

Town of Washington Selectmen's Meeting – April 29, 2013

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. 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 April 22. M. Case seconded the motion and the minutes were accepted.
3. J. Huebner recognized Ken Walto, Town Manager and Gabrielle Taglieri, Manager of the Operations Center, of Dalton. They had been invited to speak to the Town about the emergency 911 service which Dalton provides to Windsor and Hinsdale in addition to its own residents. The Board was interested in hearing about the service as an alternative to using the County Sheriff's dispatch service which we are using presently. Dalton has been providing emergency dispatch since 1995. G. Taglieri said that she grew up in Washington and was Police Officer here for a time. Dalton dispatches to police, fire and highway departments. Dalton has 4 dispatchers who work on rotating shifts, with one person working per shift.

She cautioned us about the complexity of having Dalton pick up all of our emergency communications. It may not be accepted by Becket fire department. All dispatches might have to be passed to Chief Breen or the State Police who would then forward them on. Being well acquainted with Washington, she knows that she can't communicate with all parts of the Town. There would be dead areas with no reception. She said that the cost for communication equipment is high. A small basic Motorola repeater costs \$5000. Dalton would have to investigate just where they can and cannot reach with their signal. Motorola would have to come to check the coverage out. The Town would own any repeaters purchased. D. Spencer suggested that we cooperate with Becket on this project. They have 5 towers. Chief Breen said that it is hard to call Dalton from here, but easy to get the Sheriff's dept. from just about anywhere in Town. There are line of sight issues. D. Fish mentioned that he has problems reaching across town with his new radios.

K. Walto offered to review his operations budget and estimate charges. He currently has an operations budget of \$190,000 yearly. He does get some grants. They cover about half of the budget. He estimated that Washington would have about 60% of the calls Windsor receives. Chief Breen confirmed that we have about 300-400 calls per year. Under Dalton's program that would cost us about \$4000 per year, considerably less than the Sheriffs current bill. K. Walto said that the more towns using their dispatch system the more likely it would be that the grants would continue. They would like to find a way to provide our emergency communications service. It would benefit both towns. J. Huebner said that it seems worth pursuing. G. Taglieri said that she will talk to

Becket first. She believed the plan would only work if we both come in together. G. Taglieri said that it would be a long haul for them to dispatch to all of Becket. Ken Walto provided the Board with a copy of Dalton's FY 14 Communications Center Operating Budget and the Intermunicipal Agreement For the Use of the Dalton Regional Communication Center Between the Towns of Dalton and Hinsdale.

4. V. Breen told the Board that the school bus has been inspected now, even though it was not required. K. Sharp said that he would like to read the documentation.
5. The Board addressed the issue of fees for Town Hall usage. The Board does not want to charge fees if the user is a resident and the activity is sponsored by a Town organization such as the COA. Both Frank Kennedy and Heidi Nugent were present and spoke on this issue since they give classes at Town Hall. Both of them have permits signed by the Board. The Board decided that under these usage guidelines they will waive the fee. They asked J. Hostetter to give H. Nugent a Town Hall key and alarm pass card. E. Bond observed that since all offices are locked now there will be no security issues.
6. J. Huebner asked D. Parnell for an update on the emergency preparedness grant. D. Parnell said that he had no new information about the grant.
7. E. Bond asked about the wood dumped on the ball field. D. Fish said that it was too big to chip and he had left it there for residents to help themselves. S. Lennon expressed interested in taking some of the wood for his campfire use. D. Fish has been cutting down trees since last week at the request of C. Willis the tree warden. He wondered if perhaps he should push some of the downed trees back into the woods instead of hauling them out. He received from Tom Delaney a 4-option estimate for paving the rear Town Hall parking lot. None of the other contractors he called, called back. We want to pave only the most broken up segment nearest the handicapped entrance. He is working to get a trapper and may need a permit extension. He said that the state may want to inspect Depot Brook. He attended the FEMA meeting at Berkshire Community College. We may get \$15,000.
8. J. Huebner asked C. Briggs for an activity update. She is still trying to find a less expensive payroll company. She has not yet investigated the unemployment insurance issue. She met with one auctioneer for Mapleview and will talk with another. She did not receive an incident report from Tom Soules. She informed the insurance company about this. Chief Breen told him to report it and he did not do so. So he does not have a claim.
9. Roy Bryan of Westfield Wild and Scenic addressed the Board. He reminded them that the stream crossing class will happen again on June 17. D. Fish plans to attend. Roy told the Board that we can apply for a free engineering inspection of the Town's stream crossings through WW&S. We need to fill out a form and apply by 5/15 to get on the list. The engineers may make proposals to the Town. Roy will forward the form by email to

us. D. Fish is going on vacation the last 2 weeks in May but hopes that we can do the inspection.

10. J. Huebner commented on the following correspondence and issues:

- a. CSX told him that we didn't completely fill out the damage claim form. J. Huebner replied to them and got an acknowledgement. He will forward the email to the Administrative Assistant to put in the record. He also received the CSX yearly right of way management plan.
- b. There will be a meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Operation Committee tomorrow.
- c. He has identified another solar energy company potentially interested in installing panels on the Town Hall roof to generate electricity for Town Buildings at a reduced rate. The company is Vanguard Solar.
- d. There will be a Board of Health training course given at BCC on 7/17 from 2:30 to 5:30. He requested that all Board members attend this.
- e. Incident response training covering several emergency issues, including bombings, will be given in Northampton on Sat. May 18. S. Lennon may attend.
- f. He also received information on a program called "Building a Safer Tomorrow" coming up at the Worcester Conference Center.
- g. The Mass. Municipal Management Association will hold its spring conference at Cranwell.
- h. He made a motion to accept the May Board letter as written. M. Case seconded and the vote to accept was unanimous.
- i. BRPC is working on an Economic Development Strategy for the region. They are looking for projects. J. Huebner said that if Mapleview fails to find a buyer through auction perhaps the BRPC could help us.
- j. We have not gotten status on the Hazard Mitigation Grant for which the Town applied.

11. D. Fish asked the Board if he should get another \$1.00 raise. The Board affirmed that. He asked for a \$1 for his crew member A. Southard contingent on him getting his hydraulic license. The raises would be effective July 1.

12. V. Breen told the Board that we have one Voc Ed student going to McCann next year, and Becket will have 2 students for McCann. He will confirm transportation plans with Becket after the new town manager is appointed. He asked if there is money in place for a new bus. D. Spencer told him that there is no money in the budget for this. We can have a special to buy a new bus if we need to. Chief Breen suggested that a used vehicle would be adequate. J. Huebner agreed.

13. J. Huebner reported that he had received an email forwarded by the Town Clerk. The sender was a Judith Helmer who wants to place a memorial plaque in the Chapel at

Bucksteep. She already paid \$500 to the Chapel Committee for a plaque for Mildred LaBarbara and that has not been installed yet. The donors are upset and will visit this summer.

14. Chief Breen has decided to leave his retirement money where it is.
15. J. Hubner asked D. Spencer and the Finance Committee to take up the Town budget review in preparation for the May 11 Annual Town Meeting. Peter Borgnis and David Weisbrod attended from the Finance Committee in addition to Chairman Spencer. D. Spencer told the Board that the Planning Committee had requested that their By-Laws go first on the agenda. The Selectmen agreed to that request.
16. A line by line review and discussion of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant followed. The finished Warrant is attached to these minutes.
17. J. Huebner made a motion to go into recess while J. Hostetter made changes to the draft Warrant and prepared a final version for Selectmen's signatures. M. Case seconded. The vote to approve was unanimous and the recess began at 9:10 pm.
18. At 9:25 J. Huebner made a motion to call the Selectmen's meeting back into session. S. Lennon seconded and motion to resume the meeting was unanimous.
19. All Board members signed the prepared Annual Meeting Warrant. Three copies of the Warrant were given to Chief Breen to post.
20. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous at 9:35pm.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson

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