

**TOWN OF ESOPUS  
TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP  
February 5, 2026, 7:00 PM**

A regularly scheduled Town Board Workshop was held in person on February 5, 2026, at 1 Town Hall Way, Ulster Park. The following persons in attendance:

**Present:**

**Supervisor Roscoe Pecora**  
**Councilman Evelyn Clarke**  
**Councilman Jared Geuss**  
**Councilman Paul Brooks**  
**Councilman Stephanie Yeh**

**Recording Administrator:** Lisa Mance

**4 WAYS TO GIVE PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- 1.) **In-Person – Attend the Workshop**
- 2.) **Phone in:** Leave a voicemail on 845 331 0676 before the meeting
- 3.) **EMAIL – [assistant@esopus.com](mailto:assistant@esopus.com) with the subject line “Public Comment”**
- 4.) **MAIL – mail written comments to:**  
*Town of Esopus, P.O. Box 700*  
*Port Ewen, NY 12466*

**Supervisor Pecora called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.**

**Pledge to the flag**

**Public Comment**

**Allan Goldhammer – Esopus resident** – Provided a handout which reflected Resolution No. 4 of 2026 adopted by the New Paltz Village Board & Town Council supporting the Mandating End to Lawless Tactics (MELT) Act and urging the New York State Legislature and the Governor to enact legislation. Mr. Goldhammer stated that a plan had been leaked to the Washington Post which stated ICE facilities were planned around the Country with one proposed in Chester, New York. He asked that the Town Board create a Resolution or Letter of Support relative to four (4) pieces of legislation referenced in his handout which would separate New York State from ICE enforcement and a fifth bill proposed by the Governor. “Mandating End of Lawless Tactics (MELT) Act” - ICE Agents would have to be unmasked and have identification, “New York for All Act,” - prevents cooperation between New York State agencies and officers and ICE, “Dignity Not Detention Act,” – ends cooperation of New York State entities for housing detained immigrants (document/undocumented people) and “Access to Representation Act” – Takes effect in 5 years and would provide council to people held for immigration purposes, whether moved out of New York State or not who make less than twice the poverty line. A fifth bill was proposed by Governor

Hochul which would take effect 30 days after being made law and would be in effect for three (3) years.

The Town and Village of New Paltz passed a joint resolution, 16 Democratic Members of the Ulster County Legislature had written a letter in opposition to the Village of Chester, the Mayor of the Village of Chester was in opposition to the facility, the Town of Chester Supervisor opposed the facility and supports the MELT Act, the Rural Vibrant Ministry was opposed, Congressman Ryan, Senator Michelle Hinchey was opposed, Assemblyperson Shrestha was opposed, Orange County Supervisor was opposed, Ulster County Supervisor was opposed, and Kingston City School Board passed a Resolution in opposition to ICE. Mr. Goldhammer offered to provide an e-mail to any interested Board Members.

**Sharon Jones, N Broadway, Sleightsburgh** – She asked that she be involved in the Task Force created to develop a park access management plan. She had been involved from the beginning and wanted to follow it to the end. Ms. Jones stated that she had reached out to several people but had not received a response. Councilperson Geuss asked if she had reached out to him, and she responded that she had not, but really wanted to be on the Task Force. Councilperson Geuss stated that a couple of people had reached out to him. He had responded to them that he and Councilman Brooks were meeting to review the guidelines and may bring back information to them for input.

Ms. Jones stated that they had gone through it all with Board Members, the Hudson River Estuary Program, the DEC, the Sheriffs and right now, there was a guy on the new Task Force that had never been to a meeting and didn't know what was going on. Supervisor Pecora stated that no one had been "put on". Councilman Brooks stated that the meeting was an extension of the Town Board, would fall under the Open Meetings Law (he assumed), and that people could attend to observe. Councilman Geuss stated that moving forward, he would be meeting to iron out how to structure the first meeting, roll from there and keep her as well as others in the loop. He stated that the neighborhood would have a representative. Supervisor Pecora stated that parameters for the Task Force would be sent out to include two names which had been recommended but did not exclude anyone else and the Task Force would work on the details and should be open to everyone, especially the people of Sleightsburgh. Ms. Jones stated that currently it was nice, and Supervisor Pecora stated he would be visiting personally.

**Stephanie Lettieri – Clay Road** – Relative to previous comments by her neighbor (Esopus Resident), she was in opposition of the Board creating a resolution and asked if it was decided to create, that a public hearing be held for comments on the resolution.

Supervisor Pecora closed the Public Comment.

### **Supervisor's Office Accomplishments**

The Supervisor has created a Task Force for the Sleightsburgh Park access plan. The Task Force, led by Councilmen Geuss and Brooks, was to meet over the coming weeks to develop a park access plan, provide draft recommendations to the Town Board at the March 5, 2026, Workshop, and present a final plan at the March 19, 2026, Town Board meeting. Two (2) residents volunteered to participate. Supervisor Pecora was delegating to the Task Force Councilmen to ensure that everyone is heard.

Several state and local grants are being pursued, with the Hudson River Greenway Conservancy Trail Grant for Trail Rehabilitation or Improvement to be submitted by the due date. (Required Board authorization in support of the grant and others were listed later in the agenda under "3.")

**Updates**

**Audits** – Pursuant to the letter from the Town CPA Brian Pickard, the completion of the Justice Court finances and records, the Town Clerk, and the Tax Collector have been certified.

*rec'd  
1/20/26*

*Brian J. Pickard, CPA*

30 Grand Street, PO Box 1368, Kingston, NY 12402  
T (845) 339-9926 F (845)339-9928  
BPickardCPA@gmail.com

January 16, 2026

Mr. Roscoe Pecora, Supervisor  
Town of Esopus  
284 Broadway  
PO Box 700  
Port Ewen, NY 12466


Dear Supervisor Pecora,

I have conducted an audit of the cash accounts of the following town offices for the year ended December 31, 2025: Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Justice Court. My audit was conducted to render assurance that all cash receipts and disbursements were properly recorded by the individuals in these departments.

The accounts of each of the custodians of town money were found to be accurate. The town justices are current in their reporting to the Department of Motor Vehicles for the TSLE&D program and the handling of their cases.

Thanks to all individuals for their professionalism and cooperation during the audit. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

  
Brian J. Pickard, CPA

A “Resolution to Acknowledge the Audit of Court Finances and Records” had been submitted as follows:

**TOWN OF ESOPUS  
RESOLUTION TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE AUDIT OF COURT  
FINANCES AND RECORDS**

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Town Board of the Town of Esopus, in the County of Ulster, State of New York the following;

WHEREAS Section 2019-a of the Uniform Justice Court Act requires that the Town Justices annually provide their court finances and records to be audited by the Town auditing board;

WHEREAS such records be examined or audited and that fact be entered into the minutes of the Board’s proceedings to increase monitoring of the Town Board compliance with Section 2019-a;

WHEREAS, an audit of the Court finances and records for the year ended December 31, 2025 was performed by Brian J. Pickard, CPA, as part of the audit of the cash accounts,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Esopus Town Board acknowledges the required audit was conducted.

**Resolution offered by:                      Supervisor Roscoe Pecora**  
**Resolution seconded by:                  Councilman Paul Brooks**

**Supervisor Roscoe Pecora    AYE**  
**Councilman Evelyn Clarke    AYE**  
**Councilman Jared Geuss      AYE**  
**Councilman Paul Brooks      AYE**  
**Councilman Stephanie Yeh    AYE**

**Amended Resolution duly adopted.**

The Town’s CPA has also submitted a letter stating that he would not continue to provide accounting services to the Town of Esopus in 2026 and recommended that the Town search for a replacement CPA advisor and auditor prior to the budget season. Supervisor Pecora and Councilman Yeh would form a workstream to solicit proposals from local accounting firms; the process had already begun.

Councilman Clarke asked whether the previous Resolution required the Town Clerk and Town Tax Collector. Deputy Supervisor Harris stated that only the Town Court required a resolution.

