

Town of Washington Board of Selectmen's Meeting – June 18, 2012

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. J. Huebner, M. Case and Shaun Lennon present.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.
3. J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of June 11 as written. M. Case seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. J. Huebner recognized E. Bond and initiated a discussion of the Parks Commission and its clean-up efforts. J. Huebner asked how we could get more people volunteering and suggested offering refreshments or a cook-out to workers. E. Bond said that he is happy just to see the Park well tended these days. He has a dependable core of volunteers. He said that people's interests in recreation have changed and involvement in the Park maintenance is down at least partly because of this change. Ed mentioned the last Park Fun Day and the low turnout that was a disappointment to all who worked on it.
5. D. Fish addressed the Board and inquired if there is a standard Town scale for raises. D. Fish wished to give one of his workers at the highway department a raise. The Board agreed with D. Fish's idea that it was reasonable to raise the worker from \$16/ hr. to \$17/hr. J. Huebner reminded D. Fish that this is his decision according to his budget. D. Fish indicated that he understood that. D. Spencer pointed out that D. Fish had not had a raise himself. The Board agreed to raise D. Fish from \$20/hr. to \$21/hr.
6. K. Walls addressed the Board on the subject of beaver activity on CSX property on Upper Valley Rd. Much of the road is under water again. J. Huebner asked if K. Walls had heard from USDA again. K. Walls reported that he had not. J. Huebner stated that we will have a health emergency on Upper Valley by the next rain. J. Huebner will call CSX again to remind them of their agreement to remedy the flooding situation.
7. J. Huebner asked to start the next group of employee performance reviews. M. Case stated that it was awkward to hold the reviews in open meeting and asked if there wasn't another way to conduct them. Perhaps we could have an executive session first and then move to open meeting. J. Huebner said that might be considered when there were strong negatives to be discussed, but for now we will proceed to do all in open meeting.
8. The Board initiated a performance review of Karen Avalue of the Assessors' Department. The review was strongly positive. J. Huebner stated that she was an asset to the town. She has generously shared her expertise with Mary Jarvie and with C. Rodhouse in her department. The Town hopes that she will continue to do so. M. Case made a motion to appoint K. Avalue for another year. J. Huebner seconded and the vote was unanimous.

9. The Board initiated a performance review for D. Parnell. J. Huebner said that the Board appreciates all D. Parnell has done for the Town in his Accountant position. He is thorough and knowledgeable. With regard to the Vadar accounting software, D. Parnell said that we need to continue with it for now. When he gets the new chart of accounts finished and tested then it will be time to transition to a better software system. He will use 2013 to test new chart of accts. D. Parnell mentioned that he is trying to find a course at UMASS or perhaps GCC, but has not yet. One of his goals in the next year is to develop a better organization for bills incoming. He believes that the mail process doesn't work at present. Need a reliable distribution system throughout the departments for invoices. All invoices should go to Town Hall. D. Fish mentioned that he picks up his highway department bills with no trouble from the mail boxes in the hall. J. Huebner asked the administrative assistant to investigate alternatives to the present distribution system. Saying that D. Parnell is an asset to the Town and hearing no comments or concerns, M. Case made a motion to re-appoint D. Parnell. J. Huebner seconded and the vote to approve was unanimous.

10. The Board initiated a performance review for C. Briggs. This was her 3 month review and it was positive. J. Huebner stated that the Board found her very helpful despite being new on the job and taking over the Treasurer's position with little or no training from her predecessor. C. Briggs said that she is trying to find a new charge collector course at UMASS with hours that work for her schedule. She is also still looking for an HR course and for some of our internal HR files. The Board also mentioned that she is a very clear communicator. This being a 3 month review there was no need for a motion. J. Huebner asked C. Briggs to describe a recent encounter she had in Lenox with S. Brazee, our former Treasurer. It was a chance encounter and S. Brazee seemed hostile. C. Briggs told the Board that she had taken S. Brazee off as signatory on all Town accounts that she could find. C. Briggs had asked S. Brazee for some missing statements a while ago, but has not yet received these. J. Huebner read a letter he had drafted to S. Brazee last week requesting return of Town funds in the amount of \$1250.00 which the Board believes she mistakenly paid to herself after her resignation had taken effect. J. Huebner signed the letter to be mailed immediately.

11. The Board initiated a performance review for Michelle Lampro. The Board noted that she had improved the transfer station property. M. Lampro mentioned that when she took over duties there she cleaned out the shed and painted the office. J. Huebner recognized her great skill at packing the paper container tightly to minimize number of hauls. He asked that she implement the new transfer station process in recording haulage charges and dumping costs. M. Lampro agreed to perform these tasks. M. Case made a motion to reappoint. J. Huebner seconded and the vote to reappoint was unanimous. J. Huebner reminded M. Lampro that she must review her assistant, Jane Pytko. She needs to be reappointed and included on the master list of appointments. J. Huebner made a motion to this effect. M. Case seconded and the vote to reappoint Jane Pytko was unanimous. J. Huebner asked D. Parnell and M. Lampro to review the new transfer station payment procedure together. D. Parnell asked her where the recycling

revenues go. M. Lampro replied that twice per year the state pays the Town for this. The checks come from the DEP to the Town.

12. J. Huebner read into the record that the Westfield Wild and Scenic group will hold a meeting at 6:30 on 6/21 at the Middlefield Town Hall. He will remind Phil Clark to attend if possible. WWS is potentially interested in contributing money to both the Cross Place Road bridge work and to the Eden Glen project. P. Clark is involved in both of these as Chair of the Town Conservation Commission.
13. J. Huebner told D. Parnell that Vadar software wants the Town to renew for 2 years. D.Parnell was not in favor of a two year renewal. One year should be adequate.
14. D. Parnell told the Board that the Town needs to send certification regarding our FEMA emergency expenditures caused by Hurricane Irene. The amount we are requesting is up to \$35,000. J. Huebner made a motion to authorize the expenditure of up to \$35,000 for repairs under Hurricane Irene. M. Case seconded and the vote to approve was unanimous. S. Lennon must sign this as Clerk of the Board, as must A. Michaniewicz as Town Clerk and C. Briggs as Treasurer. J. Nelson to type certification letter and deliver to Accountant's office Tuesday, 6/19 in the morning.
15. J. Huebner reported that he had received an amended agreement from Mr. Shapira at Pugzees Farm. J. Huebner made a motion to accept the amended agreement. M. Case seconded and the vote to accept was unanimous. Under the amended agreement D. Fish will inspect the 750 ft. of Beach Road as it is under construction by White Wolf and regularly after that. The roadway must be 18 feet wide with 4 feet of drainage on each side.
16. J. Huebner asked M. Lampro how we are doing on the compost grant. M. Lampro said that Jamie (from CET?) has submitted it. J. Huebner raised the question of ending the contract with Covanta and switching to Valley in Lenox. We would negotiate a new contract with Lenox. He asked M. Lampro to call Valley and ask about contract rates for the Town. Currently we believe that Covanta is cheaper than Valley, but we are not sure. Covanta is at \$81.20 per container. In August we would start a new year with Covanta. We may have to put the hauling contract up for bid. We need to get White Wolf fees from D. Parnell. M. Lampro said that most of the billed amount goes to Covanta. We could solicit bids or just extend White Wolf. M. Lampro described the excellent service from White Wolf. They are always available to help the transfer station. J. Huebner made a motion to extend the haulage to White Wolf for one year if White Wolf will give us the same price as this year. S. Lennon seconded and this vote was unanimous.
17. J. Huebner asked D. Fish about the culvert on Upper Valley. No cosmetic repairs will be done there.

18. J.Huebner agreed to a request from D. Fish for another beaver trapping permit for Cross Place. He reminded D. Fish that Westfield W & S may contribute some money to bridge the Cross Place culvert. D. Fish said that he can get a temporary bridge from Lee.
19. J. Huebner requested that D. Fish ask Cathy Stevens of DOT if she has a set of state standards for dirt road construction.
20. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson for an update on the Maplevew re-use project. J. Nelson told the Board that all public notices had been placed as requested in the Berkshire Eagle, Berkshire Record and Country Journal. The Mass Central registry notice appears online starting on June 20. She gave the Board a timeline of project events she had prepared based on the RFP. Walk through is scheduled for July 14.
21. J. Huebner reported that he had spoken with Mr. Dupere about our personnel handbook. He was told that the handbook will be completed shortly. Mr. Dupere said that our model came out well. Some corrections are still needed.
22. M. Case reported a good turnout of town and area residents for the coffee hour with Senator Ben Downing held that afternoon at Town Hall. There were many questions for the Senator from attendees and the discussion was lively. Among other issues raised, a request for improvements to the reverse 911 system was strongly urged. J.Huebner asked M. Case to convey the Town's thanks to Sen. Downing.
23. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson for an update on the Town Hall Doors and windows project. J. Nelson will put the materials information received from E. Bond into a matrix to solicit bids from contractors.
24. J. Huebner scheduled Chief Breen's performance review for 6/25. Chief Breen agreed and mentioned that the Town has much bear activity at present. He has advised affected residents to put out moth balls to discourage visits from the bear. J. Huebner confirmed that Chief Breen is the Town's representative to BRTA. Michelle Beemer is our alternate to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. Chief Breen told the Board that extensive repairs had to be done on the school bus recently. The Town must decide whether to continue repairing the old bus, purchase a new vehicle, a used vehicle or lease one. D. Fish confirmed that the bus needs about \$5000 worth of repairs. Chief Breen will get state bid information for a bus of like quality. Right now we have 3 students for Fall. Discussion of vehicle size and specs continued. Chief Breen raised the question of whether Becket would cooperate in securing a better vehicle.
25. J. Huebner asked D. Fish to get his crew to fill in potholes around Town. Residents are complaining. D. Fish agreed to get right on this.

26. J. Huebner announced that there will not be a Board of Health meeting on 6/25 as previously planned. It will be re-scheduled and announced.

27. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 pm. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved _____

Date _____

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Minutes written by J. Nelson