

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: October 23, 2017
Time: 7:00pm
Place: Town Hall
Egremont

Present at the table were Chairman Bruce Turner, Vice-Chairman McGurn, Selectman Brazie.

Others in attendance: Corely Wiley(Berkshire Record), Alice Boyd, Jonathan Hankin, Robin Goldberg, Bruce Bernstein, Mary McGurn, Susan Bachelder, Kevin Zurrin, Jim Noe, Marj Wexler, Juliette Haas, Sue Funk, Tom Reynolds, Bill Tighe, Francne Groener, Peg Muskrat, Keila Sheldon, Ed McCormack, Steve Agar, Elliot Snyder, Don Pulfer, Hans Carlson, Tyler Race, Marcella Bush, Paul & Brooke Storti, Dave Campbell, Joe Schneider, Jim Golden, Tom Sierau, and David Seligman.

The Board voted to join with Monterey and Sandisfield in an application to the Mass Department of Housing and Community Development for funding under the Housing Rehabilitation Program for low to moderate income, year-round residents. Alice Boyd of Baily Boyd Associates presented the program details to the board and will be coordinating the efforts for all three towns at no cost to the Towns. If funding is obtained 5 to 7 homeowners in each town will receive up to \$40,000 in a no-interest, deferred, forgivable loan to make necessary repairs and code upgrades to their homes. Late this fall or early this winter Bailey Boyd Associates will conduct a windshield survey of homes in Egremont to determine homes that, from the outside, appear to be in need of repairs. As well some residents should expect to receive a pre-application form to express your interest in the program.

(Alice Boyd left the meeting)

Pledge of allegiance was recited.

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

MINUTES:

The minutes of the October 10 meeting were accepted as presented.

SCHEDULES ISSUES:

All-Boards presentations:

Robin Goldberg, Board of Assessors: The Board will need to increase its training budget as Florence Browner is expected to not run for office again. The tax assessments records will be transfer from CAMA to Tyler. There have been 59 sales to date which is an increase over prior years.

Robin Goldberg, Cultural Council: The council awarded \$9,700 in grants this past year.

Bruce Bernstein, Council on Aging: The council has hired an Administrative Assistant to help with outreach. It has become apparent that elders ability to hear when on the phone is a problem. The council continues its luncheons and educational presentation, and its annual celebration of those turning 90. Transportation for the elderly in Egremont is also a problem. The council participates in the AGE Triad and the Be Seen Be Safe campaign.

Jim Noe, Highway Department: The Department has received its new dump truck, one-ton truck and tractor. There are 11 roads in Egremont needing upgrades at an approximate cost of \$1.3 million. The Town did not get awarded a MassWorks grant for Creamery Road, but was successful in getting Mount Washington Road on the tip list. It was noted that the state only gives Egremont about \$155,000 per year for road upgrades.

Don Pulfer, Planning Board: The Planning Board will be conducting a questionnaire to determine the zoning needs and priorities of the town. The Board is rewriting the Village District bylaw to simplify it.

Henry Granger & Dave Campbell, Cemetery: The Town owns 3 Cemeteries that require regular maintenance. Clean up of the property line around Town House Hill cemetery has been taking place. There have been several sales of lots over the past year.

Susan Bachelder, Historical Commission: The commission is in need of members. The commission has been working with the group looking to re-purpose the South Egremont Church. The North Egremont Church gave the commission its archives. The Kellogg center is being sold and will hopefully go to another conservancy agency. The school house foundation project is ongoing. The town's annual birthday celebration will be the last weekend of August.

Marcella Bush, School Committee: The school has recently adopted policy regarding concussions. There are two new ad hoc committees: Curriculum review and consolidations of districts. Marcella noted that she is not in favor of consolidation. She noted that enrollment continues to decline. When asked she said that instead of voc ed they were talking about internships for students.

Sue Funk, Treasurer/Collector: Tax Collections are good. As the state CAMA program is closing the Collectors have to convert to another program. The Tyler program that the Assessors are converting to is not available to Collectors.

Francine Groener, Library: Attendance is up from 345 last year to 362 to date this year. The trustees thanked Bud Candee for his building of the little library's that were placed at Kenvers and the Town Hall. A \$500 donation was given to upgrade the children's center. There are 2 public computers and a reading nook. There are special children's programs and game programs. The Friends of the Library group is reforming.

Tom Reynolds, Buildings & Grounds Superintendent: Paint, repairs, mowing, improvements have kept the department busy. Plans are being formulated for the conversion of the Annex building to garage space to possibly move this department from Town House Hill Road to the Town Hall complex. Plans are being formulated to upgrade the bathrooms at Town Hall. As well the water softener in town hall needs to be upgraded to accommodate the water that the Police Facility uses.

Juliette Haas, Board of Health: The Board is very busy, and very dedicated.

Juliette Haas, Sustainability Coordinator: Under the Green Communities grant furnaces in some town buildings were upgraded, solar panels were placed on the Police Station, and other energy efficiency measures were implemented in town buildings. The total grant was \$353,000 and has netted about \$35,000 a year in savings to the town. The Board is currently negotiating a Solar purchase power agreement that will reduce the town's electric charges by 20%.

Juliette Haas, Town Clerk: Reported that Egremont has, for the first time, over 1000 registered voters. 86% of the voters turned out for the past presidential election. That meant that counters were counting votes until 2:30am. Because of that she will be asking the Town to purchase an electronic tabulator at an approximate cost of \$7,000.

Bill Tighe, Human Resources: There has been little turnover in the past year, and a few new hires. The compensation committee continues to meet each year to consider employee wage increases. Hazard Communication and OSHA training has taken place. Hazardous materials have been documented. He will be implementing an emergency action plan and conducting fire extinguisher training. He recently helped to update the ADA check lists for the South Egremont School House and the Police Station.

Tyler Race, Police Department: 66 arrests so far this year, 50% higher than last year. The department is pro-active and no longer just reactive. Officer Carlson applied for, and the department was awarded, a grant to purchase a portable Breathalyzer unit. Officer's Carlson and Kemp are both field training officers. All officers are current on their training. The black cruiser needs to be replaced in the coming year.

Ed McCormack, Emergency Management: All town officials have to take NIMS training. The Emergency Management team will be conducting training and the testing can be done on line. The team meets monthly and the director meets with MEMA quarterly. Two members attend the SBREPC meetings each month. The team also conducts regular drills.

Joe Schneider, Fire Department: The new air packs are in use. The department hired out its hose testing as, with 2 miles of hose, it was very difficult for the volunteers to do it. The department is aging and is in need of younger recruits. Pump testing took place in Great Barrington. 160 calls to date for the department, numerous others just for the Chief. Some members have been taking part in ropes rescue training. A skid unit to tow behind the Mule was purchased by the department. A First Responders class will be starting soon. Fire prevention education is ongoing. The Department will be asking for a new rescue truck to replace the 2008 one. The old one will be re-purposed to a brush truck.

Steve Agar, Water Department: The department is currently billing for 60% of the water that flows into the plant. Several leaks in service lines have been repaired. The final paperwork was submitted to USDA for the engineering grant. An engineer will be looking at the crack in the retaining wall at the plant. DEP is requiring a corrosion control program at the plant which the department will ask the town for funding for. Operator Jim Olmsted is retiring in August of 2018. The department is looking at a service to operating the plant instead of hiring a new employee. Steve suggested a committee be formed to analyze this option. The department, with the approval of the Selectmen, will be allowing New England Service Company to offer the water users an insurance policy, at the homeowners expense, to pay for repairs to service lines.

David Seligman, Conservation Commission: The Commission has been very busy over the past year. Much of Egremont is in wetlands so many projects have to go before the commission. Most notable in the recent past and/or ongoing are the Mount Washington Road bridge, Catamount pond expansion, and the Prospect Lake dam repair. The commission has recently lost some long time members, but recently has been able to gain new members. In the very near future, this fall or in the spring, Prospect Lake will be drawn down 4' in order to repair the spillway dam. Many projects have required additional engineering help.

Elliott Snyder, Zoning Board of Appeals: Members are Jim Lamme, Elliott Krancer, and , alternate member is Susan Bachedler. The ZBA's job is to balance the interest of the applicant with the interest of the abutters. When the judge ordered a remand of the Catamount junk violation hearing the board decided to not pursue the case further. A recent request for a variance at 64 Main Street was protracted and complicated. The variance was granted to the sideline set backs to allow residential use.

Marj Wexler, Green Committee: The April road side clean up continues to be a popular and successful event. The Committee recently collected \$800 in returnables at the Transfer Station. To keep the program going, the town is looking for a different non-profit organization to collect the returnables each month. Corinna Barnard has begun a monthly article in *The Edge*, written each month by a different Green Committee member about the towns green efforts.

(Many town officials left the meeting.)

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board approved the request of a town employee to carry over 5 vacation days and to get paid for 5 vacation days.

The Board, after some discussion, accepted the resignation of Tyler Race as the Police Chief, with regrets, respect and a thank you. The Board will meet in closed session on Wednesday, October 25 at 6pm to conduct non-union contract negotiations for someone to fill in while the hiring process begins.

FOLLOW UPS:

Technology Committee members will meet with Charter to begin negotiations for the cable franchise license on November 10 at 12:30pm.

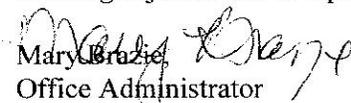
The Board has received the draft Solar Power Purchase Agreement for review.

The School House foundation project will go out to bid again soon. Susan Bachelder reported that about \$7000 has been raised towards the \$20,000 needed to date.

SELECTMEN'S ITEMS:

The Board will meet on Tuesday, November 7 and Monday, November 20.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.


Mary Brazier
Office Administrator

minutes.18/oct23

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.