

## Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – March 3, 2014

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. 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 approve the minutes from February 24, 2014. M. Case seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.
3. Rose Borgnis was videoing the meeting.
4. Mr. Giovanni, from Berkshire Graphics, made a presentation to the Board. He appeared at the request of J. Hostetter who, at the Board's direction, was researching our options for possibly replacing the current copier at Town Hall. Berkshire Graphics supplied and has serviced our present copier for the past 8 years. This is the third machine they have sold to the Town. We pay a maintenance fee of \$825 annually. He explained that Berkshire Graphics does in-house re-builds of 2 or 3 year old machines. We could lease or purchase one of these or we could continue using our current machine under the existing contract. We own our copier now. It can't be refurbished because he can't get replacement parts for a machine that old. The cost for purchasing a comparable new copier re-built by Berkshire Graphics would be \$3900. On a lease it would cost the Town \$94 per month. Toner costs would be lower. Repair costs would also be less since the newer machine would be more quickly repaired. After discussion the Board decided to continue under the current contract rather than purchase a re-built machine now.
5. Resident Gene Goebel addressed the Board about a fund raising program he runs with and for the Cub Scouts. The Scouts collect redeemable cans and bottles at the Becket transfer station and would also like to do it in Washington. He has 5 cub Scouts from Washington in the troop. The troop would place recycling barrels at our Transfer Station in the Spring and empty them on a regular basis. He would coordinate this with D. Fish and M. Lampro. The Cub Scouts would share the money raised with the Boy Scouts. J.Huebner pointed out that the Chapel currently gets receipts from our redeemable bottles and cans, but he would have no objection to the Cub Scouts' program as described. He asked Rose Borgnis, Chair of the Chapel Committee, if she would have any objections. She did not object. The Board told G. Goebel that he could go ahead with his program.
6. Ken Walls showed the Board a conservation poster from DCR that he would post in the hallway.
7. J. Huebner asked John Les about progress with his work on the town computer software upgrade. J. Les reported that he has one machine completed and delivered back to

Town Hall already. He is presently working on D. Parnell's computer. He has three more to do and expects to finish one each week for the next 3 weeks. He has found a 5th license which will cover an additional computer he has identified here.

8. J. Huebner signed the CIC contracts before the Town Clerk. She notarized them. After making copies, J. Hostetter will send them on to the state. J. Huebner asked her if we need to invoice Hinsdale for plowing. She will check on that, but thought Hinsdale may have already paid the Town. J. Huebner asked D. Fish to talk to Mr. Huntoon of Hinsdale about the closing of a town road by his neighbor on Plunkett Reservoir Road. J. Hostetter told the Board that the collection of job descriptions is not complete yet. She is waiting for information from the electrical inspector, the plumbing inspector and the building inspector.
9. J. Huebner reminded the Board that Dave Davies of the state IT office had asked us if we would be interested in getting involved in the CIC's remote IT services program which he will be setting up. J. Huebner has a description of the services that would be needed. John Les reviewed the proposal and requested that J. Huebner forward him the email for further review. John will make a recommendation to the Board.
10. D. Spencer asked the Board about getting D. Parnell's salary corrected from the mistake made last year. It needs to be raised from \$12,400 to \$12,582. D. Spencer asked if we need a Special Town Meeting to do this. J. Huebner said that we can make the correction at the Annual Town Meeting. Next week the Board will discuss raises and other budget issues with the Finance Chair.
11. D. Fish reported that he had gotten a quote on a new plow truck. He spoke to a few companies. He wanted a group purchasing quote before going out to bid, and that is what he got. The quote was for \$ 205,583.30. This is for a four wheel drive vehicle. It has 6 wheels. This price is less than he could have gotten on the open market. J. Huebner asked the value of our two wheel drive truck. D. Fish told him it is not worth getting rid of. The most we could expect is \$10,000 in trade. He would keep the old one as an emergency spare. Our newest truck is 12 years old.  
  
J. Huebner asked him to write up a replacement schedule for our highway equipment with P. Clark. He told the Board that he had put the Hazard signs up on Washington Mountain Road. He will get the weight limit sign up on route 8 at Pittsfield Road as soon as the ground thaws a little. J. Huebner asked him if he had given the DEP transfer station survey to M. Lampro and told him to call her about this.
12. J. Huebner reported that he had written a letter to the Mass. Joint Committee on Public Health in support of House Bill 1940: An Act Relative to the Safe Disposal of Medical Sharps. Regulation banning disposal of used sharps in the household waste stream went into effect in 2012, however not all Berkshire towns have a program in place to deal with this health threat. Thanks to Michelle Lampro of the Transfer Station and Sean

Connors, employee of BMC, we have had a sharps collection box in place at the Transfer Station for several years. The Bill offers some funding for local governments to collect and dispose of sharps. J. Huebner made a motion to approve his letter in support of this effort. S. Lennon seconded and the motion passed unanimously. All three Board members signed the letter. Copies to be sent to the entire Berkshire legislative delegation.

13. J. Hostetter presented the Board with permits to sign for Bucksteep for overnight camping, public entertainment on Sundays, and to operate a swimming pool which is professionally managed. The Board signed these.
14. J. Huebner presented a letter to the Board which he had drafted to Comer Construction offering to split the difference in the \$7300 the Town has demanded in payment for post chip seal sanding , both labor and materials. After reading the letter, J. Huebner made a motion to accept it. M. Case seconded and the vote to accept was unanimous.
15. Regarding the COA potluck question, J Huebner told the Board that he had spoken with Jeff Sawtelle who told him that he is comfortable continuing with the potlucks as they have been conducted to date. He is working up recommendations for kitchen upgrades for the Board.
16. J. Huebner said that he and M. Case had attended the legislative breakfast on Friday in Tyringham. Although none of our legislative delegation attended, he had a productive conversation with the representative from the Mass. Municipal Association. The MMA has requested more funding for most categories of local aid. The state expects to have 5% more funding to dispense this year. Chapter 90 highway funds may be available earlier in the year than they have been, perhaps as early as April.
17. J. Huebner met our insurance representative from MIIA, who gave him a valuable direct contact for submitting and settling Town insurance issues. He passed this information along to G. Grogan, our Treasurer. G. Grogan reported receiving information from MIIA regarding the Drugmands' damage claim settlement. MIIA has approved a \$14,300 settlement.
18. J. Hostetter presented the Board her very detailed report on the Town's Board of Health fees, both invoiced and collected, from 7/14/12 through 9/24/13. J. Huebner observed that the \$1,625.00 loss she identified was largely the result of long and involved perc tests for which the health agent billed his hourly rate. He reported that the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance (BRHA) will be working to standardize fees throughout the county at a higher rate to cover such cases. He did not believe that Towns should be subsidizing people's perc tests.
19. During a discussion of the seven town CBRSD meeting, J. Huebner observed that we face about a 5% increase in the school budget over this year. He believes that the CBRSD has

saved money wherever possible. Budget growth has been from state mandate salary increases. Though it will increase our levy a bit, Dalton will see a substantial increase. J. Huebner recommended that Washington approve the budget. The school budget needs the approval of 5 of the 7 towns. D. Spencer said that some towns, notably Hinsdale and Dalton will probably not approve. For the district, the budget will increase by 7%. J. Les, who is the school committee delegate from Becket, said that Becket pays \$15,000 per student. This is the highest rate in the district, while Dalton pays the least. Student enrollment is decreasing. One cost control option may be to close down some schools. We have a total of 1780 students now. J. Huebner noted the budget item of \$872,620 for replacement of the Berkshire Trails Elementary School roof. We have no students at this school and so would not be affected. This cost is so high because the work is mandated under the state contract. Prevailing wage rates will apply.

20. J. Huebner reported that he had checked with Counsel about the Town's authority to regulate businesses. We have no right to fine people for not registering. MGL 5990 and 91 allow for criminal fines for those who fail to file a tax return relative to personal property used for business. We still need to understand what to ask in a mailing to residents. Karen Avalue, Assessors' Consultant, gave him a list of all the Town businesses that she has. He plans to put an update in the Tracks about this effort.
21. A brief discussion on the budget for the Annual Town Meeting followed. D. Spencer gave the Board copies of preliminary estimates from the Finance Committee. He told the Board that D. Parnell thinks we will have about \$100,000 in free cash. The consensus of the Board seemed to be to level fund all salaries and budgets and to look for cuts where possible. D. Spencer said that the state is zeroing out voc transport support this year.
22. J. Huebner spoke to Town Counsel about his experience with the Green Communities Program. Counsel was negative about it. People report having a hard time getting a certified green inspector. This costs the owners in construction delay. The fee for green certified inspectors is also much higher than usual and customary locally. J. Huebner is still interested in the Town taking advantage of the Community Preservation Act. This would give us funding to maintain and improve Old Town Hall, the Town Park, North lake recreation etc. He will write this up for the Tracks. J. Hostetter mentioned the Scenic Mountains Act which has been passed by a number of Berkshire town including Lenox and Stockbridge. J. Huebner will look into this. J. Nelson mentioned that the Town had been notified by Peru Concerned Citizens that their ZBA meeting on the commercial wind turbine development will take place on Wednesday, March 26 at 7:00pm at the Peru Fire Station. The meeting is open to the public. All are welcome to attend.
23. J. Huebner acknowledge receipt of the following correspondence and briefly commented on the following items:
  - a. A letter from the Mass. Board of Health about important changes in the death certificate and electronic registration.

- b. A letter from CBRSD concerning the process for bonding to cover the cost of the Berkshire Trail Elementary School roof replacement.
- c. A letter from CBRSD on tentative adoption of the FY 15 school budget. Dr. Cameron will visit the Selectmen’s meeting on 3/17 to discuss the budget.
- d. Official Roster of the State Boards of Health
- e. Notice of a conference on Saturday, April 12 at the Clarion Hotel in Northampton. Jay Kaufman will talk about tax fairness, water systems and the CIC. Senator Elizabeth Warren will also speak.
- f. Notice that this Friday Rep. Smitty Pignatelli will host an affordable care act information session in Lenox at town hall. It will focus on changes that ACA will mean to individuals and small businesses.
- g. Receipt of the Municipal Financial Booklet.
- h. Receipt of information on the Wounds of War program for Veterans and their families. M. Case to review this material.
- i. Receipt of zoning update from BRPC.
- j. Announced Capital Assets meeting on 3/24.
- k. No developments on Cross Place Road or the cemetery acreage.

24. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn at 8:44 pm. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

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Minutes written by J. Nelson