

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: March 1, 2022
Time: 10:00am
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present in-person were Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie, and for part of the meeting Council on Aging member Georgette Kinney and Council on Aging Administrative Assistant Peg Muskrat.

Others participating via zoom: Mary McGurn, Ronnie Sacco, Eileen Vining, Peg McDonough, Rolfe Tessem and for part of the meeting Wylie Goodman, Chuck Ogden.

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

MINUTES:

The minutes of the February 9, February 11, February 14, February 15 meetings were accepted with minor edits.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

Wylie Goodman, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, presented the Board with information on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 5-year plan. Ms. Goodman shared her screen so attendees could follow a power point presentation(Attached). The focus is on an assessment of economic resilience and issues that came to light during the COVID pandemic. She asked that anyone with input regarding experiences over the last 2 years email her directly. Vice-Chairman Vermeulen noted that Egremont has the best broadband around. She asked if there was an understanding of the demarkation between North, South and Central Berkshire County. BRPC is aware of the differences but the federal government lumps the Berkshire town's together. Ms. Goodman urged the Board to be specific about the distinct differences in their input. Selectboard member Brazie suggested that Ms. Goodman speak with ARPA Administrator Peg McDonough who has been gathering data on needs over the last two years. Ms. Goodman said that BRPC could help with ARPA administration. Chairman McGurn strongly urged Ms. Goodman to speak with the Southern Berkshire project manager for the School District Planning Committee Jake Eberwein.

COVID-19:

The Board voted unanimously to re-open town buildings to the public effective immediately. The Board of Health is meeting on March 3 to possibly vote to rescind the mask directive.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board expressed its confidence in the Police Chief and agreed that there were no changes needed in the Chief's employment agreement that is expiring June 30, 2022.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the request of the Friends of Prospect Lake to hold a craft fair, in conjunction with the Alford-Egremont Cultural Council, at French Park on October 8, 2022.

The Board accepted, with regrets, the resignation of Brittany Walsh from her position as administrative assistant to the Police Chief and will wish her luck in her full-time position doing the same for another area Police Department.

OLD BUSINESS:

Georgette Kinney and Peg Muskrat, representing the Council on Aging, updated the Board on plans for recognition of Council on Aging members and others, as well as the kiosks for distribution of Be Safe Be Seen vests. The Council is proposing a wall of recognition in Town Hall for COA members who served a minimum of 10 years. These people would be honored at a luncheon and approved by the Selectboard. Proposing 10 benches and trees to be placed with plaques honoring those who have passed who should be recongized for their contribution to the Town. Trees to be planted at Town Hall, Library and French Park. Native trees that won't grow too large. Funds to be raised through fund raisers. New benches would also be funded through fund raising. It was suggested that recognition could also be made at the annual Town Birthday celebration. Greenagers have offered to built at least two, and possibly 4, kiosks for the vests. Final details and costs are still being gathered. The Council is also looking at grant funding for an accessible walking path at French Park and have begun to look at Senior play grounds or outdoor exercise parks.

Ronnie Sacco reported that the French Park Dog Park Committee has met and will be contacting the former organizers for the bank account information for donations. She asked about how to add members, which would be via a written request to the Selectboard, but she was cautioned to not overload the Committee with members. Their proposed new signage will be sent to legal counsel. The Committee is working on the web page information and may have an idea about a donation box on site. The last on site donation box was stolen.

GRANTS:

The Board announced it is the recipient of a third Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$1.3million jointly with the Town's of Great Barrington and Monterey. This will be the second round that the Town will administer.

The cost to build out Broadband to the Water Plant on Mount Washington Road is estimated at less than \$2,000. This small amount is more appropriate as an ARPA expenditure then a grant application through the Municipal Fiber Program.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The Board will hold a second joint budget meeting with the Finance Committee on March 9 at 1:30pm. The Board's next regular meeting will be March 15 at 10:00am.

Meeting adjourned at 11:17am.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.22/mar1

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.