

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – July 7, 2014

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, M. Case and S. Lennon.
2. After leading the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of June 30, 2014. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. Lillian Fox told the Board that the neighbors on Washington Mountain Road (WMR) want to meet the new owners of Bucksteep. She reported that there are many rumors circulating about who they are and what they are going to do with the property. The abutters are asking for information. J. Huebner told her that the attorney for the buyer is supposed to appear before the Board next week. However, this has been scheduled before and the attorney did not show up.
4. Heather Anello, of The Becket General, asked the Board about their plans for catering services for the upcoming dedication of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans Scenic Byway on July 19. J. Huebner told her that we really do not know how many people will attend. The Board is planning for at least 50. Their thinking was that they would just supply cold drinks (iced tea, lemonade and bottled water) and snack-type food, not the full brunch that had been talked about previously. Heather said that she could not really help with this kind of refreshment service. She needs a minimum of \$500 to cover all her costs for an event. She is very busy for other clients that day and will have to decline our job. She expressed her strong support for the veterans' byway dedication. M. Case volunteered to take responsibility for getting the refreshments together and coordinating the ceremony. He will make a trip to BJ's and the Price Chopper.

5. M. Case apologized to the attendees for having gotten “hot under the collar” at last week’s discussion of the scenic byway dedication. He described the symbolism of the signs that will be posted. The border is United Nations blue. The field is white for purity of purpose. The color bar across the middle of the sign contains the colors assigned to the Iraq and Afghanistan campaign by the department of Defense. This color bar forms the Campaign ribbon awarded to all Americans who fought in those conflicts. He is going to add an American flag image to the signs in order to clear up any confusion as to which veterans are being honored. He emphasized that the road’s name is not changing in any way.

6. Dan Hatch introduced himself as a veteran and read a text which listed some of the many “gifts” veterans have given to the American people. He applauded the Town for the Scenic byway designation. He asked how many Iraq and Afghanistan veterans there are in Town. M. Case knew of 2 – himself and his son. Veterans Agent Peter Blake is trying to identify all of them. A resident mentioned that Tom on the highway crew has a son returning to the US from Afghanistan on July 18. He won’t make it back to Town by the 19th, however.

7. A resident told the Board that the only complaint people have about the dedication is that they did not have a vote in it. M. Case replied that the Board has learned that lesson and will be more careful in the future.

8. A representative from the American Legion Riders asked the Board about traffic and parking arrangements at the Old Town Hall on the 19th. He said that due to the bad condition of Frost Road, they will take the long way around from Dalton and ride up the WMR from Becket. He expects that there will be about 25 bikes. S. Lennon told him that they can pull in to the field across the road from the Old Town Hall and park there. We will have people directing traffic.

9. The L'Hotes told the Board that someone will need to contact the Patriot Riders about the event. They are also interested in attending also. M. Case said that the Riders should call him. He said that the Veterans' Coalition had been notified. The Vietnam Veterans of Berkshire County are confirmed as the attending color guard.
10. Several people complained that it was very hard to hear the Board and other speakers in the auditorium. Many agreed. The Board tried to speak more loudly.
11. M. Jarvis of the Planning Board suggested that it would be best for the Board to consult Town Counsel on the question of the signage by-law. J. Huebner said that he had already done so. Counsel's reaction was that this is a "silly controversy". J. Huebner added that he sees many signs on roadways in Town which do not conform to the by-law. Huebner requested that the Planning Board review all the existing signs in Town with regards to the signage by-law. He explained that they will go ahead with the ceremony as planned. The stantions for the signs will be put in place and the signs mounted after the ceremony, as the signs will be used during the dedication.
12. P. Blake asked where the American Flag will be placed on the plaques. M. Case indicated the area right below the curve of the word "Afghanistan". J. Huebner asked D. Fish to order an appropriate sized flag sticker. Jan Huebner measured the space and it is 2.5 x 3 inches. This will be an all-weather, highway quality sticker.
13. P. Blake told M. Case that we have to contact the Dalton VFW and invite them to attend. J. Huebner suggested that P. Blake do that.
14. S. Lennon said that he is prepared to provide security at the dedication.

15. M. Case said that we have to recognize the dignitaries in the audience. Ben Downing will speak unless the Governor attends. We will need a podium. M. Case said that he has a bull horn. All agreed that we need to find out if there is electricity at the Old Town Hall.
16. J. Hostetter has arranged with C. Taylor to clean the Old Town Hall and with White Wolf for porta-potties.
17. J. Huebner said that the press release will have to be sent out to the Berkshire Eagle, the Springfield Record, the Albany and Springfield TV stations and the Country Journal. P. Blake also asked for a copy. J. Nelson to update and format the press release draft and submit it to the Board for final review.
18. The Board asked D. Fish to purchase a 10'x10' canopy tent to be set up outside Old Town Hall. A couple of tables will be set up there to hold the refreshments.
19. At 7:56 J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

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Minutes written by J. Nelson