

Switzkill Farm Board Meeting

Town of Berne
PO Box 57
Berne, NY 12023

Date: October 3, 2017

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

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

Review of Minutes: Minutes from the August 1, 2017 meeting were reviewed. Mr. Ronconi moved to approve the minutes. Mr. Jones seconded and the motion passed, 5-0.

Guests: Tom DiGiovanni, who constructed the large kiosk on the property, was on hand to discuss possible ways to relocate/preserve the kiosk.

Old Business:

Ms. Schimmer reported on the following:

- Fred "Pete" Bassler, a lifetime resident of Berne who had been involved with Switzkill Farm, passed away.
- The 2018 (provisional) Town Budget for Switzkill is \$9,830.00. A public hearing will be scheduled. She said that SF brought in approx. \$7800 in revenue for 2016.
- The orienteering group will be using the lodge on 10/7.
- Mr. O'Malley asked about expenditures for 2017. Ms. Schimmer stated that there were still funds remaining in the budget for SF.
- On 10/7 the great room will be dedicated and renamed The William J. Conboy II Great Room.
- A letter was received from Steve Rellis from the local observatory group stating that at a recent meeting it was decided that the group would pursue other locations for establishing an observatory. Dark Sky Certification for Switzkill will still be sought; Craig Angard said he'd coordinate with Steve.

Mr. Jones reported that income for September for rentals was \$550 and two lodge rentals for \$250 each. A wedding in August brought in \$500. The retreat house was rented for \$180.

Mr. Hohengasser said he will finish blowing out the trails on the outer loop before HarvestFest. Trails are blazed and marked. The local radio-controlled car group is interested in finding space on the property to hold activities; may present to the Board soon with ideas/plans.

Mr. Kunker reported on the following:

- Chance Townsend and Jeff Alexander will be improving the supports for the handicapped access ramp at the lodge.
- Discussed getting the portable toilets already on the property functioning. Sink holes/holding tanks would need to be created.
- An updated list of contacts for Board will be made for 2018.

Ms. Harlow updated the Board on the progress of the Friends of Switzkill Farm group: Renew the Earth is no longer able to offer use of their 501-C3 to Friends of Switzkill Farm; email letter regarding initial meeting on 10/14 will be going out to people who have expressed interest in group.

Mr. Ronconi reported on the program committee and said that he'd contacted BKW school administrators about using the SF facilities for field trips, programs and employee workshops. A class of 5th graders is coming up on the 13th to walk the land. The school's new agriculture program is interested. The school also received a bee-keeping

grant and possibly could locate it at SF. Mr. Townsend said that the tech/shop class at the school is looking for building projects including sheds, picnic tables, lean-to's which might work for SF. The Board discussed having a seat on the SF Board be filled with a student representative from the BKW high school.

New Business:

Mr. Hohengasser reported on the progress of HarvestFest plans.

Mr. Kunker reviewed the decision of the Board when it decided to not allow hunting on SF lands. Ms. Schimmer stated that according to the Town Code, within the boundaries of any town-owned parks, hunting is prohibited. In addition, according to the Town's insurance agency, if hunting were allowed, premiums would increase and the park would have to be closed to all other uses and activities other than hunting.

Mr. Jones moved to recommend to the Town Board the revised Switzkill Farm rules and regulations as proposed by Karen Schimmer with Mark Segenberger's changes included as an addendum and striking #6 and #20. Ms. Kingston seconded and the motion passed, 5-0.

Next meeting will be on November 7th.

At 9:15 p.m. Mr. Kunker adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Brown
Switzkill Farm Board Secretary