

Town of Washington Selectmen's Meeting – July 9, 2012

1. J. Huebner, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. S. Lennon, Clerk, was also present for the Board.
2. J. Huebner led all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. J. Huebner requested a correction be made to the date of the minutes from the 6/25 meeting. That correction was made immediately. A motion to accept the minutes from 6/25 as written was then made by J. Huebner. S. Lennon seconded the motion and the minutes were accepted and signed.
4. J. Huebner recognized Paul Willis of White Wolf and inquired if C. Willis had agreed to extend the current hauling rates to the Town for another year. Paul Willis said that White Wolf would continue to serve the Town at the same rates. J. Huebner requested a contract specifying these terms and Paul Willis agreed that White Wolf would provide a signed contract to this effect.
5. J. Huebner asked M. Lampro about the gardening lecture that had been proposed. M. Lampro said that the presenter did not have a good reputation for being knowledgeable or very interesting. R. Borgnis agreed with M. Lampro's comment. There wasn't much interest from the COA members in the presentation. The consensus of the meeting was that the Town would not go forward with this gardening program. J. Huebner asked M. Lampro about the new documentation process for transfer station billing. M. Lampro said that she had conferred with D. Parnell and that the process was already in effect and working smoothly. She is comfortable with the process. Per the Selectmen's request of 6/25, M. Lampro had conducted a performance review of her assistant, Jane Pytko. This was a positive evaluation. M. Lampro submitted the completed evaluation form to the Selectmen.
6. M. Burke addressed the Selectmen and asked if the Board has changed its schedule and will only meet every two weeks and not every week as has been customary. J. Huebner replied that there will be no change in the Board's schedule. The Selectmen will continue to meet every Monday.
7. J. Huebner asked Chief Breen for an update on the search for a replacement for the old school van. The Chief reported that he has looked for a new 4-wheel drive vehicle similar to a Suburban. He was told that it would take about four weeks to get delivery after the Town arranged financing. Chief also mentioned that he would request that a video camera be installed in the vehicle. He has also requested a vehicle with as many seats as will fit into the van safely. Chief Breen will report cost of prospective vehicles to the Board when he has the information.
8. J. Huebner asked K. Walls to report on the status of flooding on Upper Valley Road. K. Walls reported that the road is dry. CSX has installed new beaver control piping and screen fencing in

their culvert. K. Walls has inspected the site and took pictures which he shared with the Board. He said that so far CSX and the USDA have abided by their agreement with the Town to maintain the site and control flooding going forward. He will continue to monitor the site. J. Huebner said that he will call his contact Maurice at USDA and thank him for his assistance in this effort.

9. J. Huebner called on Chief Breen for his performance review, but first agreed to hear the Chief's report on a rumored domestic dispute incident that was said to have occurred in Town on the evening of Saturday, June 30 at Selectman Shaun Lennon's home. Chief Breen read from his Incident Day Report dated July 2, 2012. Chief Breen said that a Town resident told him about the alleged incident. Chief Breen asked this individual how he acquired this information. The individual told Chief Breen that another "person in Town" told him that he had heard about it on the police scanner that evening. As Chief Breen had not been informed of this alleged incident by the police authorities, he made inquiries to investigate the truthfulness of these rumors that had been passed on to him. After speaking with State Police and County Dispatch, Chief Breen dropped further investigation as he was told that there had been no dispatch on such an alleged incident from any Police Authority. Chief Breen went to S. Lennon's home on the evening of Monday, July 2 to inform him of the actions he had taken as described above.
10. S. Lennon addressed Chief Breen and the meeting to state how upset he was to hear from Chief Breen that he had acted on hearsay and rumors in a manner that cast a negative light on his (S. Lennon's) professional reputation with the police and legal authorities with which he works. Mr. Lennon is an Officer of the Massachusetts Trial Court and Operations Manager for the Security Department at Williams College. J. Huebner told Chief Breen that in his opinion Chief Breen used poor judgment by acting on hearsay and had as a result contributed to the spread of these rumors. Chief Breen replied that he acted to show he was responsible by contacting state police who don't always keep him informed. S. Lennon said that he was told by the authorities that Chief Breen is designated first responder on 911 calls by the police dispatchers. Chief Breen replied that the reality is that on many occasions the state police or fire are called before he is. Chief Breen mentioned that he had heard additional rumors since the alleged incident of 6/30 about a domestic dispute involving Mr. and Mrs. Lennon that occurred in another town. S. Lennon asked for the names of the people who had reported these rumors to Chief Breen. Chief Breen refused. J. Huebner asked to end the discussion at this point before any further rumors were spread. He stated again that he thought this business could have been handled differently. The Board will consider the issue again next Monday when the full Board will be in attendance. Until that time, J. Huebner asked all parties to reflect on the handling of this matter. The Board will conduct Chief Breen's performance review next week.
11. S. Lennon asked to have a copy of Chief Breen's Incident Day Report entered onto the public record.

