.

Music Festival (July 22): Ms. Schimmer said that plans for MusicFest are moving forward. There are four bands scheduled to perform and there will be a children's tent with entertainment from 3-6 p.m. Vendors will now be allowed. Local brews will be available.

Solar Eclipse (August 21): Judy Petrisillo spoke to the Board about plans for a library sponsored event for the public to view the eclipse at SF.

Farm-to-Table: Mr. Lippert spoke to the Board about helping host some cooking classes at the lodge that focus on local food and drink.

HESO: Ron Barnell said that HESO is now incorporated with NY State and is beginning work on forming a 501-C3 and expanding donor/grant outreach. Dark Sky specs regarding lighting are being reviewed.

At 8:50 p.m. Mr. Sengenberger moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hohengasser seconded and the motion passed, 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Hill Brown
Switzkill Farm Board Secretary