

## **Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – November 24, 2014**

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. 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 from November 17, 2014. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. Dave Drugmand gave the Board copies of a resolution he had drafted in opposition to the Kinder Morgan pipeline. He proposed that we put this non-binding resolution up for a vote at the December 15 Special Town Meeting (STM). He said that the Berkshire Environmental Action Team will be present at the December 8<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting to discuss the pipeline situation and their resolution. J. Huebner made a motion to put the resolution on the STM warrant. M. Case seconded and the vote was unanimous.

J. Hubner said that he had attended a meeting of the pipeline working group at Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) this afternoon. The group is composed of Board members from a number of the towns on the pipeline's route. Most members are opposed to the pipeline. He reported that Kinder Morgan is seriously considering a more northerly route across the Berkshires, following an existing electric power right of way starting at Hancock. He learned that another company is planning a pipeline through Connecticut. That route is still undefined, but could impact Massachusetts. He said that this new development makes it even more important that we act right away with other Berkshire towns to gain as much influence over these powerful energy companies as we can. This is the purpose of BRPC's working group. BRPC is looking for grants that would cover the cost of an attorney to advise them. They also want to hire Foresight Engineering to do an environmental review of the plans. The hope is that Kinder Morgan will follow standard practice and reimburse the

towns and BRPC for expenses necessitated by their business activities in our region. J. Huebner will put an article about joining the BRPC working group on the Dec. 15 STM warrant. He has asked Paul Mikaniewitz to review our emergency management plans in light of the pipeline.

4. Doug Plachcinski of BRPC presented his draft report on Town roads. He drove all the roads and rated them on a scale of 1-10 based on condition. He observed that our roads are about as good as those of neighboring towns. After giving some suggestions on how to maintain and improve the roads, he mentioned that the state has the correct count for the miles of roads in the Town. This is important because it determines the amount of Chapter 90 money we receive each year from the state. We receive \$4000 per mile for our approximately 42.5 miles of roads. About 19.2 miles of our roads are paved. Of these only about 2 miles need significant repair.

He mentioned that we need to acquire or rent equipment to maintain the dirt roads. He recognized that Washington Mountain Road, under its new paving job, needs to be completely re-built. J. Huebner mentioned that Washington Mountain Road is on the Transportation Infrastructure Plan (TIP) for 2018. Doug will get a formal final report to us shortly. It will include suggested budget numbers and a five year plan for maintenance.

5. J. Hostetter updated the Board on her work on the Annual Reports. She finished the 2011 and 2012 reports. They have been printed, bound and are available to all residents at Town Hall. She is still waiting for the Clerk on some items for 2013. Allison is checking on elected officials as there were many changes that year. J. Huebner expressed the Board's appreciation for her work pulling the Reports together. He also thanked her for assembling all of our files on the Borgnis landfill property for his review. He asked her to continue to work on getting Town applications up on the web site.

6. J. Huebner reported that he has been talking to BRPC about funds available to clean up the Borgnis landfill. There is a possibility that we can get a grant for site assessment next year. Getting remediation funds will take more work. D. Spencer asked about our liability if toxins are discovered in the soil or the stream that crosses the property. E. Bond said that he saw GE trucks up there using the dump. If we could prove this we might be able to draw on some of the GE clean-up funds available. D. Fish mentioned that “No trespassing” signs have recently been posted at the landfill area. J. Huebner will be reviewing all of the materials on the landfill which J. Hostetter assembled for him.
  
7. J. Huebner mentioned that we have been in touch with the representative from HCOG , Ken Elstein, about their bulk electricity purchase program. Mr. Elstein presented the details of this cost saving program to the Board last month. If the Town were to join, residents would pay reduced rates for electricity from WMECO or National Grid. Individual membership in the program is optional and residents can opt out if they wish not to participate. The Board decided to move ahead with HCOG. We need to begin that process now to enjoy the reduced rates next winter. A resolution to join the electricity purchase aggregation program will be on the December 15 STM warrant.
  
8. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson for next steps in pursuing grant money for removal of the Eden Glen dam. She reported that the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs advised us to work through our legislators and the Mass. Municipal Association (MMA). Although \$49,000,000 was earmarked for dam removal and repair as part of the \$2,000,000,000 Environmental Bond bill this year, there is currently no allocation in the budget to spend the money. We won’t know the outcome until next July.
  
9. J. Huebner has scheduled a meeting at the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance (BRHA) office on Dec 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss how the BRHA could assist member towns in managing their Board of Health administrative duties. J.

Hostetter, Administrative Assistant, and Town Accountant Dan Parnell will attend.

10. The Board again signed the letter detailing the necessary inspections and compliance requirements Bucksteep LLC must satisfy in order to do business. The previous copy was hand delivered and this copy will be mailed certified. E. Bond mentioned that the Planning Board had decided that Bucksteep LLC could go ahead with running the wedding and meeting business as the Saccos had. They cited the precedent of grandfathering- in a Town gravel pit operation when that business changed hands. J. Huebner added that they cannot operate at all in their current state which is out of compliance with the laws. E. Bond observed that their dual business operation(weddings and autism counseling) is a change of form from the Sacco's business plan and as such might not be comparable to the gravel pit precedent.
11. J. Huebner mentioned that MassDOT is insisting on inspecting and approving the temporary bridge for Middlefield Road before we can install it. That has caused a delay in the work.
12. J. Huebner made a motion to approve the Monthly Selectmen's Letter for the Tracks. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously. He will also insert an announcement of the 12/15 STM.
13. D. Fish will call CSX to verify that they will install guard rail at the intersection of Summit Hill and Lower Valley Roads as promised. At that location CSX took down a number of trees leaving a large gap through which a vehicle could fall to the rail bed below. The Board asked him to report back on CSX's reply. D. Fish told the Board that he has received no complaints on the Town's closing of the bridges at Lower Sargent and at Lower Valley Roads.

14. The Board reported receiving checks in the amounts of \$50 from White Wolf and \$100 from Sanitary Septic for pumping services.

15. The Board discussed a non-binding resolution submitted for approval by S. Nelson, the Town's delegate to WiredWest. The resolution is being submitted to all member towns interested in being part of the regional last-mile fiber network. The resolution "confirms the Town's intent to continue to support the WiredWest cooperative initiative to construct and operate a regional "fiber to the home" broadband network to substantially serve all premises in the Town". In December WiredWest and Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) will conduct a series of presentations for town officials to explain the last-mile network financial model and the town process for funding the network construction. Passing the non-binding resolution is a necessary step for towns to stay in the game by being included in detailed engineering of the network to be conducted by MBI. But the final decision to proceed with its share of last-mile financing will be made by each town at their Annual Town Meeting in the Spring. WiredWest plans a massive public education and conditional customer sign-up campaign in the interim. M. Case made a motion to approve the resolution. J. Huebner seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Both Board members signed the resolution.

16. J. Huebner said that we must have the warrant for 12/15 written next week. At the present time we expect that it will include: The BEAT resolution; BRPC working group membership decision; and the HCOG electricity bulk purchase resolution. D. Parnell advised that it is not necessary to reallocate highway funds except for a small amount for machinery repair.

17. J. Huebner commented briefly on the following:

- a. No news on the cemetery 5 acres and no word from the state on Virginia Lakes Estates.
- b. We received Notice of Filing and Request for Comments from WMECO for its Annual Storm Recovery Reserve Cost Fund .

- c. Received from Dalton notification of its Town Boundary Survey.
- d. Received from WMECO its 2015 yearly operational plan concerning issues such as private wells, wetlands and herbicide spraying.
- e. Received Westfield Wild and Scenic Meeting minutes from Oct. 30.
- f. D. fish mentioned that the Town owes P. Clark \$11,000 for his work on the Middlefield bridge.

18.J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm. M. Case seconded and the motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

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

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

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

Minutes written by J. Nelson