

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: April 4, 2023
Time: 10:00am
Place: Town Hall and Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present in-person were Select Board Chairman George McGurn, Vice-Chairwoman Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Select Board member Mary Brazie, and Finance Committee Chair Laura Allen.
Present via zoom: Eileen Vining, Fiber Connect’s CEO Adam Chait, Grant Administrator Peg McDonough, Housing Committee Doug Mishkin, Finance Committee member Dan Blitzer, and Mary McGurn.

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

MINUTES:

Acceptance of the minutes of the March 10 meeting was deferred to review edits proposed.
The minutes of the March 21 meeting were accepted as edited.

It was noted from the March 10 meeting that an Ezpass transponder cannot be obtained as it requires direct withdrawal from the Town’s checking account which cannot be done.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board voted unanimously to approve the request from Road Superintendent James Noe for 5 additional vacation days each year beginning in August of 2023 based on his 17 years of service with the Town and to help offset the number of overtime hours he puts in that he cannot be paid for. It was noted that the he is a working Superintendent and that the Police Chief has also been given additional vacation days each year.

Fiber Connect has applied for certification of the final Milestone #3 has been completed. Fiber Connect build out is completed throughout the whole town with the exception of Whites Hill Road which is served by AlfordNet and on the private Brookvale & Hilltop Roads where the residents can’t come to a consensus on paying for the fiber infrastructure. Fiber Connect has equipment ready to extend there if and when a decision is made. The Board voted unanimously to certify that Milestone 3 is complete, with thanks and congratulations.

The Barn at the Egremont Village Inn has asked for an allowance for outdoor service for the season. The Commonwealth has approved an extension to the allowance for outdoor service through April 1, 2024. After clarification that the outdoor service was clearly delineated on the permit and was exactly the same as last year, the Board voted unanimously to approve the request and issue the permit.

GRANTS:

Grant Administrator Peg McDonough reported that an error on the prior ARPA update was corrected and the town has less funds to allocate. Grant match funds are still set aside for the Blunt Road Culvert and Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP). As the feedback on the expression of interest to MVP for the Water Department was negative, the grant application may not be filed. Other grant programs are being sought to fund the necessary studies for the Water Department. There are funds in place to do bylaw revisions that may be recommended by the Comprehensive Plan update process.

The grant application to the One Stop For Growth program for the construction of the Buildings & Grounds building will be filed by May 2, which is the deadline. The application will include the addition of the Cemetery Department sharing the building as the Board has begun planning to have the Buildings & Grounds Department take on the maintenance of the Cemeteries.

FY 2024 BUDGET AND TOWN MEETING WARRANT:

The Board reviewed all the articles on the draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Article 1: reports from town boards

Article 2: budget

Article 3: Water Department

Article 4: Vote to have Selectboard act as Water Commission

Article 5: Establish a housing trust

Article 6: Right of Way Easements for Mount Washington Road

Article 7: Borrow \$287,000 for a new dump truck

Article 8: Establish a special stabilization fund for Opioid Settlement funds

Article 9: Pay Opioid funds to Rural Resource Recovery

Article 10: \$8,500 for a sander

Article 11: \$5,000 for the Police Revolving Account

Article 12: Revolving Accounts authorization

Article 13: \$15,000 for Cemeteries expansion and repairs

Article 14: \$9,500 for French Park repairs

Article 15: \$6,000 for MACRIS listings

Article 16: \$4,500 to restore historic books

Article 17: \$5,000 for tree removal on town properties

Article 18: \$27,500 to blacktop the Library parking lot

Article 19: \$22,000 for Air Compressor for the Fire Department

Article 20: \$7,500 for Police Department pistols

Article 21: \$1,900 for an AED for the Police Department

Article 22: \$90,000 to replace the roof at Town Hall

Article 23: \$200,000 for road repairs

Article 24: Accept Chapter 90 funds

Article 25: \$15,000 for GASB 45

A great deal of discussion ensued as to the drafting of the article establishing a Housing Trust, the need for it to be a Bylaw and not just an authorization to establish, as well as the now limited time to draft. It was agreed that Office Administrator Mary Brazie will work with Housing Committee co-chairs Doug Mishkin and Judith Goodman over the next week to bring to the Board a final draft of an article. An answer as to whether donations to the Trust are tax deductible will try to be answered but can really be left up to donor to determine.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

Vice-Chairwoman Lucinda Vermeulen is in discussions with Larkin LTD regarding a new design for the Town Hall sign. She is hopeful for a green alternative that looks handmade and historically aesthetic.

The next meeting of the Board will be April 11 at 10:00am.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30am.

Mary Brazie,

Office Administrator

minutes.23/apr4

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.