

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECTBOARD
MINUTES

Date: February 7, 2023
Time: 10:00 AM
Place: Via Zoom Meeting & Town Hall
Egremont

Present at the meeting in person were Selectboard Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie, Grant Administrator Peg McDonough, Housing Committee Co-Chair Judith Goodman, Finance Committee Chair Laura Allen.

Present via zoom were Chuck Ogden, Alice Boyd, Mary McGurn, Dan Blitzter, Bruce Kafenbaum, Dawn Lemon, James DiPisa, Caleb Chao.

The meeting was audio and video recorded.

MINUTES;

The minutes of the January 24 and January 31 meetings were accepted with minor edits.

Selectboard member Brazie proposed, and the Chair agreed, a change in the order of the agenda to take New Business items prior to the Scheduled Issue discussion with the Housing Committee, so those attending for what should be quick new business items could leave the meeting if they so wished.

NEW BUSINESS:

After a short interview, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Caleb Chao to the French Park Dog Park Committee. The Board will ask the Committee to make an update to the Board in the near future.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the discharge of a Housing Rehab loan under the Community Development Block Grant to a home owner who has an extreme health condition. The guidance for the program allows forgiveness for cause.

The Board voted unanimously to declare a snow and ice emergency as allowed by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 31D. Discuss ensued regarding the logistics of this process.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

Housing Committee Co-Chair Judith Goodman presented the Housing Committee's recommendation that the Selectboard adopt the October 8, 2021 SK Design Group Feasibility Study as a Basis for Workforce Housing. Judith gave a short explanation as to the difference between workforce vs affordable housing, which is basically the percentage of median household income used to calculate the applicable required income level. An expression of interest for funding to complete further studies and possible additional infrastructure needs on the town's 6.1 acre parcel has been submitted under the One Stop For Growth program. The request for proposals issued for the site garnered no proposals, but the Committee did receive a letter from several different agencies urging the Town to complete the infrastructure on the site. The Board was concerned that adopting the SK Design Group study, which says that up to 20 units could be constructed on the site, would be interpreted as the plan for construction of 20 units which the Selectboard rejects as too many. Also of concern was the fact that there is not currently a town meeting vote in place to do anything with the site. Housing Committee member Bruce Kaufenbaum spoke supporting the town's adoption of the study as the basis as it did not mean the Town

would be constructing 20 units. Judith agreed to go back to the Committee with the Board's concerns. Grant Administrator Peg McDonough suggested that the Town wait for the comments on the expression of interest to the One Stop Program and also the outcome of any recommendations that the update to the Comprehensive Plan regarding housing. The Housing Committee was urged to participate in the Comprehensive Plan Update meetings. Vice-chairman Vermeulen urged the Housing Committee to look at ADU's and other parcels for housing.

GRANTS:

There were no updated.

FOLLOW UPS:

The Board will discuss both the Fire Department Recruitment and Mount Washington Fire Services with the Fire Chief at its meeting on February 14.

The Southern Berkshire Regional School Superintendent is conducting an open discussion meeting to talk about the proposed merger of the two local school districts.

SELECTBOARD:

Vice-Chair Vermuelen has spoke with Senator Paul Mark about visiting Egremont. She will draft a letter of invitation.

The Board will meet in regular session on February 21 at 10am following a 9:30am closed session for strategy with respect to Police Union Collective Bargaining.

Meeting adjourned at 11:19am.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.23/feb7

The recording of the minutes is posted on the Town's web page at www.egremont-ma.gov for 90 days. Any attachments noted are on file at Town Hall.