

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: November 5, 2019
Time: 6:00pm
Place: Town Hall
Egremont

Present at the table were Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie.

Others in attendance: Marj Wexler, Mary McGurn, Evan Triantafilidis(Berkshire Record), Bruce Bernstein, Pat Konecky, Juliette Haas, Eileen Vining, David Seligman, Richard Allen, Ben Barrett, Jim Lamme.

It was announced that the meeting is video and audio recorded by the Board and the Berkshire Record. A portion of the meeting was recorded by Ben Barrett.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the October 22 and October 29 meeting minutes were accepted with edits. The minutes of the October 31 meeting will be considered at the next meeting.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

Richard Allen was interviewed as a candidate for the vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Juliette Haas, Sustainability Coodinate, reported on the past years measures to reduce energy. There was a 23% reduction in energy used in town buildings from the baseline in 2015, but an increase form the baseline in vehicle energy usage which is attributed to that fact that the former Police Chief used a police vehicle that got only 17 miles per gallon and drove 100 miles each in his commute to work and back. Water Department energy usage was also down. She would like see the town move towards more energy efficient vehicles but understood that might not be possible. The Town Hall uses a large amount of electricity as it fully electric. This years Green Communities Grant application will be for a mini-split HVAC system at Town Hall.

In other business Juliette Haas reported on the new Materials Recycling Facility contract that will take effect on July 1, 2020. For the past 30 years town's were not charged any tipping or processing fees by MRF. The new contract has a \$93.50 processing fee per ton, with a 2.5% increase each year for 5 years. This will cost Egremont around \$13,000 in the first year. There seem to be no other viable options. Chairman McGurn and Vice-Chairman Vermeulen will both attend upcoming meetings to gather more information about this new contract. There is the possibility that grant funds obtained from DEP over the last two years that were being saved to pay for a new compactor could be used to lessen the tax impact in the first year of the contract.

Bruce Bernstein, David Seligman and Pat Konecky, Trails & Greenways Committee, updated the Board on the efforts of both the Egremont Trails & Greenways Committee and the Great Barrington Committee to convert the old Trolley Line, which was abandoned in 1914, into trails for hikers and bikers. It turns out the line is mostly owned by two property owners not several as was originally thought. Support is being give to the project by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Berkshire Natural Resources, The Greenagers, and the people who built the bike path in Great Barrington. There

may be funds available through the High Road grant program. The Board went on record as supporting a proposal by the Egremont Trails and Greenways Committee to create a recreational trail along the former Egremont/Great Barrington trolley line. The Board can see the value of developing an additional means of travel between our two towns, particularly one that is relatively flat and accessible by people of all ages.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board has been advised by Legal Counsel to not take action on the Host Community Agreement for Sparkboro Corp in light of the Federal Government issuing subpoenas to several town's who have issued HCA's, Lee and Great Barrington among them. The Board put the issue on "temporary hiatus" and will include it on the November 19 agenda.

The Selectboard and the Conservation Commission have defined a path forward and agreed that the past is the past and to create a better future. The joint meeting was productive, amicable and collaborative.

Motion was made, seconded, and after discussion, voted unanimously to appoint Cathy Fracasse as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals and to appoint Richard Allen as an alternate member. No action was taken on the re-appointment of James Lamme to the ZBA.

FOLLOW UPS/UPDATES:

There has been no movement forward on the broadband issue in the last two weeks. It was confirmed that payments made by MBI in arrears will go directly to Fiber Connect. Most residents on Hickory Hill and Brookvale/Hilltop have responded confirming the wish to poles to be installed for an aerial build out.

The Mount Washington 911 numbering system and maps have been approved by all the Emergency Personnel as well as the E911 center. The installation of the new number will begin immediately.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The Treasurer has asked the Board for its opinion on borrowing schedules for the Mount Washington Road engineering project and the Fire Rescue Truck. Bond Counsel is proposing a series of 10 one-year temporary state house notes for the \$735,500 engineering borrowing, with an interested rate of 2.10% currently and estimated to increase to 4% over the 10 years. Bond Counsel is proposing a three-year fixed-rate permanent state house loan note for the \$200,000 Fire Rescue Truck borrowing with an interest rate of 2.80%. The Board approved both options.

The Town has received a request from Mountain Water systems, the firm that runs Sheffield's Water Department, asking the Town to adopt zoning overlay districts protecting the Zone II water resource areas that include Green River. The Board will say thanks but no thanks as other protections are in place.

Susan Bachelder is asking for a letter of support to obtain two signs designating the historic districts to be placed on the Village Green and French Park. The Board felt that it would be more appropriate to replace the signs that are along the roadside as they are aging and some are in need of repair or replacement. She will be asked to amend her request for the signs.

Vice-Chair Vermeulen has asked Tom Reynolds to remove the Anderson Window stickers from the Annex windows.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34pm.

Mary Brazie
Office Administrator

minutes.20/nov5

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.