

Town of Washington Selectmen's Meeting – Feb. 25, 2013

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 6:56. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, M. Case and S. Lennon.
2. After leading the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of 2/11/2013. M. Case seconded the motion and the vote to accept the minutes was unanimous.
3. Addressing the evening's agenda, J. Huebner asked if any residents wished to continue the discussion of Pugzee's Farm from the 2/11/2013 Selectmen's meeting. Hearing no response and no discussion, he then recognized Chief Breen who wished to update the Board on his efforts to secure the emergency radio. He reported that he had been in touch with Motorola about this. They are coming to Town Hall to install the radio in the hallway closet with a speaker into his office. He has also spoken to the Veterans Administration about our financial issues. They agreed to pay us once paperwork is complete on their end and if they determine that we are owed the funds we believe are due to the Town for veterans' benefits. Chief Breen also told the Board that he will have exploratory knee surgery next week. The Board wished him a speedy recovery and thanked him for tying up these loose ends at this time.
4. J. Huebner asked D. Fish about the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) survey. D. Fish had not called the BRPC, believing that the DPW already has a good understanding of the condition of Town roads. J. Huebner suggested that one advantage of signing up for the survey is that the information it will provide may make it easier to get additional funding from Mass. DOT. Since we are now off the federal funding list for highway projects, any future money for road work will have to come from the state.

D. Fish said that one thing we can do immediately to help preserve the condition of the roads, especially on the Mountain Road, is to lower the speed limit. He said that the Mountain Road really needs a road bed repair. After three years any resurfacing will deteriorate due to the unstable road bed. J. Huebner will draft a letter to DOT requesting a lowering of the speed limit on the Mountain Road. Several residents commented on the excessive speed of many cars using that road and the safety hazards it creates. J. Huebner said he will put these highway issues on the agenda for discussion at next week's meeting.

D. Fish reported that he had filed an initial assessment with MEMA for the February 8 and 9 storms. There is of course no guarantee that we will receive any funding. He applied for full machinery earnings in the amount of \$19,000. The award could be more if they accept his assessment. D. Spencer Chair of the Finance Committee made the point that we can't overspend on the winter roads budget without sign off from the Board. He asked for a joint Selectmen's and Finance Committee meeting to discuss next year's budget for the DPW. There will be a joint meeting with the Capital Assets committee on March 11 at 7:30.

5. J. Huebner reported receiving a gracious letter from Dr. Cameron, Superintendent of the CBRSD, regarding his pointing out an error in calculating the school budget. Dr. Cameron agreed that a mistake was made in calculation of the Town's assessment. J. Huebner signed a reply to Dr.

Cameron, thanking him in turn for his dedication to providing the best possible education for the students of the District.

6. J. Huebner asked S. Lennon to contact the Berkshire County Sheriff's Office to ask him about the reasons for the steep increase in the Town's assessment. Our new assessment totals \$8287.00, which is a significant rise over last year.
7. J. Huebner reported receipt of the following notices and other correspondence:
 - a. Lee notice of public meeting regarding a special permit for a Friendly's Restaurant sign on 3/13/2013; a request for a variance on a resident's septic system to be heard on 3/13/2013; and a Planning Board meeting for 3/11/2013. These notices will be posted in Town Hall.
 - b. Westfield Wild and Scenic will meet on 3/28/2013 at the Chester Railroad Depot.
 - c. Complete calendar of MIIA municipal training courses for February through June of 2013.
 - d. From BRPC, an update on Sustainable Berkshires activities including Energy and Climate workshops to be held this week on Feb. 26 (Lenox) and 27 (North Adams). Both at 6:30.
 - e. From MEMA, a 3 day course on advanced application of the Incident Command System to be given on March 27, 28 and 29 in Agawam.
 - f. Notice of several upcoming Legislative Breakfast Meetings. J. Huebner may attend.
8. J. Huebner asked S. Lennon if he had any information on a stage curtain available through Williams College. S. Lennon replied that there was no curtain available presently, but that he was watching for this and would let the Board know if one became available through the College's furniture recycling program. The surplus furniture from Williams remaining in the Auditorium will need to be disposed of as Town offices have claimed those pieces they need already.
9. J. Huebner reported that J. Nelson has begun work on the Public Health Mini-Grant Application.
10. J. Huebner reported that the Board has still received no response from CSX to our letter and damage claim for flood damage to Upper Valley Road.
11. J. Huebner read the Selectmen's monthly letter and made a motion to accept it. M. Case seconded and the vote to accept the letter as written was unanimous. However, a resident asked that if the Town History Book is now available in electronic form on the Town's website shouldn't that be mentioned in the letter. The Board agreed and J. Huebner amended the previous motion, to include in the Selectmen's letter a sentence to the effect that the Town's History Book is also available on the web site. M. Case seconded and the amended motion was passed unanimously.
12. D. Spencer raised several budget questions. It was decided that we will keep the veterans' agent funding at the current level unless the actuals are higher. Similarly, the Health Agent fees should stay the same for FY 2014. It was \$2000 last year, though it may go higher. Dan Parnell can track the actuals.
13. D. Spencer, as Moderator, convened the Special Town Meeting at 7:30. He led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Allison Mikaniewicz, Town Clerk, took the minutes of the STM

meeting. They are attached to these Selectmen's minutes. D. Spencer adjourned the STM at 8:30 pm.

14. At 8:31 pm J. Huebner reconvened the Selectmen's meeting to complete discussion of the remaining agenda items.
15. J. Huebner signed the COA grant formula document for R. Borgnis, Chair of the COA.
16. J. Huebner signed the Bucksteep Manor liquor license. The Town had withheld the license until P. Mikaniewicz re-inspected the premises to confirm that the kitchen grease vent cleaning was done. As the kitchen has now passed inspection, the Board signed the license.
17. J. Huebner signed J. Hostetter's application for a Notary Public license. The Town is grateful to her for becoming a Notary as she will provide back-up to the Town Clerk in this capacity as well as being available to notarize documents as needed on other occasions.
18. J. Huebner asked C. Briggs if she has had a chance yet to do the online Ethics and Conflict of Interest course which the state requires. He also asked her to contact Town Counsel to clarify the process for the Town's auction of the Mapleview property. J. Huebner will email her the RFP again.
19. C. Briggs mentioned that there have been some price increases in the Town's FY 14 employee insurance from The Berkshire County Insurance Group. Dental plans are up \$2.00 to \$37.00 for an individual and up by \$4.00 to \$89.00 for a family. The Life Insurance price is not yet set. C. Briggs agreed that the way to handle the job descriptions in the Personnel Handbook is to include them as an addendum. The Administrative Assistants will proceed with the production of the books on this basis.
20. J. Hostetter sent a link to M. Jarvie to access the DOR letter. Once the books are finally closed J. Hostetter will finish the Annual Reports.
21. WMECO sent the Town an Annual Electric Review. M. Case will read this.
22. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the Selectmen's meeting at 8:47. M. Case seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson