

**Minutes of Meeting of 8/7/23
Egremont Bylaw Review Committee via Zoom**

In Attendance:

Mary McGurn (MM), Chairwoman
Steve Goodman (SG), Secretary/Treasurer
Eileen Vining (EV)
Robert Sandor (RS)
Richard Allen (RA).

Chairwoman MM convened the meeting at 4:05 pm.

RS then presented his review of the complete draft of the Bylaws with respect to the use of gender-neutral terms. He suggested two changes: In Section 1.2.2, he felt that the term “Selectboard” should be two words – “Select Board”. And In Section 5.1, he proposed changing “his or her” to “their”. After discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt these suggestions.

Discussion then turned to the suggestion of EV that the bylaws be reordered into groups of related topics. She argued that the current bylaws lacked any sort of structure, merely being added in chronological order, and scattering certain content which logically was related to other content. After discussion, it was determined that MM would ask the Select Board if it wished the Committee to undertake such a reorganization.

In connection with issues of style, such as how to refer to Massachusetts General Law, MM volunteered to prepare a suggested style sheet for the next meeting.

The Committee then turned to the question of whether a separate glossary at the beginning of the Bylaws would be helpful in understanding them, or whether terms should be defined in those Sections where they are used. SG indicated that he wished to propose several additional definitions, which he would circulate to the Committee. It was decided to defer a decision on the question of a separate glossary until the Committee had proceeded further with its review.

EV’s compilation of the various fines specified in the Bylaws was then discussed. It was agreed that the compilation would be reformatted and presented to the Select Board to see if the amounts of the fines and the circumstances in which they could be levied were satisfactory to them.

The Committee then addressed the questions initially raised by EV regarding the current version of Bylaw 9 (formerly Bylaw 10). EV reported that the minutes relating to the adoption of that version did not reflect any specifics regarding the discussion or how the final text was arrived at. SG pointed out that there was new language in the Bylaw which he had no recollection of discussing. It was agreed that EV would propose revisions to Bylaw 9 for the next meeting.

The Committee then discussed revisions to Bylaws 2 and 3 prompted by an RA proposal regarding how vacancies on boards and committees should be filled. The Committee asked SG to present the draft text incorporating these revisions at the next meeting.

The Committee then turned its attention to the means for presenting the changes to the Bylaws to residents of the Town. The Committee agreed that some form of written explanation of the changes would need to be circulated. After discussion of various possible formats, SG offered to prepare a draft of the Animal Control Bylaw (Bylaw 13) reflecting (1) the existing bylaw (Bylaw 14), (2) the proposed revised Bylaw 12 and (3) the Committees explanation for the proposed changes.

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would take place at 4 pm on September 14.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 pm.

SG