12. J. Huebner asked Ed Bond to attend the Mapleview walk-through scheduled for Saturday, July fourteenth. E. Bond agreed to attend.
13. J. Huebner inquired about the doors and windows RFP. J. Nelson responded that she has begun work on this and has some questions on details of the technical description to discuss with E. Bond. She agreed to email him a draft of the report so he could see where further information was needed. J. Huebner reminded J. Nelson that MGL 30B applies to this RFP and that procurement procedures must be followed. J. Nelson agreed to review these.
14. D. Parnell addressed the Board on accounting issues. J. Huebner acknowledged that the Town had received a letter from the state DOR releasing the requested \$35,000. D.P concurred. Discussion of the Vadar software contract followed. J.Huebner agreed to get D. Parnell a copy of the Vadar contract. There is confusion about the renewal date. Vadar is asking the Town to renew now, but D. Parnell said that we are on a 5 year payback schedule so there should be more time under the contract. D. Parnell said that we need to continue using Vadar until he is able to make all needed updates to the Town's books. J. Huebner told D. Parnell that the letter written to former Treasurer Sandy Brazee had been returned undeliverable. J. Nelson confirmed this and added that we now have a better address for her and will re-send the letter. D. Parnell asked for clarification on Town fees. J. Huebner said that plumbers and other professional service providers get to keep 100 per cent of the fee. Electrical inspectors refund \$10.00 to the Town for administration.
15. J. Huebner asked D. Fish if he had gone through the formal hiring process for the highway department helper's job. D. Fish said that he had not. J. Huebner asked him to do so and bring in 2 or 3 candidates. D. Fish agreed to do so. D. Spencer and B. Phillips will assist with the interviews.
16. J.Huebner has received the state aid report on Highways. He asked D. Fish for an update on activity. D. Fish reported that he took down ten old and rotted trees on Johnson Hill Road today. J. Hostetter reported that she received a phone call from a Johnson Hill Rd. resident this evening asking to have a dangerous tree removed near the corner with the conservation property. D. Fish will look into this. He plans to put a new sleeve in on Upper Valley Rd. culvert. J. Huebner will talk to USDA about how the new beaver screens will be maintained. D. Fish learned that there is no Mass. standard for unpaved road maintenance. DOT recommended that we use the engineer's drawings for major projects affecting our roads. D. Fish confirmed that our requirements for Pugzee Farm road conform with general DOT guidelines. He is trying to get all his paperwork in order for the end of the fiscal year.
17. S. Lennon made a motion that Washington 911 calls go directly from County dispatch to the state police, not to Chief Breen. J. Huebner seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson to type up this decision of the Board as voted so that S. Lennon could hand deliver the information to the State Police and the County Sheriff's office tomorrow.

18. J. Huebner reported no word from Lawyer on personnel handbook.
19. Mike Burke asked that all Town vehicles be inspected. J. Huebner asked D. Fish to get that done.
20. J. Huebner asked about the recent Mass Broadband installation at Town Hall. J. Nelson, alternate Wired West representative, explained that the box installed is not live at this time. MBI will probably not "light up" the network until early 2013. At that time the Town will have to choose an ISP to get internet service. There are four ports available in that box. One could be for a modem which, if placed centrally, could provide wireless internet throughout the Town Hall. The other 3 ports could be used for secure lines, say to the Treasurer, police chief etc.
21. J. Huebner called Hinsdale and Dalton on the Blotz Rd. weight restriction but has received no replies.
22. J. Huebner reported that M. Case received a letter from Sen. Downing confirming that he had authored a bill for \$750,000 for Washington Mountain road repaving. He is now trying to get that passed. He is hopeful but still urged the Town to go ahead with the application for Mass. Works Infrastructure funds. J. Huebner sent a thank you to Sen. Downing on behalf of the Town.
23. J. Huebner stated that he also wants to apply for some of the grants offered by MIIA insurance for municipal projects. He wondered if we could apply for funds to cover the cost of the personnel handbook. He will call MIIA to discuss this
24. Karen Avelle told the Board that computer consultant John Les will write a proposal to the Town for updating Assessors' and other town computers.
25. J. Huebner reported learning that \$5 million in grants are available to towns for Mass. Cultural activities and facilities. He asked if we can we use any of this. Residents in attendance suggested the Hill Town Hoot, COA and Pumpkin Walk might all benefit. J.Huebner to follow up with details on grant next week.
26. J. Huebner asked Treasurer C. Briggs for an update. She responded that she has not found an HR course yet and will work on the Mass UI report and Mass municipal health report
27. J. Huebner made a motion that the Town pay \$451.00 in annual dues to the Mass Municipal Assn. S.Lennon seconded and the vote to approve was unanimous.
28. J. Huebner made a motion that the Town pay the Mass Municipal Personnel Association (MMPA) \$100.00 dues for annual membership. S.Lennon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

29. J. Huebner asked Administrative Assistant J. Hostetter for her update. She continues with work to sort out Town Hall phone numbers and to get Verizon to clarify numbers and to correct wiring so that all offices have phone service. She asked J. LaPier if he could do the wiring to correct phone confusion. Regarding the mail process, J. Hostetter said that she collects the mail a couple times weekly. She slips it under the appropriate doors and the rest goes in the trays marked by committee in the hallway. She keeps the selectmen's and BOH mail. D. Parnell has been concerned about a couple of White Wolf missing invoices. M. Lampro is working on this now. J. Huebner asked D. Fish to call Verizon and change the address for phone bills that now go to the Highway garage and have them addressed instead to D. Parnell at Town Hall. J. Hostetter told the Board that many of the 2013 appointments have been confirmed. She will contact all to be sure they are sworn in by the Town Clerk. She reported some questions from people who were hired and appointed. J. Huebner confirmed that they still need to be sworn in. J. Hostetter asked if we want to renew the computer maintenance contract with Dell. She will get a copy of the agreement for the Board to review. She asked to have her performance review next week as she did not have time to complete the form. J. Huebner agreed.

30. S. Lennon made a motion to adjourn the Selectmen's meeting. J. Huebner seconded and by unanimous vote the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson