



Town of Washington

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Town Offices/Selectman

Town of Washington Board of Selectmen's Meeting – November 28, 2011

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. J. Huebner, S. Lennon and M. Case present.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. M. Case motioned to approve the minutes of November 21, 2011 as written. S. Lennon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
4. J. Huebner entered into the record receipt of the signed annual Inspection Report and Renewal Certificate for Bucksteep Manor adding that the Building Inspector was pleased with Bucksteep's compliance with his requests to improve the property. The Fire Chief still needs a sign off before the Alcoholic Beverage License is issued.
5. Dr. William Cameron of the Central Berkshire Regional School District (CBRSD), introduced himself to the Board then expressed his appreciation to the Board for the opportunity to meet with them. Dr. Cameron then acknowledge that the Town of Washington's contribution to the School Department is the Town's largest budget item and therefore wanted to provide this opportunity to anyone who wanted to express concern prior to the budget process. Dr. Cameron then stated that the he plans to meet with all of the towns within the district to hear their concerns to compile what CBRSD should be conscious of going to next year's budget process. J. Huebner expressed both his and other residents concern that last year's excessive draw down in the E and D account would dramatically impact this year's budget by trying to cover a budget gap in one year that should have been covered over two years. M. Case, who is also the School Committee's Assistant Chairman, asked Dr. Cameron to keep in mind that the he is in the Washington School and that when Central Berkshire regionalized this school was closed so any attempt or talk about closing the Becket Washington School is near and dear to our hearts. R. Spencer stated that it would be nice if the rumor could be ended as most of the people in the room realize it is nearly impossible to do, financially at least for the district, but most residents do not realize this. Jane Paxton Huebner commented that the point can be made that whether it is the Becket Washington School or the Berkshire Trail School, it requires a district vote and that vote must be 100 percent. J. Huebner followed up with the statement that from a political point of view, it is impossible. J. Huebner recognized that there are individuals who think that the way the capital and teaching resources is distributed appears to be unfair adding that the outcome of his research showed that if there is unfairness it appeared to be in the opposite direction where towns outside of Dalton tend to pay more per student. J. Huebner stated that when the Becket Washington School was re-done the Town lost a lot of students to the Town of Lee and they are not moving back, partly due to the rumors. J. Huebner then requested a very clear set of facts on what is equitable and a statement that both the Becket Washington School and Berkshire Trail School are there for the long hall suggesting that the Town residents may even swallow a larger budget. M. Case stated that Dr. Cameron has some very good ideas on innovation and a Charter School. R. Spencer stated that the Town of Washington is paying a disproportionate amount of the capital cost for the Becket Washington School because of the amount of students attending Lee and that a committee tried to get wording for a change to the district agreement that would base capital cost on eligible students rather than actual students. It failed because of the required 100 percent favorable vote, with the Becket representative against it. The district would benefit as it could potentially encourage towns to get their students back. J. Huebner stated that generating interest in surrounding area's for kids to come to our schools was emphasized in the strategic plan that was done and that he would like to see more of the strategic plan enrollments implemented and that setting the tone and goal to communicate what the district is about should be elevated. J. Huebner asked if the will be capital money for Wahconah. Dr. Cameron replied that the School District is submitting to the Building Authority another statement of interest tomorrow, trying to emphasize that the heating system is not only old but fragile

along with other issues from the reports used by Building Committee such as fire suppression systems, air circulation, electrical systems and greater access to electrical technology. Marge Foster, CBRSD Finance Director submitted a revised budget for this year explaining that school choice receipts have historically been misclassified in the general fund and that they have been correctly reclassified as special receipts. M. Foster added that although the overall budget had to be decreased by 358,000 there is no difference in the Town's assessment. FY2013 will be compared to the revised budget. R. Spencer expressed another concern regarding designating a vocational institute for the district as it would help the Town on transportation and tuition costs. J. Huebner added that it is the single largest uncertainty in our budget every year. Dr. Cameron replied that the School District had received a letter from the Dalton Town Manager indicating that Dalton is interest in pursuing that very matter and that he is in the process of corresponding with the other five towns to see if there is additional interest. Dr. Cameron stated that the School Committee can take that initiative without town support, but they would like it adding that he is confident the School Committee will revisit the topic.

6. D. Fish asked the Board for the John Building Supply warrant so he can sign it and return it to D. Parnell. The Board asked D. Fish to clarify an email sent to the Board by S. Brazee regarding the Highway Department's payroll submission for M. Newton that charged vacation pay, sick pay or holiday pay. D. Fish stated that the employee by-laws state that an employee is entitled to holiday pay after thirty days of service adding that M. Newton meets the criteria. D. Fish also stated that he did not put in for vacation time, that he was unaware of any sick time charged but that M. Newton has probably accrued one day so far. D. Fish commented that S. Brazee has given him M. Newton's pension paperwork, but is unavailable to go over it with Mark. The Board asked D. Fish to work with S. Brazee then informed him that she will be at the Town Hall next week to discuss the personal policy.
7. J. Huebner informed the Board that Maurice O'Connell of CSX has provided his phone number with the assurance that he can be called at any time. J. Huebner also stated that CSX had used a hydraulic hose to clean out the culvert and they expect to do that twice a week. The Board asked D. Fish to let them know as soon as there is sign of trouble so they can call for action. J. Huebner stated that the Board has requested an inspection of the area but CSX has not answered that request. K. Walls asked if there is an active beaver trapping permit as he was down there a week ago and there are fresh cuttings so there must be at least in there. Jim Huebner stated that the Board has not issued any permits recently. The Board discussed along with K. Walls, R. Borgnis, D. Fish and E. Bond beaver trapping and beaver activity on both sides of the road acknowledging that part of the area is designated as an area of critical concern. J. Huebner also stated that he informed the M. O'Connell that the drainage out of Hinsdale Flats is also a problem. J. Huebner entered into the record that the folks at CSX received a call from a US Senator.
8. S. Lennon updated the Board on the installation of the steel railings for the handicap ramp and boiler room catwalk stating that there is a meeting setup for 3:30 pm at the Town Hall. S. Lennon then asked if anyone could attend the meeting as he has to work. E. Bond volunteered and asked S. Lennon to give the Taconic Instructor his cell phone number and relay that if he did not show up that he will choke him to death.
9. The Board discussed with Chief Breen his purchase request for a camera inside the school bus to protect both the students and bus driver. Chief Breen explained that the camera is a two way camera. It takes pictures inside and outside the bus so if there is an accident there is a record of it adding that the camera is removable. The Board discussed with R. Spencer the account that should be used to pay for the purchase with R. Spencer determining the transportation account should be used. J. Huebner motioned to authorize the installation of the dual vision vehicle camera with disk reader and 16 GB hard drive at Anthony Auto Sales. There was discussion on color vs. black and white. M. Case seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
10. J. Hostetter reported that the Covanta contract has not been finalized, that S. Brazee stated that she has ordered the laptop and will call in an order for printer cartridges and that many of the Selectmen meeting minutes have been scanned but she has not scanned anything in a while.
11. J. Huebner stated that there is nothing new to report with Mapleview. R. Spencer informed the Board that E. Bond has been informed that he was charged with creating a floor plan and that he would be assisted by D. Wiessbrod and R. Spencer.

12. J. Huebner informed the Board that J. Nelson, who is temporally working for BRPC has asked for the formal denial for the request to re-use the remaining EECBG funds. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson to begin work on a new siding RFP and consult E. Bond for any technical language. E. Bond reported that he will have a master list of what is needed when the Town is ready to apply for Green Community Grants, with the suggestion that new doors be the priority. E. Bond reported that he has installed a new sensor light on the side of the building and that better lighting will be needed when the ramp is done. J. Nelson informed the Board that one challenge to use the remainder of the EECBG grant is figuring out what the energy savings going to be. The Board informed J. Nelson that an energy audit was done and will have to be done again. S. Lennon asked J. Nelson to possibly assist with FEMA Hazard Mitigation grants.
13. J. Huebner read a portion of October 24 minutes in which it was written that R. Spencer stated that the Cultural Council committed a bookkeeping error. R. Spencer stated that he did not believe he used the word committed. J. Huebner stated that that is how it was written and that is why the Board would like S. Brazee, D. Parnell, R. Spencer and the Cultural Council in the same room to discuss the issue. R. Spencer wants to make sure that all committee's and departments, including the ones that are off budget, understand that they are responsible for maintaining their own budget.
14. M. Case informed D. Fish that a member of the Chapel Commission has complained about the flag pole and light outside the Chapel. The pole is leaning and the light appears to be broken. D. Fish will check it out.
15. J. Hostetter recapped the meeting she had with Jeff Sawtelle of BBE Office Interiors in which measurements were taken to divide the Selectmen's office into multiple office spaces. The Board discussed and revised the proposed floor plan along with R. Spencer, J. Nelson, E. Bond and J. Hostetter. R. Spencer stated that he has a line on some locking file cabinets, S. Lennon will inquire about furniture in storage at Williams College and E. Bond will create a revised floor plan to discuss at the next Town Hall Usage Committee meeting, which is scheduled for December 6th.
16. J. Huebner motioned to approve the Selectmen's December letter submission to the tracks. M. Case seconded and the motion passed without discussion.
17. J. Huebner motioned to adjourn the selectmen meeting at 8:25. M. Case seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approved: _____

Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Submitted by J. Hostetter