

Town of Washington Selectmen's Meeting – July 16, 2012

1. J. Huebner, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. S. Lennon and M. Case were also present for the Board.
2. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from 7/9/12 as written. M. Case seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.
3. Bill Olivera from Becket introduced himself to the Board. He is new selectman from Becket and was visiting to observe Washington's meeting. J. Huebner introduced the Washington Board to him. J. Huebner reported that Becket is interested in participating 100% in the Washington Mountain Road re-paving project. Mr. Olivera confirmed this. J. Huebner said that he had spoken to Ken Walto in Dalton regarding the weight limit on Blotz Rd. Dalton is in favor of the weight limit. Dalton also supports Washington on the Mountain Road paving project, but will not apply. Hinsdale has not replied yet to our inquiries about their position on the Blotz Rd. weight limit.
4. J. Huebner read a communication from DOER which announced that the state will give the Town as many energy saving light bulbs as it needs for municipal buildings. J. Huebner will fill out our order online and email to DOER. All the light bulbs must be installed by the end of August.
5. J. Huebner read J. Hostetter's adaptation of the template from BRPC for the Resolution Adopting the Berkshire County Hazard Mitigation Plan. J. Huebner made a motion that the Town adopts this Resolution. S. Lennon seconded. The resolution was duly signed by the Board. J. Huebner explained that by adopting the plan the Town is eligible for Pre-Disaster Mitigation grants and for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program grants. J. Huebner asked that J. Hostetter copy and mail the original to BRPC on Tuesday.
6. J. Huebner asked Chief Breen for the status of the school bus search. Chief Breen reported that he had received a quote from MHQ (under state contract) of \$31,359.00. This quote is for a 2012 8 passenger Ford Expedition. J. Huebner asked Chief Breen if there is a more fuel efficient vehicle we could consider. M. Case pointed out that Becket shares the gas cost. Chief Breen said that this price includes a number of features need for the bus. That includes: running boards for kids to get into and out of the high vehicle safely; 7B package – safety devices such as fire extinguishers and more visible lights on top. It also includes the Town's name on the doors.. Chief Breen suggested that we put the old vehicle out to bid to the Town. Lead time from purchase to delivery is usually six weeks. State law will require that the Vehicle be yellow by sometime next year. Chief Breen will verify this requirement as it may guide our choice of paint color. J. Huebner said that this purchase will have to be approved by the Town in Special Town Meeting. He will speak to D. Spencer of the Finance Committee about this. J. Huebner made a motion to purchase the vehicle as described. M. Case seconded and the vote was unanimous.

7. R. Borgnis presented the Board with cash receipts as follows: From COA \$19.00, from Chapel Committee \$76.00, which is the sum of one contribution of \$ 33.00 and a second for \$43.00. The Board thanked her.
8. J. Huebner reported that he had spoken to the MIIA about using a grant from their FY 13 Grant Program to defray the cost to the Town of the new personnel handbook. The MIIA encouraged the Town to apply for this grant. Our application will have to be submitted before July 23. Along with our grant application we will have to include a copy of the contract with Mr. DuPere. J. Hostetter will provide a copy of the contract from our files. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson to complete and submit the grant application. J. Nelson agreed to do so.
9. J. Huebner asked K. Walls of the Conservation Commission about the status of Upper Valley Road. K. Walls said that the road is dry and the water level is down. J. Huebner had spoken with the USDA and was assured that the USDA will maintain the new beaver dam and culvert at that site.
10. Regarding the \$5,000,000 available to towns in Mass. For cultural facilities, J. Huebner asked J. Nelson if she thought that the Historical Commission would be interested in making an application to winterize the Old Town Hall. J. Nelson said she would bring this up at the next Commission meeting.
11. J. Huebner addressed the Town Treasurer C. Briggs. He reported that the Town must name a primary representative to the MMPA. He asked C. Briggs if she would like to be designated and she agreed. C. Briggs will complete the form for her appointment. J. Huebner gave her the MMPA file. He suggested that she might find an HR course through that organization. C. Briggs inquired about the Town's practice of taking a \$10.00 fee from electricians who do work in Washington. M. Case made a motion to let the electricians keep 100% of their fees. S. Lennon seconded and the motion passed unanimously. J. Huebner reported that the Town had had an email reply to its letter to S. Brazee asking for return of \$1250.00 she paid herself for work allegedly done in March. She said that she had indeed worked in March processing 3 weeks of payroll and meeting with and training C. Briggs. She also attended a March 26 meeting on harassment. In light of this information and mindful of the cost of litigation, J. Huebner asked that the Town drop its effort to pursue recovering the money. The Board agreed with him. J. Huebner asked J. Hostetter to write a note to S. Brazee thanking her for her response to the Town's recent inquiry and for clarifying the work she had done for the Town in March and that consequently we no longer expect payment from her.
12. J. Huebner reported that he had called Mr. O'Connell at CSX to thank him for taking action on the flooding problems on Upper Valley Road

13. J. Huebner read an application from Frank Kennedy of the COA to continue with his computer classes on 7/17, 7/24 and 7/31 at Town Hall on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 12:00. J. Huebner made a motion to grant this permit, S. Lennon seconded and the Board approved unanimously.
14. J. Huebner asked D. Fish to update the Board on his hiring efforts, D.fish said that he had checked the application files and still likes his current helper Adam Southard better. He will, however, pick out 2 or 3 candidates and complete the required search and interview process. D. Spencer and B. Philips to help with interviewing.
15. D. Parnell said that he had looked at the Vadar contract. The Town does have a 3 year contract with them, even though the payments stretch over 5 years. We will have to renew the contract. D.Parnell will check details in the new contract to be sure they don't change from the current version. He will call Vadar to confirm that we will renew.
16. M. Case asked D. Fish about the disabled Town truck on Frost Road. D. Fish put gravel down on Road to absorb the leaking oil. He put signs up and flares around the truck. He will clean up the road tomorrow.
17. J. Huebner inquired about the Mapleview walk through held Saturday, 7/14 from 9:00 to noon at the old nursing home. J. Nelson reported that she and E. Bond were there for the entire scheduled time with only one party looking at the property. That party was Eyal Shappira of Pugzees Farm . He expressed some interest in converting the structure into an upscale dog kennel and took a copy of the RFP. J. Huebner said that the town may soon have to make a decision on the disposition of the property.
18. J. Huebner inquired about the status of the Town Hall Windows and Doors Invitation to Bid. J. Nelson reported that she and E. Bond had met on this and reviewed her draft to date. E. Bond explained to her additional work needed to the bid proposal. She said that she would try to complete the draft for the Board's review next week.
19. J. Huebner addressed D. Fish again and asked him to see about the step at the doorway of the Old Town Hall. It has apparently sunk over the years. It is a long step down and unsafe. D. Fish said he has already raised the step.
20. J. Huebner told D. Fish that P. Clark will follow up with Westfield Wild and Scenic about the culverts on Cross Place and at Eden Glen. J. Huebner asked D, Fish how much we should seek for damage repair from CSX for Upper Valley Road. D. Fish said that from entrance to CSX property to George Lai's house to past Proctor's property had been damaged. A 3 to 4 inch overlay would probably be about \$65,000. J. Huebner asked for specs from D. Fish. He also asked for any costs incurred by Town as a result of flooding there. D. Fish will work on this.
21. J. Huebner raised the subject of the state infrastructure grant to re-pave Washington Mt. Rd. Becket will participate in that application. In a separate initiative, Sen. Downing asked for

\$750,000 for the paving project. D. Fish said that this will not be enough money to do the whole road. The whole road divides up as follows: 7 miles in Washington, Dalton 3 miles, Becket 2 miles. Cold in place re-surface is very costly. Town can pay for chip seal for its 7 miles. Infrastructure grant is a way for the 3 towns to cooperate and share cost of an effective, long-lasting job. Discussion of what the cost will be. Bill Olivera will talk to Becket about participating in one or both of these efforts to secure funding. Becket will apply for their portion separately. M. Case will talk to Dalton selectmen with whom he is acquainted. He mentioned John Boyle. The best approach may be 3 separate applications. D. Fish to confirm cost estimate from Cathy Stevens.

22. J. Huebner read an invitation to a retirement party for Police Chief McGarrey of Sheffield. No one was available to go from the Board.
23. J. Huebner called for Chief Breen's performance review. Chief Breen indicated that he was ready for the review and asked that it be held in Executive session. J. Huebner told Chief Breen that to proceed with an executive session, he will have to waive his right to 48 hrs. notice of the executive session. Chief Breen agreed to sign a waiver to this effect. J. Huebner made a motion to go into executive session on the understanding that Chief Breen will waive in writing his right to 48 hours notice of such session. J. Huebner asked for a roll call of votes on this motion. S. Lennon, M. Case and J. Huebner all voted in the affirmative. J. Huebner asked that the meeting room be cleared of all persons but Board members, Chief Breen and J. Nelson, who was recording the minutes. S. Lennon announced that he would recuse himself from the discussion. J. Huebner acknowledged this but asked that S. Lennon continue to sit with the Board through the meeting. S. Lennon agreed. J. Huebner called the executive session to order at 8:20. PM. Minutes of this session are confidential and are recorded separately.
24. Having concluded the Executive Session in which Chief Breen's performance review was conducted, J. Huebner called on J. Hostetter for her review. She told J. Huebner that she had not prepared her review form yet and asked to have the review next week at the selectmen's meeting. J. Huebner said that he was frustrated by this as she had already re-scheduled the review several times, but agreed to conduct her review next week on 7/23. He further said that one issue he has is with her missing deadlines. He said that at her last performance review they had agreed that she would have the minutes completed by Wednesday following the meeting. J. Hostetter agreed that she had been late over 90% of the time with the minutes. J. Huebner remarked that she was the Town's highest paid employee and that she was failing in her primary duty. J. Huebner said that there was also an issue of missing minutes. She said that she had been working to reconstruct the missing minutes and was almost done. She did not know how the notes could have been lost from the recorder, but they had been. J. Huebner asked her to send the recreated, missing minutes to him by this Wednesday. When J. Huebner mentioned that she had missed the Board of Health grant deadline, she told him that she had prepared the paperwork on time and put it in the Town mail box for pick-up by our carrier, but that he had

failed to take that mail. It was still there the next morning. She said that this had happened several times lately.

25. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the selectmen's meeting at 8:58. S. Lennon seconded the motion and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____