**Special Prosecutor for the Esopus Justice Court** – advertisements were published in the Daily Freeman and circulated to the Ulster County Bar Association. Resumes and cover letters expressing interest from qualified candidates were due February 15, 2026, to be followed by candidate interviews with the Town Judge participating at the February 19, 2026 Town Board meeting.

**TEXTMYGOV app** – Had gone live on Friday, January 23, 2026.

Supervisor Pecora was continuing meetings with Department Heads for the Highway, Justice Department and Transfer Station.

**Ulster County Transportation Committee** – Required the Town of Esopus to renew its two-year term (shared with the Town of Rosendale) and the appointment of a proxy.

**SUPERVISOR PECORA MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT LAURA PETIT AS VOTING PROXY TO REPRESENT THE TOWN OF ESOPUS IN THE ABSENCE OF SUPERVISOR PECORA AT THE UCTC MEETINGS. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN GEUSS AND ALL COUNCILMEN VOTING IN FAVOR, PASSED 5-0.**

Councilman Brooks revisited the Town's audit, asking whether there was a cash-balance audit of several other agencies. Councilman Yeah referenced CPA Pickard's letter, which stated that cash accounts for the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, and Justice Court for the year ending December 31, 2025, were properly recorded.

Congressman Pat Ryan "CARES" Van would be at Esopus Town Hall on February 11, 2026, from 2-4 p.m.

BUFFALO (Apple TV series) will be filming areas in Esopus, including the Wurts Street Bridge, utilizing drones on January 30, 2026. Councilman Geuss inquired if the company had contacted the Town Clerk to obtain the appropriate permits. Supervisor Pecora stated he had contacted the Town Clerk's Office and the Building Department to address permitting. Councilman Geuss stated that usually the Town receives donations from filmmakers to offset inconveniences. Supervisor Pecora stated that drones were planned to be used.

**APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE SUPERVISOR:**

A cover letter and resume for Chris Marta were provided to the Town Board.

Supervisor Pecora read the Resolution as follows:

**Resolution Appointing Chris Marta  
as Senior Advisor to the Supervisor**

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Esopus is authorized under the **Code of the Town of Esopus** to appoint advisory positions to assist the Town Board and the Town Supervisor in the performance of their duties; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board seeks to enhance its ability to review town policies, procedures, systems, and operational processes in support of effective governance and oversight; and

WHEREAS, the Senior Advisor role shall serve strictly in an advisory capacity and the responsibilities of this role may include, as assigned or authorized by the Town Supervisor and/or the Town Board, review and evaluation of town policies, procedures, systems, and workflows; identification of inefficiencies, redundancies, procedural gaps, and potential areas of risk; assessment of opportunities for operational improvement, modernization, and automation; and support for improved coordination and communication across town departments and provide analysis, summaries, and non-binding recommendations to support the Supervisor and/or the Town Board in carrying out their responsibilities under the Code of the Town of Esopus; and

WHEREAS, the Senior Advisor shall have no access to personnel files, confidential employee records, or private citizen data, including Social Security numbers or other protected personal information, and Chris Marta has signed an “Affidavit of Confidentiality”, and he affirms that he will recuse himself from any project or portion thereof that involves access to confidential or protected information; and

WHEREAS, the Senior Advisor shall have no authority over town personnel, budgets, contracting, or the implementation of any recommendations, and shall not exercise any authority reserved to the Town Board or Town Supervisor under the Code of the Town of Esopus; and

WHEREAS, Chris Marta brings extensive professional experience in organizational review, systems analysis, policy evaluation, process improvement, and risk management; and

WHEREAS, Chris Marta has offered to serve the Town of Esopus in a volunteer, advisory capacity, without compensation; and

