

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – October 7, 2013

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Present 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 of September 30, 2013. M. Case seconded and the motion to accept was unanimous.
3. Regarding the state's revised school levies, M. Case told the Board that Becket and Windsor opted not to hold town meetings. The result of this will be that the district will not pay the revised levies until next year.
4. Chief Breen confirmed that the one Washington Voc Ed student being transported this year is Tyler Lampro who is attending McCann in North Adams.
5. J. Huebner reported receiving a letter from our insurance company, MIIA, announcing available grants up to \$5,000 for several types of projects. He asked the Board for ideas. None were forthcoming at this time as the opportunities didn't seem to match the Town's needs.
6. J. Huebner had researched in MGL the requirements for Town auditors. He told the Board that he has concluded there would be no legal problem with appointing our Accounting Officer, Dan Parnell, to the auditor position vacated by Glenn Grogan. M. Case stated that he is in agreement as long as there is not a conflict of interest. Discussion followed on how to fund this position. A token payment of perhaps \$1000 per year was suggested. MGL specifies that we have to do at least one audit per year. The appointment and funding of this position will have to be approved at town meeting.
7. K. Walls reported to the Board that he has now seen a cow moose crossing Route 8 on the same stretch between Upper Valley Road and Summit Hill that he reported had become a game trail last week. J. Nelson told the Board that she had contacted C. Stevens about this and requested deer crossing signs from DOT. Ken Walls mentioned that he plans to attend the meeting with P. Clark and DOT on Washington Mountain Road Thursday Oct. 10 to inspect the culvert sites. The Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing at Town Hall on Thursday Oct. 17 at 7:00 pm to review DOT's plans for the reclamation of Washington Mountain Road (WMR). A public notice will appear in the Oct. 9 Berkshire Eagle announcing this hearing.
8. J. Huebner reported that there will be a BRPC dinner at Mazzeo's on October 31 which will include a discussion on Zoning for Formula Businesses.

9. J. Huebner told the Board that he had tried again unsuccessfully to communicate about the cemetery land with Mr. Collingwood via email. He will phone him this week.
10. After finally speaking with his contact at HCOG, J. Huebner said it is clear that, as was the case last year, they will not be able to help the Town lower its electric bills.
11. J. Huebner reported that he had received email from Rose Borgnis stating that she would like to be considered for the third assessor position. He called for a vote on this request and made a motion to appoint her to the assessor's position. He could not get a second. He will send her an email on the outcome of the Board's vote.
12. D. Fish joined the meeting and updated the Board on activities of the Highway Department. Per the Board's request he compiled the costs of laying down the sand on Town roads post chip sealing. He reported spending \$6300 on sand. Labor and use of the Town truck was at \$100/hr for a total of 10 hours. Regarding the Cross Place bridge guard rail, he received a proposal of \$2589.50. He believed that was a good price and will go ahead with the work. P. Clark still has to do a proposal on the design of the permanent bridge. D. Fish mentioned that he met a contractor who makes pre-fabricated bridges. He has called the forester, but they have not yet met. He plans to be at the WMR meeting on culvert repairs with the Conservation Commission and DOT. He has no NOI's yet. DOT will do the culvert design. The Board will send a letter to the contractor regarding the cost of sanding as a result of problems with the chip seal work.

J. Huebner asked D. Fish for an update on the Drugmand's drainage ditch project. He had talked to Trish Drugmand earlier this week. D. Fish estimated that he has spent \$30,000-40,000 on repairs resulting from the drainage work. This includes payment for Phil Clark's design work. J. Huebner mentioned that he did remove a culvert that goes from Drugmand's across the road to his land. He warned that this action could be subject to misinterpretation. D. Fish said that the culvert removal was approved by a previous Board. J. Huebner asked if some of the topsoil and gravel moved onto his property were for his personal use. The Drugmands called him to say that they think he has taken advantage of the Town. D. Fish replied that he used his land as a staging area for material throughout the repair project. There was no place to dump the material along side of the road. No Town material remains on his land.

T. Drugmand handed J. Huebner and the other Board members pictures of a topsoil pile on D. Fish's land. She pointed out that the material is down the lane a distance rather than out by the roadside. D. Fish explained that all of that material that could be scraped up has been picked up by the loader and dumped across the road on her property. She questioned this. J. Huebner asked the Drugmands if the restoration is complete. They agreed that it was and stated that they are satisfied with the work done. M. Case expressed his concern that the Drugmand project will cost the Town close to \$50,000 over a mistaken judgment decision.

T. Drugmand gave the Board copies of quotes on tree planting cost. The Town had agreed to cover the cost of providing trees to compensate for those lost to the drainage repairs. There were three separate estimates on 8- 12 trees ranging from over \$10,000 to \$4850. Jim will pass this on to our insurance company. The Drugmands also requested the Town cover the forester's consulting fee.

13. J. Huebner reported that there was no news yet on the FEMA grants.
14. S. Lennon will try to attend the Nov 14 BCBOHA meeting in J. Huebner's place.
15. The Capital Assets committee will meet on Oct. 21st. J. Huebner said that we need bylaws to protect the Town from whatever may happen with any properties sold or potentially developed. We need a bylaw to steer potential buyers to the planning board early in the process.
16. J. Nelson made a suggestion that a sign be placed at the transfer station reminding residents that property taxes are due on Nov. 1 and abatement requests are also due on that date. The Board supported this idea.
17. Glenn Grogan, the new Treasurer, reported to the Board that he had found no ICS certifications on file for them. Paul Mikaniewicz and Victor Breen do have them. The Board needs to get theirs in the files. J. Huebner gave him a copy of Drugman's tree estimate and asked him to discuss this with MIIA. J. Hostetter told the Board that she had received another claim on chip seal damage. J. Huebner said that he would copy G. Grogan on the letter to the chip seal contractor. G. Grogan reported that he has been working on securing the loan for the new school van. He expects that we will have it by the end of the month. The loan amount is \$32,700. Cathy Briggs is coming in tomorrow night to continue training him. J. Huebner told him that he will need to take charge of the old school bus auction. He referred him to MGL to the laws on disposal of old town property. We must advertise the old bus for parts only and use the Kelly Blue Book to establish a price. We will invite sealed Bids and set a deadline date for receiving them. We will open them at a Selectmen's meeting.
18. J. Hostetter told the Board that she could not find a bylaw governing the BOH appointments. J. Huebner asked her to send P. Clark and E. Bond financial interest forms to renew their status with the Town. She reported that J. Les was at Town Hall to work with C. Briggs. She will contact him to train her on posting the minutes and doing routine site maintenance. She requested that the Board email C. Briggs and D. Parnell for their job descriptions. J. Huebner agreed to do that. The annual reports are still waiting for information from a few people
19. D. Fish told the Board that he hasn't cut down the rotted tree on Lovers' Lane yet. He will not do so until he hears from P. Clark if it is on Town land or not.

20. J. Huebner reported that he has been in touch with Mr. Bartel in Dalton. He is supporting our effort to place a weight limit on Blotz Road. He has heard nothing from Hinsdale.
21. Chief Breen told the Board that he called the dealer on our new school bus. They assured him that they will have it by the end of October. He has been very upset by the delay. He explained the situation to Mr. Gibson in Becket today. He can use the Washington police cruiser to transport the students. Last week the gas tank fell off the old bus while he was filling up at the Becket pump. He has decided not to use the old bus again. He will switch to the cruiser for safety sake.
22. J. Hostetter told the Board that the Pumpkin walk will be held on Friday October 25. The Girl Scouts and other volunteers are ready to carve the pumpkins. They will not use a DJ this year. Will use a sound system instead with Halloween spooky music. Frank Kennedy has made up a poster for the event. Craig Willis will do hay rides. D. Spencer will help Chief Breen with the parking. Phoebe Weiner is the event coordinator.
23. J. Huebner made a motion at 8:16 pm to adjourn the meeting. S. Lennon seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson