

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: April 14, 2020
Time: 6:00pm
Place: Town Hall
Egremont

Present in a zoom meeting were Selectboard Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Board member Mary Brazie.

Others in attendance: Mary McGurn, Evan Triantafilidis(Berkshire Record), Morris Partee, Lannon Killea, Juliette Haas, and Bruce Bernstein.

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

MINUTES:

The minute of the March 31 and April 7, 2020 meetings were accepted with edits.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board discussed with Bruce Bernstein, Chairman of the Council on Aging, the Community Transit Grant Program which might allow the Town to operate its own transportation program for its elders. The council has been unhappy with the operations of the Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Corporation. Several Town officials will participate in the online grant training opportunities. A position entitled Mobility Manager is recommended. This will be a volunteer position that will support Bruce Bernstein and Peg Muskrat, COA Administrator, in the efforts to make sure Egremont's seniors have transportation.

OLD BUSINESS:

Some members of the Board are reluctant to establish a new date for Town Meeting and Election while the COVID-19 situation is still changing. It was agreed after some debate that Town Clerk Juliette Haas will present the Board with a contingency plan for town election on April 21 at the Board's 10am meeting. This plan is to include, at a minimum, time frames for registration and mail in voting, location, absentee voting, and conducting the election with the current order of no more than 10 people congregating together.

There are currently zero confirmed active cases of COVID-19 in Egremont.

Bruce Bernstein will contact someone who knows about the Working Forests Initiative and ask him to join a future meeting.

FOLLOW-UPS/UPDATES:

MassDOT is moving forward with the Rte 23/41 project and hopes to have a hearing in late June or early July. Remote meetings are being considered as reported by Vice-Chairwoman Vermeulen via a communication with MassDOT's Tom Currier.

The School Consolidation Planning Committee is meeting April 26 via zoom for the second time.

There are currently 135 residents of Egremont not connected to Fiber Connect broadband. The Board recently sent letters to Fiber Connect and MBI strongly urging a resolution to the negotiations so

that Fiber Connect can move forward with the build out. Lannon Killea asked the Board if he could contact un-served residents and start a calling campaign to MBI in hopes that the squeaky wheel will get action. The Board approved his doing so. No movement has been made on the agreement with Holyoke Gas & Electric.

Morriss Partee reported that Emerald River LLC has proceeded with negotiations on a location and has contact the Town's Legal Counsel to move forward with negotiations on a host community agreement.

Construct's June Wolfe has reported that their focus has had to change to rental protection during the COVID-19 pandemic. As all courts in Massachusetts are closed during the pandemic, the land court case is delayed indefinitely. The Town should begin to look for creative ways to get housing in the location on town property that has been prepared for housing. This information will be sent to the Housing Committee.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

Chairman McGurn reported that during his discussions with Mount Washington Selectmen he was told that they were not against the increased fire services fee, but that they had questions and concerns about the long term issue of how our increased costs will be shared. Those questions/concerns will be presented to the Board after an April 18 Mount Washington Selectboard meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

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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.