

Town of Washington Board of Selectmen's Meeting – May 13, 2013

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, S. Lennon and M. Case.
2. After leading the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from May 6, 2013. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. Frank Kennedy presented his invoice to the Board for 3 years of web hosting in the amount of \$204.00. The previous bill had been for 5 years. The Board thanked him for his work on the Town web site and signed off on the invoice. It is to be paid out of the Selectmen's account and will be given to D. Parnell for timely processing. F. Kennedy pointed out that he needs to pay the bill in June and hopes to have the funds in the account by then. The Board also thanked him for projecting the warrant at the Annual Town Meeting. They thought it very helpful and had received positive comments from attendees. J. Huebner encouraged him to speak with D. Parnell about his ideas on finding a less costly municipal accounting software package.
4. Chief Breen delivered to the Board 3 years of additional accident/incident reports from the state police for Washington Mountain Road. Chief Breen noted that he had moved the electronic radar trailer to Frost Rd. in response to last week's complaint about speeding vehicles at that location. The Board signed a letter to Lt. Blackmear at the Cheshire State Police Barracks requesting that the police monitor Frost Road for 30 days to address the ongoing problem of speed violations and endangerment to residents of that area. Chief Breen is working to get new American flags for the Town. He expressed the desire to have a new Washington town flag designed. He suggested that we hold a contest for the design and perhaps get the local school children involved in some way. The Board was supportive of this idea and asked him to put an item in the Tracks to this effect. He will also talk to the Principal at Becket Washington School about the idea. The Board clarified that the flag design would not be limited to children's efforts.
5. Veterans' agent Peter Blake reported to the Board that he had placed markers on all the veterans' graves in the Town cemeteries in preparation for Memorial Day. He had found the cemeteries in poor condition with much erosion, damaged and fallen grave markers. He estimated as much as \$20,000 in repairs needed. He suggested that we might want to photograph the remaining veterans' headstones that are very weathed and will soon be unreadable. S. Lennon offered to speak with Sexton Dick Grillon about the condition of the cemeteries. D. Spencer told the Board that we have a Cemetery headstone repair fund available. P. Blake gave the Board a large American flag to fly outside Town Hall. This is a special flag his family had received from the government upon the death of one of its members in active service. He donated this flag to the Town. The Board received it with sincere appreciation.
6. R. Wiley addressed the Board with a complaint about beaver damage on his property. The Board told him that as the damage was on private property the Town cannot be involved with the beaver control. He was advised that he can hire a professional to trap the beaver if he wishes.

7. S. Nelson updated the board on status of Wired West's efforts to bring broadband internet to the Town. A very positive development is that MBI, the builder of the middle mile from the Rt. 91 backbone to the towns, is moving toward partnering with Wired West to finish the job and deliver internet connections to homes and businesses. MBI has received \$40,000,000 for this from the state and will need to raise more money from various sources, including a large grant from the Federal government. MBI has recognized that Wired West, with its 42 town cooperative, represents the people and towns of western Massachusetts. They value the work Wired West has done in mapping town infrastructure and pole locations, developing a data base of potential customers, and developing a detailed financial pro-forma estimating the cost of finishing the job. The Board asked what monthly charges would be. S. Nelson thought that they would be equal to or less than the cost of cable. MBI's connection to Town Hall should be live by the end of the summer. Connection to homes will not be available until the last mile is built.
8. J. Huebner mentioned that he had given a detailed interview to an Eagle reporter about the outcome of Washington's Annual Town Meeting. Nothing has been published in the paper yet, though all other towns seem to have been covered. He said that the Board is considering changing the date of the ATM from Saturday night to a week night. Thursday before the second Saturday in May has been suggested. Any change to this date will have to be approved at a Special Town Meeting as it is established by By-law. J. Huebner will put this proposal in the Tracks for residents to consider.
9. There was a complaint to the Board about mold in the refrigerator. J. Hostetter generously volunteered to clean the refrigerator. J. Huebner asked J. Hostetter for an update on the Transfer Station permit renewal. She told him that she had been working with Michelle Lampro on this. J. Huebner suggested that the permit should be held at the Transfer Station in the future. He congratulated the Administrative Assistants on their successful application for a Public Health Mini-Grant from the state. They will organize an evening program on mosquito and tick-borne diseases and how to keep your family safe from them over the summer. J. Hostetter reported that she is just waiting for input from the Town Clerk and D. Parnell in order to finish up the Annual Reports.
10. J. Huebner set the date for the Special Town Meeting for June 24. On the agenda will be settling a few financial details and voting on the wireless communication by-law.
11. C. Briggs told the Board that she had called the newspapers regarding inserting public notice about the Maplevue auction, set for June 1 at 11:00 am. We do still have enough time to post. We have to be sure that the payment rules are made clear. The Board decided to hold the auction on site at Lover's Lane unless the weather is bad, in which case it will be held at Town Hall. The building will be open to view from 10:00 to 11:00. Because the property is zoned residential, any other use will have to be approved by the Planning Board. This information should also be made clear to buyers. J. Huebner asked C. Briggs to put together a one page summary of the facts about the auction and the property. C. Briggs had no news on the bi-weekly payroll or unemployment projects. J. Huebner directed her to see Jodi Hostetter for the Annual Town Meeting results regarding payroll and raises.

12. J. Huebner asked D. Fish for his update. D. Fish told the Board that he had moved the “Children” signs on Frost Road to be more visible to drivers approaching the sharp curve and steep hill. He continues to take down diseased trees. He has piled much wood in the ball field at the rear of the Town Park. No one has taken the big trees yet. There is a lot of good hardwood there. He is aware that the Town could be getting \$255,000 from Chapter 90 funds, though he is not optimistic. He toured Kirchner Road with Cathy Stevens of DOT. He believes we could be getting some funding for repairs there from the state. J. Huebner read him information from the MSPCA regarding their beaver deceivers. D. Fish said that our town-constructed deceivers are working well and there is no reason to contract for this service. He is still working on Washington Mountain Road drainage. He needs NOI approval to place stones in culverts.

13. J. Huebner read correspondence announcing training on regional collaboration for emergency management in Worcester on 6/3. He has received no word from Rose Borgnis on the as yet un-mounted memorial plaque in the Chapel. He sent a note to Maureen Borgnis about this. He had talked to Ken Walto about further details of Washington purchasing 911 dispatch from Dalton. This discussion will be on-going until feasibility and pricing are decided. He will discuss this with Becket next week. He announced that we have received a \$10,000 settlement offer from CSX for the damage to Upper Valley Road. M. Case suggested that we offer to split the difference with CSX and ask for \$22,500 instead. Our original claim was for \$35,000. The Board decided to take M. Case’s suggestion and will respond to CSX accordingly. The Town continues to look for a solar array partner. J. Huebner has spoken to CBRSD about joining us in this project.

14. J. Huebner moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 pm. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson

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