

Town of Washington Board of Selectmen's Meeting - September 17, 2012

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. J. Huebner and M. Case attending for the Board.
2. After the assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from 9/10. M. Case seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Chief Breen addressed the Board and proposed that Peter Blake be our Veterans' agent. Chief Breen said that he had decided to step down from that post. The Board replied to Chief Breen that P. Blake should come in to discuss this post with the selectmen. M. Case said that he went to school with P. Blake, a long term acquaintance. Chief Breen will ask P. Blake to appear before the Board as requested.
4. J. Huebner read a letter from the Dalton Select Board into the record. They want to meet to discuss our proposed weight restriction on Blotz/Kirchner Road. Mr. Boynton from Dalton signed the letter. J. Huebner will follow up with Selectman Bruce Martin from Hinsdale on this same issue
5. By way of update, J. Huebner reported that he has received no word from FEMA or on the Eden Glen project from Westfield Wild and Scenic. There are no developments on Mapleview, but he is speaking with BRPC about possible demolition funding.
6. Regarding the expression of interest from Ultimate Energy Source, J. Huebner said that the company has determined that the area's energy needs are not large enough to justify their investment in a ground-mounted solar farm in the town. They said that they will follow up with another firm which might be interested.
7. J. Huebner read an update from the state on the Green Communities initiative. An average of \$125,000 in grant money has been awarded to each of the state's 103 Green Communities for energy saving projects to date this fiscal year. One half of all state residents live in Green Communities. All of the funding for these grants comes out of fines levied on utilities for their wasteful energy practices.
8. At 7:10 p.m. J. Huebner announced that he was suspending the Selectmen's Meeting to take up the classification hearing. He called the classification hearing to order and assessor Karen Lavalle read her department's report into the record. A copy of this document is attached to these minutes. K. LaValle said that the Town's tax rate won't be set until the state approves our numbers. She asked that the Board sign a document certifying that they had the certification

hearing. (Jim- did Karen present a form for you to sign? Voices on the recorder are too soft to hear at this point)

9. At 7:15 p.m. J. Huebner announced that the classification hearing was over. He re-convened the Selectmen's Meeting.
10. J. Huebner asked D. Fish for the Highway Department update. D. Fish reported that he had talked to Phil Clark regarding the Upper Valley Rd repairs and flooding. D. Fish has pictures of the flooding preserved to document the damage there over the past 2 years. He is ready to start now on an extensive chip sealing program throughout the Town. He mentioned Middlefield Road, Lower Valley Road, Simmons Road, Summit Hill, Johnson Hill and others. He estimated that it will take one and a half weeks to complete chip sealing these roads. He has new street warning signs for "Slow Children" to be placed on Frost and Washington Mt. Roads. J. Huebner asked him to get contact information from Jodi for the medical testing company. He is to report the names of Town employees with CDL licenses for random testing. A. Southard will take a re-test for his CDL permit. D. Fish reported that he had to call in an electronics technician to do repairs on the loader. A relay was replaced. D. Fish reported that he needs WMECO to move one pole before winter plowing. It is located on Middlefield Road. He needs them to move a line from the Verizon pole to the new WMECO pole. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson to draft a letter from the Selectmen to WMECO to give them a deadline for this work. There are important safety considerations involved. D. Fish to provide pole numbers. J. Huebner inquired about Tom Soules attendance at work. D. Fish said that he reported to work every day this week. D. Fish has been using a temp employee over the past few weeks. J. Huebner cautioned that this can't go on too long. It is reasonable to use a temp part time to fill in on vacations, but not as a regular practice when the department is fully staffed.
11. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson to write a letter regarding the trees hitting Verizon's lines on Washington Mt. Road and Verizon's refusal to trim the trees or take any action until the trees brought their lines down. J. Huebner will sign and send this letter to the Public Service Commission.
12. K. Laws reported that the Planning Board is still working on small business listings. They did not have Sept. meeting.
13. Peter Blake joined the meeting to officially volunteer for the veterans' agent position. J. Huebner told him that the Town will pay mileage and tuition for the annual meeting. M. Case made a motion to accept Peter Blake as vets officer. J. Huebner seconded and the vote was unanimous. P. Blake is to speak with the Treasurer to get on payroll and get sworn in by the Town Clerk. He should see Chief Breen for the veterans' department archives. P. Blake asked about the Town's interest in a veterans' memorial. J. Huebner expressed the Board's interest in any suggestions for the department. He reminded P. Blake that any expenditures will have to be approved at the next Annual Town Meeting.

14. J. Huebner commented on the following documents received and issues raised:

A. He announced that there will be a meeting in October of Board of Health members in either Taunton or Marlborough. The Town will not attend.

B. The Metropolitan Planning Organization will meet in Pittsfield on October 1. J. Huebner made a motion to appoint himself representative. M. Case seconded and the vote was unanimous. He will attend this meeting.

C. The Town received a bulletin from the State warning town officials to be careful in accepting donations. Officials should not pressure people to donate their time or money to town organizations.

D. Westfield Wild and Scenic will meet on September 20. This notice to be posted. WW&S visited 2 locations in Washington and will send summary of their findings and recommendations.

E. He read notice of a Lee public hearing about demolition of abandoned trailers. To be posted.

F. He read notice of a BC/AC fundraising dinner in Williamstown next month at The Orchards. Anyone can attend. To be posted.

G. The Town will contribute to funding the Center Pond Beach recreation facility next year. Becket has agreed to this arrangement.

H. The Town has received a Chapter 90 local road funding survey which asks for our best estimate of what it would cost to keep our roads in good shape on an annual basis over 12 years. This survey is high priority for the state. D. Fish said that we have 30 miles of paved roads and about 14 miles of dirt roads. J. Huebner completed the survey on the spot and concluded that the Town will need \$1,000,000 each year for 12 years to re-build and maintain all of our roads.

I. J. Huebner will attend the Selectmen's breakfast on 9/12 in Williamstown.

J. The state has approved Ch. 90 funds for chip sealing in the amount of \$314,000. D. Fish to make copies of these documents.

K. The Town has received documentation that The Nature Conservancy is blocking the Town's access to North Lake. They have installed a chain at waist height across the access road at the parking area in Middlefield. This is a danger to the public, especially to snowmobilers. D. Spencer visited the site and confirmed this is the case in an email to the Town Select Board and

to the Middlefield Select Board. The Town will object to this action taken by TNC. J. Huebner will confer with Town Counsel Pollard.

L. J. Huebner said that open action items from 9/10 will remain in effect.

M. At 8:34 J. Huebner motioned to adjourn the meeting. J. Case seconded and the adjournment vote was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson