

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: January 26, 2022
Time: 1:30pm
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present in-person at Town Hall were Chairman George McGurn, Board member Mary Brazie. Vice-Chairman Vermeulen was present via zoom.

Others participating via zoom: Peg McDonough, Mary McGurn, Eileen Vining, Joyce Frater, Judith Goodman, Daniel Blitzer, Jared Kelly, Peg McDonough, Marj Wexler, Fred Gordon, Lannon Killea and Jon Herman.

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

Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the One Stop For Growth grant program are due February 4. The Town has plans to submit 5 EOI's.

Peg McDonough, ARPA Administrator, explained that the EOI is a template form. The first section is the town's basic information and allows for an introduction of the EOI's, then there is a page for up to 5 different projects. The introduction will give a unifying message that will unite all the projects in some way while tying all EOI's with a common thread.

EOI #1: Buildings & Grounds building: Office Administrator Mary Brazie presented the request for \$267,000 for a new Buildings & Grounds garage, new facility to be constructed near the Highway Garage on the town's property which could also house the Transportation Van. Selectboard Chairman McGurn suggested the possibility of re-purposing an existing building though there aren't any currently available. Selectboard Vice-Chair Vermeulen said she was not in favor of this EOI and it was voted down at Town Meeting, and the Buildings & Grounds Superintendent told her he was fine without it.

EOI #2: Technical Assistance to draft new zoning bylaws: Planning Board Chairman Jared Kelly proposed a project that would piggy back on the current best practices grant to update the Master Plan and Open Space & Recreation plan. With the recent change in demographics in town, increased population, broadband, the lack of affordable housing and the upcoming changes in the south village there is a need for help to look at causes and solutions, and a best path forward with bylaw changes, etc. Mary McGurn proposed a framework that was specific and included help with zoning for Affordable Housing.

Vice-Chairman Lucinda Vermeulen proposed adding an EOI for the maintenance of the sidewalks in the South Village. This is not the program for such a request, though there are other avenues for grant funds.

EOI #3: Building Support for Affordable Housing Ownership and Rental Choices in Egremont: Housing Committee Chairman Fred Gordon is proposing a component around the need for workers and housing that is affordable, and for economic development. The Housing Committee will be finalizing a request for proposals for the town's 6.6 acre property soon. Funds are needed for site development, though other felt that this would be funded by developers responding to the request for proposals, an education campaign for Egremont's residents. Housing Committee member Judith Goodman noted that Massachusetts is now punishing suburbs that limit affordable housing to single family. Peg McDonough

is proposing that a consultant be hired to lead and guide the town to what it wants as there is currently no clear that as to what is needed.

EOI #4: Assessing Under-Utilized Properties: this proposal would seek to hire a consultant to inventory and assess public and private properties for reuse and possible parking in the south village.

EOI #5: Strategic planning for the Fire Department: to include looking at utilization and possible consolidation of the two fire stations, equipment and manpower needs, and recruitment of members.

A 6th EOI was proposed by resident Lannon Killea who was just granted a special permit to revitalize the former Old Egremont Club. He would like to submit a proposal to help make his building accessible and compliant, a public private project that is shovel ready. Chairman McGurn added that parking and access on Route 23 were also of interest and that this would feed into the revitalization of buildings. This EOI could be a part of #4.

The Selectboard unanimously voted to approve the submission of the following 5 EOI's under the One Stop For Growth Program:

- Technical Assistance to draft new zoning bylaws
- Building support for Affordable Housing
- Assessing Under-utilized properties
- Develop strategic plan for fire department
- Public Private revitalization

Selectboard member Brazie's motion to approve the Buildings & Grounds new building did not receive a second.

Peg McDonough will present to the Board for its February 1 meeting the request in final format.

Daniel Blitzler asked about timing for filing the applications for the grants after the EOI's. Grant round open early May and close early June. The actual grant application can be modified and will solidify the EOI's.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the submission of two EOI's for grants under the Municipal Vulnerability Program:

1. \$175,000 for culvert replacement on Blunt Road
2. \$675,000 for stream restoration along Karner Brook and Green River

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

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.