WHEREAS, Chris Marta has confirmed he has read the Town Code of Esopus, Chapter 32-26, the “Code of Ethics,” which defines ethical conduct for officers/employees, and rules regarding investments or interests in contracts, and he confirms that he will comply with the provisions of that Code; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Board of the Town of Esopus hereby appoints **Chris Marta** as **Senior Advisor to the Supervisor**, effective upon adoption of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Senior Advisor shall serve at the pleasure of the Supervisor, without compensation or benefit of any kind, and that this volunteer appointment may be modified or terminated by resolution of the Town Board at any time.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Resolution offered by: Supervisor Roscoe Pecora**  
**Resolution seconded by: Councilman Stephanie Yeh**

Discussion:

Councilman Clarke stated that she did not understand the need for the particular appointment, not that she was questioning the Applicant’s extensive background but wasn’t sure there was a need. Supervisor Pecora stated that during Supervisor Harris’s term, there were four individuals in her office, with an individual working on the Comprehensive Plan. Other Supervisors had utilized services of this nature to assist, and Supervisor Pecora felt the request was not out of the norm.

Deputy Supervisor Harris stated that she’d had a paid Community Outreach Coordinator when she served as Supervisor. Councilman Brooks stated that Chris had been a tremendous asset to date. Councilman Clarke responded that she was not questioning his abilities but felt it was all to run interference. She read the portion of the Resolution stating the responsibilities of the position. Councilman Clarke stated if we were hiring someone to do this, that we would pay someone to do that work., but this is work the supervisor and board should be doing. Supervisor Pecora responded that he was doing the type of work and could use the technical expertise that Mr. Marta could provide to the administration. Councilman Clarke countered that a volunteer could help the Supervisor but didn’t understand oversight over the Town offices. Supervisor Pecora stated that oversight came from the Supervisor’s office. Chairman Clarke responded that it made Chris an “arm” of the Supervisor, so when he went into an office, he was not going as a volunteer but rather representing the Supervisor. Supervisor Pecora stated that he was going in as a volunteer in a very defined capacity and stated that Councilman Clarke’s comments were not true.

Councilman Geuss stated that he had been willing to appoint Mr. Marta as Chairman of the Planning Board and still would. The issue he had was similar to Councilman Clarke’s but he had seen too many organizations where this became an “arm” and there was no control on actual “headhunting sort of say, as in oh I need to find out about this, go find me everything about it”; and it didn’t sit right with him. Continue stating that an advisor usually doesn’t conduct the information gathering and is normally focused strictly on policy or strictly inner-office. It was way too broad, and Councilman Geuss had seen it used in other organizations as well, and he would be a “no.”

**Supervisor Roscoe Pecora AYE**  
**Councilman Evelyn Clarke NO**  
**Councilman Jared Geuss NO**  
**Councilman Paul Brooks AYE**  
**Councilman Stephanie Yeh AYE**

**Resolution duly adopted 3-2.**

**BOARD RESOLUTIONS AUTHORIZATION SUPPORT FOR FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GRANTS:**

Councilman Brooks questioned the dollar numbers attached to the proposals, and they were not in the agenda. He asked if the material had been made available to the Public or had it been attached to the agenda online, stating that the Public had the right to know the amount of money being discussed and whether matching funds were involved. Supervisor Pecora referenced a March 25, 2025, letter from DASNY in the packets. The grant was \$50,900.00 to reimburse monies already in an account. Chairman Brooks stated if amounts had been provided to the Public and made available fine, but if not, they should be included in the agenda items. Supervisor Pecora asked if Councilman Brooks wanted to make an amendment. Councilman Brooks responded that in the future, the numbers should be made available to the Public and whether a local match was involved, etc. Supervisor Pecora stated staff would be duly noted.

