

Washington Board of Selectmen's Meeting – June 10, 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 attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of June 3, 2014. M. Case seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously. J. Huebner also made a motion to accept the redacted minutes of 5/13/2014 as written. M. Case seconded and those minutes were likewise approved unanimously.
3. Craig Willis of White Wolf Trucking asked the Board whom he should contact to reach the Town's Public Health Inspector. The Board told him that we use the Berkshire Public Health Alliance for that service now and that Jodi Hostetter will give him the contact information.
4. M. Beemer reported on the new process for mailing the Tracks newsletter. The Town used the services of Zip n Sort in Pittsfield for the first time this month. The US Postal Service can no longer do our bulk mailing out of Becket. M. Beemer told the Board that the mailing is slower than before. There is about a week's lag time from when we submit the material to Zip n Sort, including the new mail route through Hartford. On the whole she was satisfied and feels that the service is efficient and affordable. The Town will have money coming back from Becket post office. They will refund the balance of our standing account.
5. K. Avale of the Assessor's Office discussed with the Board an email exchange with Mr. Jeffrey Reynolds of the state Department of Revenue regarding MGL Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 54. This pertains to taxation of personal property and includes businesses, second homes and utilities. The Board voted to exempt up to \$10,000 in personal property for each resident affected. She advised the Board to take the word "business" out of the STM warrant as the law applies to all 3 categories of personal property.
6. D. Fish reported to the Board on activity at the Highway Department. He has looked through the USDA application and will need help completing it. He will also need Conservation Commission to get involved with his culvert work on the Mountain Road. The Notice of Intent is being worked on. He has very little budgeted now for this work. He got the paperwork done for the FEMA funds. This will amount to about \$11,000. Regarding potholes on the Mountain Road, DOT told him to just fill with sand. He has done that. After the rains though, Shaun Lennon reported that all of the sand has been washed out of the holes. We are still waiting for Chapter 90 money for roads. J. Huebner said that he has received a letter from Transportation Secretary Davey to the effect that we can expect \$127,310 from Ch. 90. He will draft a reply.
7. Regarding MapleView, D. Fish told the Board that Jane is ready to make payment, but there is some confusion about the taxes due. He will speak with the Treasurer about this. The Board informed him that Jane will pay property taxes based on the \$5000 valuation.
8. J. Huebner informed Chief Breen that he had received a certificate from Mr. Cahill of the state Department of Animal Health confirming that he has been reappointed the Town's Animal Officer. Chief Breen reported that he has no news from Becket on the school bus yet. Regarding the dangerous speeding situation on Frost Road, Chief Breen reported that State police have patrolled that road as requested three times so far. He himself has patrolled the road numerous

times. The Highway Department has installed "Watch Children" signs close to the steep hill where the near hitting of a young child was reported. He spoke with the child's parents about the danger of that section of Frost Road and the need to restrain their children from straying near the road. He is concerned that the children are not observant of the road danger. He reported that one of the young children had run across the road in front of his truck. Chief Breen also placed the Electronic vehicle speed sign at the steep hill on Frost Road. He believes that the town has done all it can to mitigate the danger.

9. Discussion about transportation for Voc Ed students next year was initiated by J. Huebner He asked if we could use the Police cruiser instead of buying a new bus. Chief Breen said that we potentially have 5 students and that the cruiser will be too small. He will do a search to find a good used van as he has in the past. J. Huebner cautioned that we need to get quotes. Chief Breen said that he will get quotes from 3 different companies. Mr. Gibson , the new Town Administrator of Becket, wants to go forward with our transportation sharing arrangement. The Board wants to get rid of our old school van. It has 200,000+ miles on it.
10. J. Huebner raised the question of whether we want to sell the cruiser and put that money toward a new van. Chief Breen argued against that strategy, saying that the cruiser is used for hospital runs, to serve about 30 summonses per year, pick up stray animals, make home checks and serve restraining orders. It's presence in Town is also a deterrent to crime. J. Huebner asked him to get the trade- in value of the cruiser and to get pricing on used and new vans. We need a 3 seat, 4 wheel drive vehicle which will take up to 9 passengers. We will wait until we hear from Becket before we act. Chief Breen told the Board that it takes 60 day prep for a new vehicle. J. Huebner asked hi m to keep the Finance Committee in the loop. Chief Breen mentioned that he had joined NESBIN, an organization for searching for stolen articles. Cost is \$50/yr. Police use only.
11. P. Blake told the Board that he had interviewed a candidate for veterans' aid and that his case looked like it might be approved by the VA. He said that he had recently taken training as our Veterans Agent. The Trainer told him that he will need a new computer to work with the new VA systems. He will visit the Northampton VA office to get software uploaded on the new computer. He was told that the VA would prefer he get an Apple computer. The Board took exception to this and asked to see the specifications from the VA before anything is purchased. D. Spencer said that the Town must hold \$2000 in reserve for burying destitute soldiers. The state covers some portion of this, but reimbursement is slow.
12. J. Huebner briefly reviewed the following items:
 - a. Spoke to Administrator Gibson in Becket and to Dalton about emergency communications.
 - b. Spoke to new Selectman in Hinsdale about Blotz Rd. signage and participating in a Solar energy project.
 - c. Wrote several letters concerning Washington Mountain Road repairs to DOT officials, the Dalton Chief of Police, and Lt. Blackmer of the State Police, enclosing letters about the deterioration of the road from Carol Kennedy and Will Rogers.

- d. Reviewed Elected/Appointed from last year. Discussed clarifications. Did updates. Administrative Assistants to contact people to see if they are willing to continue to serve.
- e. BRTA advisory board– M. Case volunteered to be representative.
- f. J. Hostetter to send out performance assessment forms to Town employees.
- g. Board received recent building permits : Deck, solar panels, cell tower modification
- h. USDA wants to meet on 6/19

13. Regarding the Special Town Meeting on 6/24, D.Parnell told the Board that he needs \$40,660 to cover winter roads. J.Huebner told him that he had received bills from Phil Clark today for work on the Transfer Station Certification renewal. D. Parnell said that there is money available from M. Lampro’s budget. The STM will be held at 7:30 with Finance Committee meeting after that. D. Parnell said that we need to get an invoice from the Eliz. Freeman House organization. We give them \$100 each year, but get no acknowledgement. D. Parnell will ask Chief Breen about expenses for the Pumpkin walk and the Hoot. For carryovers we have the voting booths, Chart of Accounts, map of Red School House etc. Not sure what Preservation account is. Need to see Allison on this. Transfer station DEP compliance - \$7000 and carried forward. Vet’s service expense also will carry over. Chief Breen to tell P.Blake to bill Town for \$500. Eden Glen Dam will carry over. Tax taking expense is tax collector. Chief Breen said that \$266 should be put aside for Pumpkin Walk. He hasn’t yet received the bill for the emergency radio. He will give that to D. Parnell when he does receive it. The Columbarian wall will carry over. Cemeteries will carry over. Town report and postage also carry over. Chapel will carry over.
14. J. Huebner reviewed and finalized the STM warrant with J. Hostetter. Shaun Lennon will post the Special Town Meeting warrant tonight at Town Hall, Old Town Hall and at the Transfer Station.
15. At 8:57 J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. S. Lennon seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson

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