

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD
MINUTES

Date: September 13, 2022
Time: 10:00am
Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present in-person were Selectboard Vice-Chair Lucinda Fenn-Vermeulen, Selectboard member Mary Brazie, Grant Administrator Peg McDonough, Moderator Stephen Cohen and for part of the meeting FiberConnect CEO Adam Chait.

Others participating via zoom: Selectboard Chairman George McGurn, Mary McGurn, Chuck Ogden, Eileen Vining, Marj Wexler, Jeff Lazarus, and Juliette Haas.

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

MINUTES:

The minutes of the September 6 meeting were accepted with minor edits.

SCHEDULED ISSUES:

The Board discussed the amended agreement allowing the removal of Brookvale and Hilltop Roads from the Milestone 3 Fiber Connect Buildout. The agreement would postpone the build out for 3 years or until such time as the Home Owners Association obtained easements for the build out. Fiber Connect will give the Town a surety payment to ensure that the final build out is done as per the agreement. The Board voted to sign the agreement effective September 13 with a \$10,700 surety with Vice-Chairman Vermeulen and board member Brazie voting in favor and Chairman McGurn recusing.

NEW BUSINESS:

Joan and Larry Kleinman of Jug End Road wrote to the Police Department asking that the intersection of Jug End Road and Mount Washington Road be made a 4-way stop and that the speed limit on Mount Washington Road be lowered from 40 miles per hour. Unfortunately the Kleinman's were involved in an accident at this intersection recently. Neither the Highway Superintendent or Police Chief are in favor of a 4-way stop at the intersection. There have been few accidents in the area over the past 5 years. The changing of a speed limit requires a traffic study and approval by MassDOT. The Board may consider doing this after the Mount Washington Road reconstruction project. A written response will be sent to the Kleinmans.

The Regional School District Planning Board (RSDPB) has requested \$15,000 from all 8 towns in the two school districts and from both districts to fund the operations of the RSDPB for FY 23. The Board expressed its displeasure with the timing as the RSDPB should have anticipated this need prior to Annual Town Meetings. The Board also has questions and concerns about moving forward with a merger of the two districts while closing the Mount Everett High School and constructing a new Monument Mountain High School.

An application has been filed with Mass Historic Commission (MHC) for emergency funds for the repair to the Belfry at the Library. It is anticipated that funding would be about half of the projected cost of \$79,600 leaving the Town having to fund the balance.

The contract for the specialized Fire Truck has been cancelled because the company is unable to meet its obligation. A new company has been found through a bidding consortium the Town belongs to that can supply the Town with the truck it needs to meet the needs of driving up Mount Washington and allow for replacement of parts of the vehicle without having to purchase a new truck. There is an additional cost of \$55,000 to change contracts.

Because of the request for funding for RSDPB, funds to match the MHC funding if obtained, and the additional funds for the Fire Truck the Board voted unanimously to hold a Special Town Meeting on November 14 at the Mount Everett High School. The warrant will also include an opportunity for the three Egremont members of the RSDPB to make a report on the action of the planning board and the reasons that the members disagree with the decision. Other Town Boards/Committees/Departments will be notified of the upcoming town meeting so that they may present items for the warrant if they have them.

Because of last minute updates that hadn't been reviewed by the Board, action on the acceptance of the Web Administrator's job description was postponed to the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Board of Health Director Juliette Haas presented a proposal to contract with Tough Stuff Recycling for the Town's mandatory mattress recycling program. The cost for the program will be shared by the potentially as many as 32 towns. The program collection will be based in Pittsfield. Egremont will purchase a container at an approximate cost of \$6,000 from its Recycling Dividend Program (RDP) funds, as well as bags to put the Mattresses in. The annual costs for the service through Tough Stuff Recycling will be about \$500. Residents will be charged either \$43 or \$60 for mattresses recycling depending on whether they bring them to the Town's container or set up a home pick up. The Town should know by its next meeting how many town's in Berkshire County have signed up for this program so that it can pin point it costs and sign a contract.

Board members have some minor edits to both the Grant Administrator and Tree Wardens job descriptions so action on acceptance was postponed to the next meeting.

GRANTS:

Grant Administrator Peg McDonough reported that she has looked at Dam & Seawall Removal or Repair grants in response to the property owner of the Prospect Lake Dam calling to ask for help in obtaining grants to repair the dam. The Town can apply but is then responsible for any defects in the dam after repair. The dam was inspected in November 2021 and deemed in fair condition with a significant risk factor. The grant program is highly competitive and funds are most likely to be awarded to repair dams that are in much worse shape. The property owner also has to have an emergency action plan in place. The current plan is outdated. Peg will confer with legal counsel about the liability and risk and to review the regulations.

Buildings and Grounds Superintendent Tom Reynolds is coordinating getting an updated energy audit at Town Hall in anticipation of applying for grant funds to update the heating system, which is currently all electric.

The Town is still waiting for an invasive plant removal plan for French Park before moving forward with a Forest Stewardship Grant.

There are no current updates to the American Rescue Plan Act funding. A VIN number has finally been issued for the Fire Chief vehicle on order.

FOLLOW UPS:

In the near future the Board will form a planning committee for the Town's 250th birthday celebration in 3 year. The Historical Commission will be consulted and then a notice sent out seeking volunteers from the community.

There is no further information from the Fire Chief or the Town of Mount Washington on the fire services agreement between Egremont and Mount Washington.

There is no information on the invasive plant removal at 84 Jug End Road.

SELECTBOARD ITEMS:

The next meeting will be September 20, 2022 at 10:00am

Meeting adjourned at 11:29am.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

minutes.22/sept13

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.