**AGREEMENT WITH DASNY FOR REHABILITATION OF RIVERVIEW CEMETERY INCLUDING RESTORATION OF FALLEN STONES AND FOUNDATIONS AS WELL AS LANDSCAPING AND ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

Councilman Clarke noted the letter of March 25, 2025, which outlined documentation that needed to be completed and returned to DASNY, and asked if the timeline had passed. Confidential Asst. Petit stated that a 30-day extension had been granted which was valid until February 28, 2026. Robert Pereira stated the Riverview Cemetery restoration had started four years ago. He had secured money through Senator Michelle Hinchey's office. The Grant would relieve taxpayers from the burden of the cemetery restoration. Councilman Clarke confirmed that the amount of the Grant was \$50,900.00 and the Town needed to expend the money first to be reimbursed. Robert Pereira confirmed that all the money needed to be spent on the cemetery to receive cash back. Supervisor Pecora stated there were funds available. Councilman Yeh stated she had spoken with the Town's bookkeeper to confirm that there was money (\$58,000.00) in an escrow account related to Riverview that could be used for cemetery projects in advance of reimbursement. Robert added that attention may need to be given to damaged headstones in the cemetery given that it was a focal point coming into the Town and he offered his assistance. Councilman Geuss thanked Robert for all his efforts. He added that an item he didn't see was if any services could be "in kind" that could be billed and not "out of pocket" such as utilizing Parks and Rec or Highway Department which could be billed back. Currently, the request needed to be put through to obtain reimbursement from the Grant money and moving forward, decide what aspects of the cemetery needed attention. Supervisor Pecora noted that the matter had been pending for some time and wanted to move on to the opportunity.

Supervisor Pecora read the Resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF ESOPUS TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT  
WITH THE DORMITORY AUTHORITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK (DASNY) FOR  
RESTORATION WORK AT RIVERVIEW CEMETERY**

WHEREAS, the Town of Esopus is the owner and steward of Riverview Cemetery, a historic municipal cemetery requiring restoration and rehabilitation; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Esopus seeks to undertake a project for the Rehabilitation of Riverview Cemetery, including but not limited to the restoration of fallen and damaged headstones, repair and reconstruction of foundations, landscaping improvements, and roadway improvements within the cemetery grounds; and

WHEREAS, the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) provides project management, design, and construction services for municipal capital improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, DASNY has offered to assist the Town of Esopus with the planning, coordination, and implementation of the Riverview Cemetery restoration project up to \$50,000 pursuant to a Grant Disbursement Agreement (GDA) and related contractual documents; and

WHEREAS, the Town understands that invoices for eligible project expenses may be submitted for reimbursement upon execution of the GDA and in accordance with DASNY and grant requirements, with reimbursements processed through DASNY's accounts payable department; and

WHEREAS, the Town further understands that the GDA shall expire three (3) years from the date of execution, during which time the project must be completed;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Esopus hereby authorizes the Town to enter into a contract with the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) for restoration and rehabilitation work at Riverview Cemetery in an amount reimbursable up to \$50,000, including restoration of fallen stones and foundations, landscaping improvements, and roadway improvements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to execute the Grant Disbursement Agreement and any and all related contracts, amendments, certifications, and documents necessary to effectuate this project, subject to review by the Town Attorney; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board acknowledges that project invoices may be submitted for reimbursement following execution of the GDA and in accordance with DASNY procedures and grant requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board acknowledges that the GDA shall remain in effect for a period of three (3) years from the date of execution, during which time the project must be completed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is authorized and directed to transmit certified copies of this resolution to DASNY and any other agencies or parties as necessary.

**Resolution offered by: Supervisor Roscoe Pecora**  
**Resolution seconded by: Councilman Jared Geuss**

**Supervisor Roscoe Pecora AYE**  
**Councilman Evelyn Clarke AYE**  
**Councilman Jared Geuss AYE**  
**Councilman Paul Brooks AYE**  
**Councilman Stephanie Yeh AYE**

**Resolution duly adopted 5-0.**

**HUDSON RIVER CONSERVANCY TRAIL GRANT FOR TRAIL REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO FREER PARK**

Supervisor Pecora read the Resolution as follows:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION BY THE TOWN OF ESOPUS TO THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY GREENWAY / NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA TRAIL GRANT PROGRAM FOR TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS AT FREER PARK, PORT EWEN, NY**

WHEREAS, the Town of Esopus owns and maintains Freer Park, located in the Hamlet of Port Ewen, which provides public access to the Hudson River waterfront and serves as an important recreational, scenic, and historic resource for Town residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, Freer Park is a key component of the Town’s waterfront trail system and supports walking, passive recreation, and community use consistent with the goals of the Hudson River Valley Greenway and the Hudson River National Heritage Area; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Esopus has identified the need for trail maintenance and upgrades at Freer Park, including the construction of a public restroom facility and pavilion to improve accessibility, visitor comfort, safety, and long-term use of the park; and

WHEREAS, the Hudson River Valley Greenway / National Heritage Area Trail Grant Program provides funding assistance for projects that enhance trail systems, waterfront access, and recreational infrastructure along the Hudson River corridor; and

WHEREAS, the proposed project is consistent with the 2019 Town of Esopus Comprehensive Plan, the 2019 Esopus Riverfront Access and Connections Study, and the 2026 Update to the 1987 Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for the Town of Esopus, and the mission of the Hudson River Valley Greenway to promote sustainable development, recreation, and historic preservation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Esopus hereby authorizes and supports the submission of a grant application to the Hudson River Valley Greenway / National

Heritage Area Trail Grant Program for trail maintenance and facility improvements at Freer Park, including the construction of a bathroom and pavilion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to execute and submit all applications, agreements, certifications, and documents necessary to complete the grant application process and, if awarded, to accept and administer grant funds on behalf of the Town of Esopus; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Resolution offered by: Supervisor Roscoe Pecora**  
**Resolution seconded by: Councilman Paul Brooks**

Councilman Brooks raised a question relative to the money available and if there was a local match. Supervisor Pecora stated that recreational funds were available to support. Confidential Secretary confirmed that the amount was \$36,650.00 to improve the bathrooms and put up one of the pavilions donated during Supervisor Harris administration, and “in-kind” services are recognized. Councilman Yeh confirmed that the Grant was dollar-for-dollar and would cover 50%. The balance in the Recreational Escrow was \$277,000.00. Councilman Brooks noted that the proposed 2026 Local Waterfront Revitalization Program had not been adopted and asked if that would have an impact. Deputy Supervisor Harris stated that the SEQRA process for the adoption of the LWRP would commence at the next Town Board meeting. Chairman Clarke asked if there was a list of improvements. Supervisor Pecora stated that Buildings Superintendent Dan Vedder was compiling a list which included a bathroom (not including Ross Park), the grant applied to waterway properties specifically.

**Supervisor Roscoe Pecora AYE**  
**Councilman Evelyn Clarke AYE**  
**Councilman Jared Geuss AYE**  
**Councilman Paul Brooks AYE**  
**Councilman Stephanie Yeh AYE**

**Resolution was duly adopted 5-0.**

Supervisor Pecora stated that other necessary improvements through grants were being sought, including two pavilions at the Highway garage, which via obtaining grants, would help supplement escrow. Councilman Clarke asked to see the list being prepared.

Supervisor Pecora read the Resolution as follows:

**Resolution Authorizing Application for NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP)**  
**Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program**

WHEREAS, the Town of Esopus owns and maintains municipal park and recreation facilities that serve the residents of the Town and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has announced the second round of the Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant (MPR) Program, with grant awards anticipated in 2026; and

WHEREAS, the MPR Grant Program may fund up to ninety percent (90%) of the total eligible project costs, requiring a ten percent (10%) local matching share, and all grant funds are administered on a reimbursement basis; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Esopus desires to apply for said funding to support improvements to a Town-owned park or recreation facility in furtherance of public health, safety, recreation, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board understands that acceptance of any grant award obligates the Town to comply with all applicable state requirements, including long-term public use and maintenance of the project site.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Esopus hereby authorizes the submission of an application to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for funding under the Municipal Parks and Recreation Grant Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Supervisor is hereby authorized to sign and submit all applications, agreements, certifications, and related documents required in connection with this grant application and, if awarded, to execute any grant contracts on behalf of the Town, subject to Town Board approval; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board acknowledges that grant funds will be provided on a reimbursement basis and agrees that the Town of Esopus will advance project costs as required to complete the project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

**Resolution offered by: Supervisor Roscoe Pecora**  
**Resolution seconded by: Councilman Jared Geuss**

Councilman Geuss stated that the reason for seeking grants through the recreation fund were available through projects coming into the Town, thanking developers such as Paul Page. Recreation fee escrow required by the Planning Board are deposited for parks and recreation. Supervisor Pecora noted that Paul Page had submitted a \$250,000.00 check.

