

## Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – June 30, 2014

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner and M. Case.
2. After leading the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to approve the minutes of June 23. M. Case seconded and the vote to accept the minutes was unanimous.
3. J. Huebner opened the floor to residents. K. Walls told the Board that he had visited the dam area on Frost Road after the storm on Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> and observed that a large tree felled by the storm had been washed downstream and lodged against the walkway causing much of the flooding. He believed that if the walkway could be removed we could avoid major flooding there in the future. D. Fish said that he had seen it flood there even without debris. He mentioned that we are finalizing a plan for flood mitigation at that spot for FEMA and that any structural changes would require a special permit. J. Huebner added that we may not have the means to remove the walkway anyhow. He added that we have received notice from FEMA that they will cover  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the cost to rebuild the area, per the application we submitted. The highway crew did an excellent job of getting the area cleaned up. Since last Wednesday's flood he has contacted our Congressional delegation and asked them to accelerate our getting the FEMA funding to rebuild that area and hopefully fix it permanently.
4. D. Spencer asked if we had been keeping track of the additional post storm clean-up expense. D. Fish told the Board that he estimated that cost to be around \$30,000. That is the figure he gave FEMA when they called to inquire about storm damage. On July 17 FEMA and MEMA will be doing a site visit. J. Huebner will attend.

5. A Town resident opened discussion of the "Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Scenic Byway". She thanked the Board for their work in getting the road paved. She mentioned that now they have a problem with speeders. J. Huebner said that he had contacted the state police and asked for additional patrols. She said that no one is against honoring the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, but that residents are upset that they were not involved in the decisions and planning for this initiative. J. Huebner responded that he understands her concerns but is very surprised at the controversy. This matter was discussed openly in the 3 previous selectmen's meetings. No one raised any objections or voiced any concerns. He stressed that the Board is not changing the name of the road. He added that they acted quickly to get the veterans' initiative underway when they were sure Mass DOT was going to carry out their promise to repave. The Board wanted to be able to call attention to the veterans' byway designation to be sure the state would not allow the road to deteriorate as it had in the past. They hoped to retain some leverage with the state to be in a better position to solicit funds for future road repairs.

Several attendees called attention to the color bar across the middle of the sign. M. Case explained that this is the Iraq and Afghanistan campaign ribbon awarded to every soldier who served there, not the flags of those nations as some thought. Many expressed the opinion that the signs should include an American flag so that people would understand they honored American veterans. J. Huebner urged that we take all of this energy and use it in a positive way to create a Washington Veterans Association. We have an active new veteran's agent, Peter Blake, who could guide that effort. P. Blake spoke to the gathering and said that he waited 40 years after coming home from Viet Nam to be recognized for his service and expressed his thanks for the Board's work on the scenic byway designation. He said that he is collecting the names of Korean and Viet Nam, as well as Civil War veterans now. His goal is to compile a complete list of Washington veterans from all wars.

M. Wiley, Planning Board Chair, asked if there were other plaques in town that honored veterans of other wars. M. Case pointed out that there are granite tablets at the Old Town Hall listing soldiers' names from World Wars I and II. He assured her that we are in no way dishonoring veterans of other wars. M. Wiley told the Board that she had consulted the Town's signage by-laws and learned that signs can't exceed 3 sq.' in size. The current scenic by-way signs are 4 sq. '. There is also a by-law that limits the placement of roadside signs. Planning Board approval is needed for both of these issues. M. Case said that he had cleared the byway designation with the state. J. Huebner told her that the Board will confer with Town Counsel and the state and get back to her.

6. Lillian Fox told the Board that she had walked outside after last week's flood and noticed that the water had undermined our new paving to some degree near her house on Washington Mountain Road. She wanted the highway department to know this and hoped they could get it fixed before traffic broke the new road. She also observed that the culvert on Frost Road was blocked by some gravel that had been dropped there. D. Fish said that he is aware of this and that the culvert had been covered since the previous flood.
7. At 7:30 J. Huebner called the Special Town meeting to order. Ed Bond took the podium as Moderator. The Town Clerk recorded those minutes.
8. At 8:13 The Moderator dissolved the Special Town Meeting and the Selectmen's Meeting resumed.
9. J. Nelson told the Board that she was still working to complete the telephone follow up to the Business Census mailing to Town residents. She mentioned that many residents do not list their phone numbers, perhaps the result of a widespread switch to "cell phones only" as a less costly alternative to landlines. J. Huebner asked if she had any encouragement on

the Energy Resiliency grant opportunity for the Town from E2Sol or DOER. She said that she had not.

