

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: January 21, 2020
Time: 6:05pm
Place: Town Hall
Egremont

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

Others in attendance: See attached sign attendance sheet.

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

MINUTES:

The minutes of the January 6 meeting were accepted as presented.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

At 6:07pm the hearing for the CDBG Housing Rehab grant was called to order. Alice Boyd, of Bailey Boyd Associates, Inc., read the hearing notice and explained the program, which gives \$40,000 grants to homeowners for necessary home repairs. Egremont participated in the program in FY 2019 and for FY 2020 will be the lead of the three town's, Egremont, Great Barrington and Sandisfield. The Board voted unanimously to apply for the \$1,300,000 grant and participate in the program. The grant application is due March 6, 2020. The hearing was closed at 6:15pm

ROUTE 23/41 RECONSTRUCTION:

James Barnack, Jacobs Engineering, presented a power point presentation (copy attached), in which he spelled out the goals of MassDOT in the rebuild of Route 23/41, the changes being made, and the design, engineering and construction schedule. Three new crosswalks will be added with Beacon lighting and the two current crosswalks will be moved slightly, sidewalks will be continuous on both sides of the road, with the exceptions of entry ways to some of the businesses on the south side, from Route 41 to Creamery Road. The raised median at Route 41 will be removed. A raised median will be installed as a gateway at the Route 23/41 intersection. A painted median is proposed as a gateway approaching Creamery Road but some residents feel this is not an adequate speed deterrent and asked that a raised median be considered. There is the need for temporary easements throughout the project area, and a few permanent easements for utility pole placement. The current schedule for this \$4,400,000 project has the public hearing being held in the spring of 2020, the 75% engineering design being completed in the fall of 2020 and construction beginning in the spring of 2024 and lasting 10 months.

One area of concern to the Town are the area in front of Mom's Restaurant. The current plan shows a 50' entry, then a 6" raised sidewalk with crosswalk entry, then another 50' entry. Though the measurements of the parking area meet the turn radius for large box trucks, there is still concern that this will limit available parking and thus have an adverse economic impact on the Restaurant and the store. A second option would be for diagonal, marked parking. The Town will think about this and let MassDOT know in the near future.

Another is the gateway entry coming from Great Barrington. The plan currently shows a painted median. The concern is that this will not slow traffic enough, especially with the new crosswalk at the

Cemetery. MassDOT agreed to re-evaluate installation of a raised median there.

A small section of raised sidewalk directly in front of the entry to the Old Mill will be re-evaluated by MassDOT.

Barbara Kalish asked that the MassDOT consider the sense of entry and sense of place that the historic Town center is and use some form of traffic calming other than painting on asphalt. She also expressed concerns over maintenance.

Alexis Fakelman asked about different materials and textures for the crosswalks such as brick and raised speed tables, and using benches, trash cans, and lights as traffic calming measures. It was also suggested that heavy timber be used for guard rails. MassDOT said they can consider colored concrete or brick imprint on crosswalks but cannot use brick pavers. In Lenox those were installed and paid for by the Town and they pay for the hefty maintenance on them. In Lee MassDOT used brick imprint which is low maintenance and lasts along time. Guard rails have to be installed as per federal highway requirements which precludes heavy timber.

MassDOT will maintain the roadway and mow/trim roadsides two times per year. At this time they will not remove snow & ice from the sidewalks. There will be no additional signage giving warning of raised medians ahead. In the raised median at Route 41, a group may adopt the area to plant shrubs, etc and take care of them. Egremont Garden Club has interest in this and would like to be able to remove their plantings at the Creamery/Rte 23 green to possibly put in the new median at Route 41.

There is concern that gateway painted median to the village at Creamery Road, coming out Great Barrington, needs more, such as a raised median, to slow down traffic. The slope of the road is being changed and the intersection of Creamery Road is being made into a T. MassDOT said they will re-evaluate having a raised median on the corner before Creamery Road. There is a culvert under the road there that may cause an issue.

When asked about reducing the bike lane from 5' to 4', MassDOT responded that it is state policy and the town would need to have a very valid reason to apply for an exception.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board voted unanimously to approve expenditures in excess of the Snow & Ice removal expenses budget as per MGL, Chapter 44, Section 31D. The current budget of \$70,000 has been expended.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the request of the Friends of Prospect Lake to hold its annual tag sale in the Town Hall parking lot on August 22 & 23, 2020.

It was noted that, even though MassDOT, announced earlier in the meeting that the Rte 23/41 reconstruction project is planned for the spring of 2024, the project is listed on the TIP list for 2022.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Materials Recycling Facility contract is on hold and the contract signed by the Board is void, while a clause is added that payment is pending Town Meeting approval. As well there are three large town's that are considering not signing, which would leave the tonnage under what the contractor is seeking.

The Board voted unanimously to appoint Max Kolb to the Water Commission. Selectmen Brazie expressed her desire that either Chairman McGurn or Vice-Chairman Vermeulen speak with Steve Agar. Chairman McGurn agreed to do so.

Legal Counsel Jeremia Pollard advised the board maintain the hiatus on retail recreational marijuana host community agreements (HCA) and that he would send language Lee urged while considering HCA's for cultivation. The board should know more for its February 4 meeting.

FOLLOW UPS/UPDATES:

Vice-Chairman Vermeulen reported that the negotiating team agreed that Fiber Connect (FC) should sign the town agreement now, regardless of the status of the MBI contract with FC, since the town agreement includes language that the agreement will be null and void should MBI and FC not come to an agreement.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.20/jan21

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.