Councilman Brooks asked for total cost and total match. Confidential Secretary stated she had been working with Dan Vedder who was providing playground selections in the \$150,000 – \$200,000 dollar range and the grant submission was due on Monday.

<b>Supervisor Roscoe Pecora</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Evelyn Clarke</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Jared Geuss</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Paul Brooks</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Councilman Stephanie Yeh</b>	<b>AYE</b>

**Resolution duly adopted 5-0.**

**2026 ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR THE CARE AND BOARDING OF CANINES BETWEEN ULSTER COUNTY SPCA AND TOWN OF ESOPUS**

**COUNCILMAN YEH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2026 ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR THE CARE AND BOARDING OF CANINES BETWEEN ULSTER COUNTY SPCA AND TOWN OF ESOPUS. (THE FEES WERE THE SAME AS 2025), SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN CLARKE, AND ALL VOTING IN FAVOR, THE MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

**AUTHORIZATION TO RENEW THE PORT EWEN WATER TREATMENT PLANT (PEWTP) INTAKE EASEMENT WITH THE NYS OFFICE OF GENERAL SERVICES DIVISION OF STATE ASSET AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

Supervisor Pecora stated the Easement Renewal Affidavit had been reviewed by Town Attorney Paul Kellar and guaranteed the continued use of the PEWTP intake to draw water from the Hudson River for purification and treatment for a term of 25 years. The Affidavit certified that no substantive changes have taken place or are contemplated, except for maintenance, on easement parcel "C" of OGS map #1747, which is State-owned land.

**COUNCILMAN GEUSS MADE A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE SUPERVISOR TO SIGN THE INTAKE EASEMENT RENEWAL AFFIDAVIT. SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN CLARKE; ALL VOTING IN FAVOR; THE MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

Supervisor Pecora stated that the Town had been without a contract since 2017 and this needed to be in order.

**2026 ANNUAL AGREEMENT FOR SPECIAL COUNSEL LEGAL SERVICES RELATED TO MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Victoria Polidoro of Rodenhausen, Chale & Polidoro LLP had indicated that although the Town Board had approved use of the firm at its organizational meeting, an updated Retainer Agreement was required.

**SUPERVISOR PECORA MADE A MOTION TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERVISOR TO SIGN THE 2026 ANNUAL AGREEMENT FOR SPECIAL COUNSEL LEGAL SERVICES RELATED TO MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. MOTION SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN GEUSS AND ALL COUNCILMEN VOTING IN FAVOR, THE MOTION PASSED 5-0.**

**UPDATE ON TECHNOLOGY ISSUES AND 2026 AGREEMENT FOR SPECIAL COUNSEL LEGAL AND OTHER MUNICIPAL SERVICES – WHITEMAN, OSTERMAN & HANNA LLP**

Supervisor Pecora noted that after multiple meetings and communications with National IT, there was still limited information about the chain of custody of Town-owned data. While National IT is developing a detailed timeline that traces custody, the Supervisor's office has:

- i. Held a meeting with the attorney for the Town. He advised that specialized legal counsel in technology and cyber security be retained, in particular, recommending Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna LLP.
- ii. Consulted with the NYS Comptroller's office to seek input. They provided useful guidance on data back up and IT best practices.
- iii. Identified an opportunity for all Town Board Members to attend a cyber security training course sponsored by NYMIR (Municipal Insurance Reciprocal) on either February 26 or March 26 at 9: a.m.

**SUPERVISOR PECORA MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE LEGAL RETAINER, SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN PAUL BROOKS.**

Discussion:

Councilman Clarke stated the letter stated the request was in connection with a "data breach" and that there had not been a data breach, and she felt legal fees should not be paid, nothing had been stolen. Supervisor Pecora disagreed. Councilman Clarke stated fees for legal services should not be paid for something that did not exist.

Councilman Geuss felt the Agreement was vague given it stated it was for legal services in connection with the data breach. Supervisor Pecora added that they were "flagged" with specialty in areas. Councilman Geuss stated if the NYS Comptroller's office had provided useful guidance, he didn't understand where the Town was going by hiring these attorneys. He didn't feel lawyers were needed to make a policy and he was looking to see what the attorneys were going to be used for. As stated at the last meeting, he asked what was being looked for that they didn't have – no one has come out with anything exact except the term "data." Supervisor Pecora replied that emails going back to the Harris and last administrations were out in cyberworld somewhere. Senior Advisor Marta had previously presented issues and they were not satisfied with the responses provided by National IT. The Town Attorney felt it was advisable to have someone with expertise in this field. They were trying to get what the Town was entitled to as a customer. Supervisor Pecora stated that did not make accusations regarding a "data breach" and was part of what could be included. Councilman Geuss stated that if WOH were being used for a specific engagement, it should be in connection with obtaining information from National in a timely, organized manner rather than in regard to a "breach." Supervisor Pecora asked if Councilman Geuss would like to make an amendment to rephrase the retainer responsibilities.

Councilman Clarke still disagreed with it. Councilman Brooks stated that a cyber security policy should exist and there were policies from the State Comptroller's office and there was a need for a policy developed by someone with the expertise. Councilman Clarke asked if he was suggesting to pay legal services to develop cyber security policy. She stated that the Town pays National approximately \$7,500.00 per year for services, were services being provided and the Board should meet with National to discuss. Supervisor Pecora replied that he had spoken with National to discuss and was not satisfied with the responses received. Councilman Clarke stated the Town Board should speak to National before approving the retainer. Supervisor Pecora disagreed and felt the process was appropriate and would have something to provide to the Board at a future date.

Councilman Yeh confirmed that the Board was not asking WOH to develop policy but was being retained to recover data not provided by National. She agreed the language should be more specific and Supervisor Pecora welcomed an amendment – changing “retain” to “recover.” The question was if the Retainer could be amended. Councilman Geuss asked if the lawyers were being retained to direct National to provide services that should have been contractually provided.

Councilman Yeh confirmed the Town Lawyer had advised engaging special counsel. Councilman Clarke stated that it was because the Town lawyer had been told there was a data breach and there was no reason why the Town Board could not meet with the Town lawyer. Supervisor Pecora stated he felt the need to move forward and had provided what was missing, stating it was prudent to advise. Councilman Geuss did not understand what could possibly be in a previous supervisor’s email that was prohibiting this administration from moving forward on what it would like to do. Councilman Clarke agreed stating the information went back two administrations and why was it needed to do Supervisor’s job. Deputy Supervisor Harris stated that it was required by Law for the Town to have all data which had not been received in over a month and that no timeline had been provided by National indicating when the data could be received. She stated they were trying to de-escalate the situation, the Town Attorney has declined to be involved, and highly recommended retaining a cybersecurity expert to retrieve data and explore refining new policies moving forward (which the Town did not have). Councilman Yeh stated that the requirement wasn’t for the Supervisor to do his job, it was public property and was all Town property. Deputy Supervisor Harris stated that the data cannot simply be deleted for a supervisor, secretary, and the entire prior administration. There was a document retention law stating how long the intellectual property and data needed to be on record before it could be destroyed. Although the Town Supervisor, Deputy Town Supervisor, and Attorney had discussions with National, Councilman Clarke wanted a discussion with National. Councilman Brooks supported getting the lawyer to have a discussion with National and report to the Town Board.

**\*\*\* NO VOTE WAS TAKEN – SUBJECT TABLED FOR FUTURE MEETING**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**SUPERVISOR ROSCOE PECORA MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:25 PM, AND COUNCILMAN STEPHANIE YEH SECONDED THE MOTION: ALL MEMBERS WERE IN FAVOR: MOTION CARRIED**

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Mance*