

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS  
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES

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Date: July 28, 2020  
Time: 10:00am  
Place: Via Zoom Meeting  
Egremont

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

Others in attendance: Marj Wexler, Mary McGurn, Jhon H, Ipad 174, Steve Cohen, Rolfe Tessem, Ilyssa, Laurie Ramsay, Matthew Bersani, Lisa Williams, Barbara Kalish, Chris Henquist(MassDOT), Mikes ipad, Terry Cowgill(The Berkshire Edge), James Barnack(Jacobs Engineering), Vicki Jenssen, Rick Ramsay, Juliette Haas, Rick Ramsay, Ann Martz, Abigail Reeves-McKee, Joan Goodkind, Vicki Kay, Lannon Killea, Ken Gogel, Tom Currier(MassDOT), Deb Ramsay, Mark Moore(MassDOT), Fred Gordon, Marilyn Derector, Robert Derector, Kevin Zurrin, Lainie Kaplan, Karen iPhone, Audrey Sussman, Erika Neilson, Len Sharzer, Rich Montone, Morris Partee(Emerald River LLC), Tom McMahon, Chuck Ogden, Brett Kaplan, Susan Warshaw, Steve Ide, Susan Obel, Noah Kushlefsky, Eileen Vining, Marshal Bouton, Sarah Frank, Janny, Bruce Bernstein, Cindy Schneider.

Motion made and seconded to go into executive session for strategy with respect to potential litigation as allowed by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 21, Paragraph 3. The Board will return to open session following the executive session.

Roll Call Vote: McGurn-yes, Vermuelen-yes, Brazie-yes.  
Open Session reconvened at 10:04am.

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

MINUTES:

Minutes of the July 14 and July 16 meeting were adopted with minor edits.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

Tom Currier(MassDOT) and James Barnack(Jacobs Engineering) asked the Board to determine how best to replace the culvert on Route 23/41 during the reconstruction project next year. The two options are to do the culvert replacement during an estimated 72 hour span of time working non-stop day and night with 9 8 hour shifts. This would mean heavy equipment working around the clock for at least 72 hours. The impact to residents would be equipment noise during the day and over night, or to do the work only during the day which would mean that the road would be closed for about 2 weeks and work would only take place during the daytime hours. The detour of Route 71 to Creamery would be utilized for the 2 week span. The Board asked for a week to ask the abutting property owners that will be impacted.

Juliette Haas reported on election changes made because of the pandemic. A record turnout is expected for the September Primary and the November Federal election. The Commonwealth is allowing mail in balloting for all voters, is requiring extended early voting hours, and is requiring social distancing and mask protocols at polls. Mail in voting is very labor intensive. The Commonwealth is paying printing and postage costs. The Board confirmed that the official polling location for 2020 elections will be the Town Hall. The Town Hall will close on election day but will remain open as usual during early

voting days.

Elizabeth Keene was not available for the update on the Pollinator Plan and discussion of preparations for the planting of the gardens.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Vice-Chairwoman Vermeulen reported on information she gained during a webinar about CyberSecurity. She said that the town should have an IT person on staff and appoint a Cyber Incident person and team, and that the Town should have a plan. Selectwoman Brazie reported that the Town is protected and has a team. The Town has a local Computer Administrator on staff and has a contract with Whalley Computer Associates. A second webinar is scheduled for early August. It was suggested that Mary McGurn take part as well as Jeff Lazarus.

The request from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) for projects for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Priority Plan will be forwarded to Nick Keene who is the Town's representative.

Resident Kevin Zurrin, 10 TownHouse Hill Road, has asked via email if the Board would negotiate a Host Community Agreement with his company Marijuana Via Permaculture for a small scale for profit cannabis farm at his residence. Though Mr. Zurrin was logged into the zoom meeting he could not hear nor communicate with the Board. The Board voted to refer the HCA to legal counsel.

The Board received via an email a request to have the purported Confederate Flag on a grave in the TownHouse Hill Cemetery removed. The board voted 2 in favor, 1 abstention to refer to the elected Cemetery Commissioners for any action.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Selectwoman Brazie moved to end negotiations on a Host Community Agreement with Emerald River LLC for the location at 195 Hillsdale Road, not to close the door to negotiations with Emerald River LLC at another location in Egremont nor to limit the number of retail shops allowed in Egremont.

The Road Superintendent has determined through consultation with BRPC has determined that the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant really isn't for Egremont. It is meant to make temporary accommodations for businesses during the pandemic. The Board agreed to ask the Complete Streets Committee to review the program.

#### COVID-19:

The Board voted unanimously to close the Dog Park at French Park until further notice as users have been violating the posted rules, regulations, guidelines and protocols.

The Board agreed to not change the status of the Assessors office but to continue to allow only one Assessor in the office at a time in compliance with current COVID-19 protocols. The contractor consultant recommended that the Assessors set up a schedule so that one Assessor is in the office per day.

The Transfer Station will return to normal operations regarding the dumping of items that the Town charges for; the attendant will collect funds on site at the time of dumping.

Southern Berkshire Regional School District will present its draft reopening plan on Thursday

evening via a zoom meeting. The teacher at the South Egremont School has presented a very effective plan to set up an isolation area for sick students as required under the Commonwealth's guidelines. There are 15 students enrolled in the South Egremont program.

#### UPDATES/FOLLOW-UPS:

Awarding of the van grants will not take place until September. The Taxi grant has been very successful, though an issue came up with two people who have mobility issues needing transportation. The Board thanked the Council on Aging for its great job looking out for the needs of Egremont's residents.

Rolfe Tessem reported that the MBI agreement has not been signed by Fiber Connect yet. The Town is out of the loop on this. The Town is beginning negotiations with Holyoke Gas & Electric for back-up, emergency service coverage. The Town of Monterey has asked if the Egremont would consider negotiating jointly on this agreement. The Board agreed to continue on its own path and not get bogged down with another Town.

Joan Goodkind reported that the Affordable Housing Committee is meeting again on August 10. Fred Gordon reported that some residents have come up with a creative way to fund housing on the town's land by forming a Housing Trust. The filing is taking place through the Commonwealth and Federal Governments. Sizable funds will need to be raised. They have reached out to the Community Development Corporation.

The School Consolidation Committee has formed three sub-committees: Education, Finance and Operations. Egremonter Tom Berkel is on the Finance sub-committee and George McGurn and Marcella Bush are on the Operations sub-committee.

Vice-Chairwoman Vermeulen reported that the birthday celebration will be blessed with a video performance of James Warwick and Gigi Teeley in a song duet, that Mr. Warwick will also read a sonnet, the Egremont song will also be a part of the video. The link to order T-shirts has been distributed. The video will also recognize Town officials who ended their service in the past year and two deceased former officials. This will be a fun and upbeat video.

#### SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The Board will meet on August 11, 2020 at 10am via zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 11:38am.

Mary Brazie,  
Office Administrator

minutes.21/jul28

*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.*