

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS  
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES

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Date: March 21, 2023  
Time: 10:00am  
Place: Via Zoom Meeting  
Egremont

Present in-person were Selectboard Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Selectboard member Mary Brazie, Finance Committee Laura Allen, and for parts of the meeting Road Superintendent James Noe and Tree Warden Jim Olmsted.  
Others participating via zoom: Mary McGurn, Finance Committee member Dan Blitzer, Eileen Vining, Housing Committee member Doug Mishkin, Board of Health Chairman Chuck Ogden, Green Committee member Marj Wexler, Grant Administrator Peg McDonough, and for parts of the meeting Rural Resource Recovery representatives Lily Timpane and Gary Pratt, and Housing Committee member Judith Goodman.

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

MINUTES:

- The minutes of the February 14 meeting were accepted as presented.
- The minutes of the executive session meeting of March 7 were accepted as presented.
- The minutes of the open session meeting of March 7 were accepted as edited.

NEW BUSINESS:

Six bids were received for both the Mount Washington Road paving project and the Spring Paving on Various Town Roads project. Both projects will take place in May. Road Superintendent James Noe said that the Mount Washington paving will be from the intersection of Route 41 to house #44 just before the new bridge. The various roads to be paved are Hickory Hill, a very small section of Rowe Road, Baldwin Hill East from Route 71 to the first farm field, Pumpkin Hollow from Route 71 to just before the bridge, Jug End Road from the Sheffield town line to Haupt Tree Company. The Board voted unanimously to accept the low bid from Best Paving & Seal Coat who bid \$104,700 for Mount Washington Road and \$232,750 for Spring Paving on various town roads.

The board voted unanimously to nominate Carla Turner to another one-year term as the Inspector of Animals.

The Board talked about possible non-budgetary warrant articles that might appear on the warrant for annual town meeting. The Housing Committee has considered requesting that the Community Preservation Act (CPA) be placed before the voters gain, as well as the formation of a Housing Trust. It was noted that the deadline for articles for the annual town meeting was March 17 and no request was received. Housing Committee co-chair Doug Mishkin explained that the Committee has not actively discussed this, though he and co-chair Judith Goodman strongly favor both. Organizations such as Construct have noted that adoption of the CPA is seen as a clear marker of a town's commitment to housing. It was agreed that these two items might be considered for a Special Town Meeting in late summer or early fall. Finance Committee Chair Laura Allen does not support the adoption of CPA, which she considers an additional tax on properties.

Grant Administrator Peg McDonough updated the meeting on the grant being proposed under the One Stop For Growth program to drill test wells to assure an appropriate and safe water supply on the town's parcel. Doug noted that the Committee is actively considering housing other than on the town parcel.

Lily Timpane and Gary Pratt of the Rural Resource Recover(RRR) & South County Recovery Center attended to discuss their request that the Town dedicate all of its Opioid Settlement Funds to their organization. Mr. Pratt gave very clear information on what RRR does and its benefits to the community. The Town is expected to receive around \$11,000 over the next 15 year and has about \$2,000 in hand right now. Currently town's either have to accept the funds as general fund revenue or establish special stabilization funds, vote to deposit all funds in the special stabilization fund then vote the funds for a purpose decided to Opioid recovery, etc. RRR has asked all 14 towns in the South Berkshire area to dedicate their funds to their organization which treats Opioid addiction and other Opioid related issues. The Board asked for a budget from RRR which Mr. Pratt said he would get. The Board voted unanimously to ask the voters to dedicate the Town's Opioid Settlement Funds to the Rural Resource Recovery & South County Recovery Center and thanked the center for what it is doing.

Marj Wexler presented the request from the Green Committee to set up a box outside Town Hall to collect regular household batteries for recycling. The cost is \$72 for a 43 lbs box. The ends of the batteries have to be covered with tape for fire prevention. The Board expressed concern over the fire risk and having the box at Town Hall. The Board voted unanimously to support the project and leave in the hands of the Committee and others to iron out the logistics and to report back with the specifics.

In May the Board will appoint the Tree Warden after a two-year process in which the voters approved this action twice. Tree Warden Jim Olmsted and Road Superintendent Jim Noe reported that the Berkshire County Bid Group, which Egremont belongs to, has added tree services to its list of items it bids out for all participating Berkshire County towns. Egremont has been unable to garner interest in its local tree work by other than one company. The Board questioned Jim Olmsted about his interaction with other town department heads and residents. Final approval for the job description was given by the Board. The Board unanimously to not post either the newly appointed Town Clerk or Tree Wardens position for the upcoming terms of office which are 1-year and 3-years respectively.

Both Jim Noe and Jim Olmsted commented on the massive amount of tree damage done during the recent snow storm. It will take some time to clean up the road sides.

#### GRANTS:

Peg McDonough reported that she is working on both the submission of the grant for the maintenance building through the One Stop For Growth program and the grant through the Municipal Vulnerability Program action grant, both due June 1.

#### FOLLOW UPS:

The Board discussed again the scope of work for a possible contract with Municipal Resources, Inc. It was eventually agreed that a strategic plan specific to Egremont might be more appropriate even though the cost is about \$10,000 versus \$7,500. The Board wants a report that will give a foundation for the future as well as regionalization.

Participation at the Regional School District Planning Board envisioning sessions has been low.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The Board will wrap up its budget deliberations on March 28 so that at the next regular Selectboard meeting on April 4 a draft warrant can be reviewed.

Chairman McGurn asked that an after action review of the March 13 & 14 storm and the unacceptable response from the Emergency Management Team be put on the agenda for the April 4 meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:36pm.

Mary Brazie,  
Office Administrator

minutes.23/mar21

*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.*