

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS  
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES

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Date: July 24, 2017  
Time: 7:00pm  
Place: Town Hall  
Egremont

Present at the table were Chairman Bruce Turner, Vice-Chairman McGurn, Selectman Brazie.

Others in attendance: See attached sign in sheet.

Pledge of allegiance was recited.

It was announced that the meeting is video and audio recorded.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the July 10 meeting were accepted with one update.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

At 7:04pm the Board called to order the hearing for pole location requested by National Grid and Verizon on Boice Road. National Grid rep Stephen Hayward explained that a new pole will be needed across Boice Road from the current pole in front of 92 Boice Road. The existing pole needs the support from the new pole. The Board approved the pole location unanimously. Hearing was closed at 7:07pm.

Nat Yohalem, New Marlborough Selectman, attended to urge the Board to attend the shared services meetings that are taking place regularly at the Sheffield Town Hall. The upcoming meeting scheduled for September 7 at 6:30m will include discussion of a shared Conservation Agent, a shared HR person, the need to get increased payments for chapter and exempt land, and, very important, shared police and fire services, equipment and personnel. Chairman Turner will plan to attend. Egremont's Police and Fire Chief will be asked to attend as well.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board unanimously voted to determine that there was no conflict in Tom Gilbert serving on the Open Space and Recreation Bylaw Committee.

The Board will not schedule a fall special town meeting at this time as requested by the Planning Board. The request was to make amendments to the Shared Driveway and the Solar Overlay district zoning bylaws. Consideration in scheduling a town meeting may take place in the fall or early winter.

The Board voted, with Bruce Turner recusing, to accept the sole bid to purchase the surplus dump truck and the surplus dump body received from Turner Farms in the amounts of \$1515 and \$505 respectively.

The Board voted unanimously to accept the low bids received for the resurfacing of Ox Bow Road and Baldwin Hill West and the reclamation of portions of both of those roads. All bids received are on file.

The Board unanimously approved BSC Group filing an application for a MassWorks grant up to

\$1mil for repairs on Creamery Road and possibly Boice Road. There is no cost to the Town to file and the grant award is inclusive of all costs including engineering. BSC Group will complete the application at no charge to the Town.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

The Board voted unanimously to approve the Police Chief contract as drafted.

The Board noted the change in date for the town's birthday celebration of Sunday, August 27 at 12:30pm instead of Saturday, August 26. The event will be opened by the Board with a welcoming statement, followed by recognition of town officials who opted out of town service during the spring election/appointment cycle. Town department's are being asked to set up areas in which they can share with residents what they do for the town. The Fire Department and Police Department will have information, games and demonstrations.

The Board agreed to take no action on a new proposal from CHA Engineering for preliminary engineering on Mount Washington Road. This will be taken up again after the Road Superintendent has reported his road work plan and discussed the use of Chapter 90 funds for road repairs.

#### FOLLOW UPS:

The Board reviewed the drafted Grant of Location permit for Fiber Connect. The draft will be forwarded to Adam Chait for his review before the Board signs it.

#### SELECTMEN'S ITEMS:

The Board will meet on August 7 and 28.

The Board will take no action at this time on a request to issue a statement against the Berkshire County Education Task Forces report that is recommending the consolidation of all Berkshire County school districts into one district.

There is a need for an additional approximately \$70,000 for the repairs needed at the South Egremont School House. All are being asked to think about some private means of funding that the town may obtain. An application for emergency funds from Mass Historic Commission is being considered.

The Board approved the hanging of the banner for the Mount Washington Fair on the Village Green again.

#### SCHEDULED ISSUES:

The Board held an open question/answer session with Anna Lucey of Charter/Spectrum and Peter Larkin of MBI regarding Broadband and Cable service for Egremont.

Anna Lucey reported that the grant agreement was signed with MBI on July 5. Charter's Operations Department has already begun the roll out process. Contractors will begin the walk out process doing pole and house counts and determining where lines will be ariel and where they will be underground. This will be followed by ride outs with National Grid and Verizon for "pole talk". Design of the system will begin following this. This will take 2 - 3 months. The Franchise agreement must be in place at this point. MBI is going to help to expedite the licensing process but National Grid and Verizon are in control of this and it can take up to 6 months. Once the licensing is in place Charter can begin construction. Weather will determine when and how quickly this will move along. Underground work cannot be done if the ground is frozen. All homes in Egremont could be lite by approximately December, 2018. Charter may lite as they go depending on how the pole licenses come in. In underground installations they will follow the utility lines. They will install on private roads. Their

minimum coverage will be 96% of the town. They may likely exceed that as they won't just do a portion of the a road and leave the other residents without access. They may also exceed that if the Town is willing to pay for the additional costs. The problem areas will be the "hard" to reach homes. Density, new development and take rates can be a part of the cable franchise license, though this license does not regulate broadband or phone, it only regulates TV service. Charter has a corporate policy to not leave a town behind if a region has service upgrades so Egremont will have all the current services that the surrounding region has. Charter's pricing is nationwide and they have no take rate requirement. The length of a house from the road determines the cost for hook up. The MBI grant agreement covers up to \$3,000 in cost for hook ups. This can be negotiated as a part of the cable franchise license. Charter has no contracts for length of service and no requirement for what services residents can obtain from them. Charter will only wire to a home if the resident is subscribing and then the attachment is not removed unless requested and paid for by the home owner. Massachusetts has rate basic tier regulation, but not for higher tiers. Charter offers a rate for low income families and seniors.

The Cable Franchise license is separate from the Broadband agreement. As the town has received a waiver from the posting requirements this will be a streamlined process. Charter has to file a basic form 100 with a permit fee of \$100 with the Town before the license negotiations can begin. They have already begun that process. It is possible the 4 towns could negotiate together but they each have to have their own license agreement and if one town is not ready it would hold up the others. Egremont already has a drafted Cable Franchise License which will be sent to Anna Lucey.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Mary Brazie,  
Office Administrator

minutes.17/jul24

*The recording of the minutes is on record at the Town Hall for 90 days. Anyone who wishes to may obtain a copy or listen to the recording at Town Hall. Attachments are on file at Town Hall.*