

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: January 4, 2022
Time: 10:00am
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present at the meeting in person were Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen and Board member Mary Brazie and for part of the meeting Steve Cohen.

Others present via zoom: Chairman George McGurn, Juliette Haas, Chuck Ogden, Joyce Frater, Mary McGurn, Steve Goodman, Peg McDonough, Eileen Vining, Marj Wexler, James Warwick, Suzanne Taylor, Bruce Bernstein, Paul Psaila, Richard Allen, Richard Slutsky, Rolfe Tessem, Elia Delmolino, Ronnie Sacco, Daniel Blitzer, 201-532-0012.

The meeting was audio and video recorded.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the December 21 were accepted with minor edits.

SCHEDULES ISSUES:

The Tax Classification hearing has been postponed until, tentatively, January 12, 2022.

Ambulance Squad representative Caleb Stone was again called to work so unable to attend.

NEW BUSINESS:

James Warwick introduced himself and expressed his interest in being appointed to serve on the Alford-Egremont Cultural Council. The Board voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Warwick to the Council.

The Bylaw Review Committee is seeking guidance on the Alarm General Bylaw. The Committee is trying to get a clear understanding of why a permit is needed, what the fees were established for, how the data is used, and if proposing mandating installation of a Knox box would be appropriate. Selectboard member Brazie explained that the intent was to have contact information for those people with alarms as the town's police and fire department's respond and most times the residence is empty when they do respond. The purpose of the Knox box is not to allow access to disarm an alarm but to prevent emergency personnel from having to possibly break in doors or windows to gain access. The Board agreed it would not be in favor of mandatory lock boxes, and that the town will continue with the alarm permit bylaw as it is written.

Juliette Haas presented a revised Recycled Product Procurement Policy to update the one drafted in 1998. The policy is required as one of two criteria for participation in the Recycling

Dividends Program (RDP) Updates. The Town has a very high RDP score for a small town as it has many important recycling programs. The Board wasn't clear on how the revised policy compared to the old and wanted legal counsel to review the new policy so no action was taken until that review occurs.

OLD BUSINESS:

Legal Counsel has been asked to review the current policy regarding the use of Legal Counsel.

The Board's vote to close the French Park Dog Park to non-Egremonter residents for 30 days was not implemented. Vice-Chairman Vermeulen has reached out to users who feel they can come together to resolve issues at the dog park. They have asked for time to present a proposal to the Board. The Board voted unanimously to rescind its vote of December 21, to revisit the issue on January 18 and to require the users group to have a written proposal to the Board by January 13.

The Board approved an edit to the Performance Review time line which moved the Selectboard's interaction to a later date. Personnel Director Cara Becker will be asked to look at the time line and see if matches reality.

GRANTS:

The Board discussed the awarded Community Health Inclusion Index grant. The grant of \$10,000 will pay for a consultant to study access to Prospect Lake for the mobility challenged. A committee was appointed to include volunteers Peg McDonough, Bruce Bernstein, Joyce Frater, Donna Bersch-Gordon and David Seligman. The group will only consider the Department of Conservation and Recreation land and the town owned slip of land for access to the lake.

An update on consultants for the Master Plan and Open Space & Recreation Plan updates is expected at the Board's next meeting.

Peg McDonough presented an updated spreadsheet of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) expenditures and proposed expenditures to date.

Rolfe Tessem explained the proposal for free public Wi-Fi in the two villages that is projected to cost about \$45,000. A grant will be applied for through the Municipal Fiber Grant Program, and would also be eligible for ARPA funding. Fiber Connect would do the build out, which will require easements from commercial property owners, but charge no monthly fee for service, though there will be some minor maintenance costs. Service will be limited to a time period and include advertising.

COVID-19:

The Board voted unanimously to close Town Hall to the public for at least the next 30 days. Other town protocols will stay the same.

FOLLOW UPS/UPDATES:

Elia Delmolino, Greenagers, talked with the Board about Greenagers taking on season stewardship of the French Park trails. He was asked to confer with Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Tom Reynolds for details on what is needed.

Highway Superintendent Jim Noe has expressed concern over an area of Mount Washington Road where the bank is very steep down the brook. The Road seems to be sinking and water is not shedding from the surface, making the roadway very dangerous. As well, the bank and underlayment of the road seems to be deteriorating. The engineers on the reconstruction project were asked to look at it and agreed that some temporary repairs should be made. The engineer is seeking grant funds to be used for these repairs.

SELECTMEN ITEMS:

The next Selectboard meeting will be January 18, 2022 at 10am.

At 11:58am the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session as allowed by MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, Paragraph 3 for strategy with respect to litigation and Paragraph 2 for strategy with respect to Collective Bargaining. The Board will not return to open session.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.22/jan4

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.