

Washington Board of Selectmen's Meeting – March 24, 2014

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:05. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, M. Case and S. Lennon.
2. The Chair made a motion to accept the minutes from March 17, 2014. M. Case seconded. The vote to accept the minutes was unanimous.
3. J.Huebner reminded the assembly that at 8:00 pm the Selectmen's Meeting would be suspended for a time during which the Joint Meeting on Capital Assets would take place and include the Planning Board and the Finance Committee.
4. The Board signed sympathy cards for the Borgnis and Adams families.
5. R. Borgnis was videoing the meeting.
6. Ed Bond reported to the Board that he had arranged for the contractor, Campora Construction, to come back to Town Hall to see about the problems we have with the doors they installed. As the Town's Annual Meeting Moderator, he asked if we could mail a copy of the ATM warrant to all residents on the Tracks list. The warrant is expected to be long this year and he doesn't want to have to read all of it aloud at the meeting. He believes that the responsibility to read the warrant should be the residents' and that this will spark productive debates on the issues. He wondered if the warrant could also be posted on the Town web site. D. Spencer suggested that we could mail the ATM summary with Tracks, rather than the long-form document and have the same impact for less postage. The Board was supportive of these suggestions.
7. D. Spencer passed out an updated version of the warrant draft to the Board. He briefly reviewed the changes. We need further discussion of the highway budget. We need to finalize salaries for the highway crew. D. Fish put the Drugmand remediation costs in winter roads. He needs to discuss cost categories with D. Fish. The Finance Committee will not approve the Highway budget as submitted.

8. David Fish joined the meeting and told the Board that he is working on the crew salaries. He requested a \$1.00/hr. increase for each of his two employees. He did not request a raise in his own rate. They are paid \$16 and \$17 per hour now. They have improved their skills. Adam Southard has received his hydraulic license. The agreement with him when he was hired was that he would get a raise when he got the license. He said that both employees are dependable, skilled and hard-working. The Board agreed and approved the raises with the caveat that we switch to a bi-weekly payroll which will save the Town hundreds of dollars.

D. Spencer asked D. Fish about his fuel budget. Last year it was \$30,000. Dave Fish said that was cutting it close. He has asked for \$36,000 this year. He only has \$3,000 left in the fuel account now. D. Spencer said that Berkshire County insurance has increased in cost. D. Fish said that he used a three year average to estimate the materials allowance and overtime. He still has to work on Roads and Bridges and machinery maintenance. He is asking for an additional \$5,000 for highway building maintenance this year. The Board will support level funding of this item, not an increase and a \$33,000 budget for fuel.

D. Spencer told the Board that he has added additional money for Veterans' aid at the level of \$8,300 requested by our Veterans' Agent. We have more Veterans to service. The Agent's expenses will increase also as he has new state-required courses to take. The Transfer Station will be level funded. The highway garage loan is down to about 2 years of remaining payments. Our free cash will be divided 50/50 between stabilization and controlling the tax rate. After this reduction there will still be a tax increase of about 1.2%.

9. Joining the meeting, P. Clark continued the discussion of highway department issues. He is working with D. Fish to write a project list for the DPW. We need an equipment planning schedule. Together they are working on a culvert maintenance plan. D. Fish has suggested using \$100,000 of Chapter 90 money (FY15 money) for the new plow truck. P. Clark said that we must plan to replace trucks, rather than repair so often. We need equipment available when it is needed. He will work with D. Fish to sort out what is annual maintenance and what is project work. He said that the Cross Place Road Bridge replacement would be a special project. He thought that we might have a chance for matching grant funds if we can

put aside some money in the budget. Westfield Wild & Scenic did a rough hydrology study and determined approximate budget for the bridge. Lower Sergeant and Lower Valley Road are also approaching hazard category. He has requested funding for Eden Glen. However, Cross Place Road is the most critical project facing the Town. Craig Willis suggested that we borrow all of the money for the truck instead of using part of the Chapter money for that purpose. Instead we could use the \$100,000 for Cross Place Road Bridge. P. Clark said that the estimated cost for Cross Place Road is \$200,000.

10. Moving quickly through some final business, J. Huebner signed the Proclamation declaring Tuesday, April 8 Equal Pay Day. After the Town Clerk adds her signature and the Town Seal the proclamation will be posted at Town Hall. We received the bill for the town's share of the FY15 school budget. Also received was an announcement of the New England Recycling Conference and Expo to be held on April 1 in Epsom NH. He received an email from Comer Construction agreeing to split the difference of the post-chip sealing sanding cost with the Town. There will be a WiredWest financial discussion at Town Hall on Thursday, 3/27 at 7:00 pm. The Berkshire County Selectmen's Association meeting and Dinner will be held on April 10th. J. Huebner approved Chief Breen's request to purchase the customary raffle gift for the Town. WMECO Emergency Management meeting and dinner on March 26.

11. As we are in need of an alternate delegate to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Board asked Don Gagnon of the Planning Board if he would accept the post. He would fill in for M. Wiley if she was unable to attend any meetings. He agreed to accept the position. J. Huebner made a motion to appoint him as our alternate to the BRPC. M. Case seconded and the vote to appoint was unanimous.

12. J. Huebner asked Chief Breen if he wanted to continue as inspector of animals. Chief Breen agreed to do so. The Board Chair also asked him if he could estimate the cost of defibrillating equipment. Chief Breen replied that a refurbished defibrillator costs about \$800. The Board asked him to get a firm estimate. We will seek a grant for one half of the cost. M. Case asked why we would keep the defibrillator in Town Hall. S. Connors said that if it saved one life during a meeting at it would be worth having.

13. J. Huebner made a motion to accept the Selectmens' monthly letter for the Tracks. S. Lennon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

14. Chief Breen told the board that a technician would be sent by the state on Wednesday to install a private connection from the MBI hub in the utility room at Town Hall to the Police Department office. There is no cost to the Town for this installation. Dedicated internet connections are being installed in all Police headquarters in the state.

15. J. Huebner suspended the Selectmens' Meeting at 8:07 and called the joint meeting with the Planning Board and Finance Committee to order.

16. At 8:39 J. Huebner called the Selectmen's meeting back to order.

17. Mary Jarvie reported to the Selectmen on the status of the lots on Virginia Lakes Estates. There are 7 lots in tax title and 3 more in arrears. J. Huebner said that we may be able to turn that area into a Town recreation area using the Community Preservation Act if the Town approves that at the Annual Town Meeting. M. Jarvie said that there are 26 parcels that we do not own.

18. J. Huebner made a motion to amend the monthly Selectmen's Letter approved earlier in the evening. We need to reword the paragraph on the Town by-law in light of the Planning Board proposal during the Capital Assets meeting and note the passing of Ron Adams and Peter Borgnis. We also need to add a return request date to the letter. M. Case seconded and the motion to amend was unanimous.

19. Ernie Lampron and his son asked the Board for permission to use the back lot at the Town Park as a playing field for the local youth La Cross league. E. Lampron offered to keep it mowed and to roll it if needed. D. Fish mentioned that we have bathrooms there that need plumbing repairs. E. Lampron said that White Wolf had offered port-a-potties.

20. D. Fish said that M. Lampro had completed the DEP survey on the Transfer Station. He added that he will speak with P. Clark about replacing the culvert at the Transfer Station. The Board of Health said that must be done. The Selectmen agreed.

21. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the Selectmen's meeting at 8:49. S. Lennon seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson