

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: June 2, 2020
Time: 10:00am
Place: Zoom Meeting
Egremont

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

Others present: Dario Boyce(Sparkboro), Jim Valeriani(Sparkboro), Bruce Bernstein(Council on Aging Chair), Marc Levasseur(Sparkboro), Blake Mensing(Sparkboro), James Barnack(Jacobs Engineering for MassDOT), Joan Goodkind(Housing Committee), Stephen Cohen(Moderator), Jeff Bradford(Survey Right of Way for MassDOT), Brian Anderson(Sparkboro), Russ Stein(Sparkboro), Juliette Haas(Town Clerk & Board of Health Director).

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

MINUTES:

Motion to defer minutes was approved unanimously.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

James Barnack and Jeff Bradford presented documents showing that the turn radius at the intersection of Route 71 and Creamery Road does accommodate a large tractor trailer unit though the vehicle will have to infringe on the other lane of travel to make the turn. To safe guard on-coming traffic MassDOT will put up stop signs and employ police details. There is no taking of land required, though the town may wish to take a small triangle piece of land. Juliette Haas thought this small piece of land was owned by the Burdsall's. Route 71 eligible for federal aid. MassDOT may be able to obtain funds for damages. The MassDOT contract can include repairs to Creamery Road caused by the large volume of traffic that will be rerouted. The detour is for a 72 hour period, whereas one way traffic on Route 23 while the culvert is fixed would take 6 to 8 weeks. The Town of Great Barrington has approved the detour plan. The Board voted unanimously to approve the planned detour with the understanding that 24 hour police detail may be needed for a period of 72 hours. The Town can establish time frames for when the detour can be in effect.

Joan Goodkind, Chair of the Housing Committee, updated the Board on the Committee's mission and goals. (Attached) The Committee is contacting any and all organizations that might be able to help the town construct affordable housing. Vice-Chairman Vermeulen asked about the Planning Board's proposed ADU versus the ADU presented by citizens petition. The Planning Board's ADU was drafted with the help of the Housing Committee. The citizens petition version, though presented by a member of the Housing Committee is not endorsed by the Committee. The Committee will be looking at the differences in the two at the next meeting which is scheduled for June 15 at 5pm. Vice-Chair Vermuelen will attend that meeting.

Joan Goodkind asked about getting word out to more residents about the RAFT program to help with housing issues during the COVID19 pandemic. Info was sent out via email but it is felt that does not reach those that may be in the most need. Other means of reaching those in need will be looked at.

TOWN OFFICIALS:

Bruce Bernstein reported that Working Forests Initiative rep Tom Ryan has contacted David Seligman. The program is a cost sharing grant to hire some to inventory the town's forest and establish a forest management plan.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jim Valeriani and others presented preliminary plans for Sparkboro's recreational marijuana cultivation business that is planned for Ben Barrett's Berkshire Veneer building off of Pumpkin Hollow Road. The current structure is 12500 square feet of which 10,000 will be used for cultivation and the rest for staff purposes. Phase 1 of the project is planned to commence in mid-2021 and will employ about 12 people. Phase 2 will consist of a proposed 60,000 square foot addition that will not require zoning relief and not impact the environment or wetlands. The new structure will employ approximately 45 employees in shifts. Approximately 90 parking spaces will be laid out. Grow, cultivation and harvest will be done in tiered stages all in-doors. 85% of the first years harvest must be sold in order to move to phase 2. Harvest will take place in stages, likely twice a month, and no large trucks will be used to transport. The building will be fully secured as per Cannabis Control Commission regulations. The building will have a fully contained, air tight, negative pressure ventilation system with carbon filters. No outside air will go in and no inside air will go out. The plans presented on screen during the meeting will be sent to the Town. The special permit process is planned to begin soon.

The Board voted unanimously to appoint Rolfe Tessem to fill the one-year vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals. The ZBA will be asked to call a re-organization meeting.

FOLLOW UPS/UPDATES/NOT TO FORGET:

COVID19:

The Board approved the plan for Town Hall semi-reopening. (Attached)

The Board agreed that a police detail at the Tennis Courts could be removed on weekdays, but want the weekend patrol to continue. The Board will reassess the need for reservations through Town Hall on June 9.

Legal Counsel has confirmed that the Board can restrict the Dog Park users to Egremont residents only during the Pandemic State of Emergency. Vice-Chair Vermeulen will finalize the protocols for posting on Friday. (Attached)

Protocols for opening the horse riding ring were approved with the addition of no sharing of equipment. (Attached) These will be posted and distributed for opening the ring on Monday, June 8.

Guidelines allowing the Selectboard to approve restaurants expansion of outdoor dining without hearing and abutter notification as approved by the Commonwealth. All restaurants will be notified of the guidelines.

Juliette Haas noted that the Transfer Station may be allowed to return to full function in mid-June. Protocols and guidelines will need to be established.

The School Consolidation Planning Committee has issued minutes and has agreed to hire a consultant.

MassBroadband Institute has issued a press release announcing the broadband agreement with FiberConnect.

SELECTBOARD ISSUES:

The Selectboard will meet on Tuesday, June 9 at 10am.

TOWN MEETING:

The Warrant is completed and signed by the Board. It awaits the Constables service.

At 11:56 am the Board voted to recess to French Park at 12:30pm.

Meeting resumed at 12:30pm at French Park to discuss plans for conducting the Annual Town Meeting on June 23 at the park. Parking and entrance at Prospect Lake Road only. All agreed that the area in front of the bandstand was the best location. The Board and the Moderator can be on the Bandstand with other Town Offices to the side of the Bandstand. Circles sized to allow for 2 people will be placed 6' apart on the lawn extending down to the flag pole. Check in will take place under two pop up tents near the driveway. The elderly and handicapped can sit in the Pavilion as it is fully accessible. All Town Officials will have to remain vigilant and be clear in all directives. Police Officers will be utilized. Those that will not or cannot wear a mask will be in a segregated area near the tree by the little league field. If the weather is inclement the meeting will go the June 24 and then June 25. Attendees will be asked not to bring children. Clear instructions will be given to each attendee with their warrant, and their voting card and mic cover.

Meeting adjourned at 12:52pm.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.20/jun2

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.