10. S. Nelson, the Town's delegate to WiredWest, the forty-two town western Mass cooperative working to bring high speed broadband service to unserved communities in the region, gave the Board an update on recent developments. He said that the IT Bond bill which has been so slowly moving through the state legislature is finally close to being enacted. It contains \$50,000,000 earmarked for the Mass Broadband Initiative (MBI) to use to finish the "Last Mile" of connections that will bring Broadband to citizens' homes and businesses. S. Nelson asked the Board to sign a letter to Phillip Holahan, Interim Director of MBI, urging MBI to work closely with WiredWest so that construction of the Network can begin as soon as possible and to present WiredWest with specific details on funding options for carrying out the construction of the Network. The Board agreed to sign the letter and J. Huebner read a copy of it into the record.
11. J. Huebner asked S. Nelson his understanding of the recent MMA memorandum urging member towns to oppose telecom industry proposals to remove local authority in siting of wireless antennas and equipment. S. Nelson said that he agreed with the MMA's position that the referenced legislation S. 2183 would remove all towns' control over where wireless towers and equipment were sited. All local decision making would be voided. No local bylaws would apply. Antennas could even be installed in local historic districts. Telecom companies would not be required to remove obsolete or abandoned equipment. He urged Washington to support the MMA's opposition to this legislation. J. Huebner agreed and will communicate our opposition to S. 2183 to the MMA.
12. J. Huebner reported that a Public hearing per MGL Chapter 166 Section 22 regarding a petition by WMECO to install 600 feet of underground cable along Beach Road will be held on Monday, July 14 at the Washington Town Hall.

13. E. Bond told the Board that he had responded to D. Fish's report of some damage to the Chapel after last week's storm. He cleared the gutters of much debris and did some repairs to the roof. He checked the drainage pipe and cleared that out too. He also mentioned that the Highway Department had done a great job sprucing up the Town Park. Everyone is working together smoothly to maintain the Park.
  
- 14.D. Fish gave the Board a written quote of \$8750 for the old Plow truck from Patriot Auto Center, Minuteman Trucks. The quote included PTO pump, warning lights, sander supply lines and controls. It noted the plow and dump equipment in need of major repairs and reconditioning. The Board commented that this figure was in line with earlier verbal quotes and may indicate that the Town would be best served by retaining the old truck as an emergency backup. D. Fish told the Board that he and P. Clark will continue work on the road maintenance plan. This was interrupted by need to clean up after the storm last Wednesday. P. Clark is working on the curb cut issues.
  
- 15.J. Huebner reported that he attended the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting in Pittsfield on Tuesday, June 24. Upon conclusion of the meeting, he was satisfied that the full-scale reconstruction of Washington Mountain Road (WMR) is securely on the Transportation Initiative Plan (TIP) for 2018.
  
16. J. Huebner reported that the Board had received a letter from Sen. Ben Downing thanking him for his kind words of appreciation "for our joint efforts to ensure the current resurfacing of WMR". To J. Huebner's request that he support the Town before the MPO in our TIP funding request, Sen Downing replied that it was his longstanding policy to remain neutral in the regional decision-making process as he must serve all municipalities in the District.

17. The Board will renew its annual membership in the Berkshire County Selectmen's Association for \$60.00.

18.J. Huebner reported receiving 3 financial award documents from Mass. DOT. These were:

A. Winter Rapid Road Recovery Program, HMA and Perma-Patch approval in the amount of \$25,451. Project to be completed before September 30, 2014.

B. State Aid Chapter 90 payment vouchers in the amounts of \$7530.60 for line painting and \$4,247.18 for signs.

C. State Aid Chapter 90 Project Request, HD International Truck 39,000 GVW \$109,000 of \$208,133.

19. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

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

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

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

Minutes written by J. Nelson