

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – December 1, 2014

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. 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 approve the minutes from November 24, 2014. M. Case seconded and the vote to approve the minutes was unanimous.
3. M. Case told the Board and D. Fish that he had received a number of complaints from residents about the Highway Department's handling of snow removal during the November 26th storm. Problems included a school bus which slid sideways on Frost Road and a UPS truck stuck on Lovers Lane. M. Case said that he tried calling D. Fish about these and other incidents without success. D. Fish said that they were all out plowing and he cannot answer the cell phone and plow safely at the same time. When he has a minute and can pull over he picks up his messages.

He was on the scene at the school bus mishap on Frost Road. He offered to take the wheel and drive the bus down the hill. The driver was afraid to release the brake. Dufour sent a driver to take over and that solved the problem. J. Huebner asked that D. Fish stay on the air during storms because communicating with people is very important. D. Fish said that he can't check up on the other drivers. They have their assigned routes to plow and he has to trust that they are getting the work done. He said that this was a very difficult storm for two reasons: the dirt roads were not frozen yet and so were very slow going for the trucks and also it was the day before Thanksgiving and an unusual number of people were on the road for holiday reasons. J. Huebner stressed again how important it was for him to respond to people's calls during all storms. If we knew the roads were truly unsafe, we could declare a state of emergency and close them Town wide.

4. J. Huebner mentioned that Pittsfield had an expectation that we would plow the dam road in October Mt. State Forest. D. Fish and the Board agreed that that was not possible. Pittsfield should take on the plowing responsibility if they want that remote road kept open in winter. D. Fish was not sure if the City of Pittsfield was asking us to do this work or if it was their dam repair contractor.
5. M. Case asked if there was any information yet on the new plow truck. D. Fish didn't expect to have any news until later in the month.
6. J. Huebner called for the warrant for the December 15 Special Town Meeting to be signed. After he summarized the three Articles aloud, J. Huebner made a motion that the Board sign the warrant. M. Case seconded and the vote to sign was unanimous. All Board members signed the warrant. Chief Breen, as Constable, added his signature and after the Clerk applied the Town Seal, he left to post 3 copies of the warrant in the Town.
7. Ken Walls asked for clarification on one of the Articles. Concerning the electricity bulk purchase opportunity, he wondered if everyone in town would have to sign up for it. J. Huebner replied that first the Town at the STM will have to vote to join. After that, individual households can choose to sign up for the discounted rates or choose not to. No one will be required to sign up. We will not be eligible to participate in the program until next winter, but need to start the application process now.
8. J. Huebner mentioned that he had sent an email to CSX reminding them of their promise to install the guardrails on Lower Valley Road. He had no reply yet.
9. Melissa Provencher of Berkshire Regional Planning told J. Huebner that we may be able to get funding to do an assessment of the Borgnis landfill.

10. Mark Levernoch, of Levernoch Plumbing, asked the Selectmen a Board of Health question. He explained that he has been working for Pete and Ann Goucher, owners of the property at 68 Cross Place Road. They hired him to winterize their vacant house. They have been trying to sell the house for several years as they have moved to Alabama. It appears that they have now found a buyer. They have asked Mark to help with Title 5 issues related to the sale. J. Hostetter told him that she can give him a list of licensed inspectors. Mark told the Board that the Gouchers are asking for another 90 day extension on their existing Title 5 inspection. That extension was given earlier this year after the house had been on the market for several years. The Board declined to give another extension and recommended that they get a current inspection so that their sale can close.
11. J. Huebner reported that there has been no progress on the Middlefield Road bridge repairs. We cannot install the temporary bridge which we located at DCR in Lee until the DOT and other agencies have inspected and approved it.
12. The Board received checks in the amounts of \$65.00, \$40.00 and \$25.00 for plumbing and furnace inspections.
13. J. Huebner asked J. Nelson to provide D. Parnell, Town Accountant, with details of the retainer due to Holden Engineering for their work on the Cross Place hydrologic and engineering study. She confirmed the amount due is \$6,000 and will give the supporting paperwork to the Accountant.
14. The Board reported that there were no new developments on the cemetery land from Pittsfield, the veterans' memorial task force or Eden Glen.
15. K. Lew, Finance Committee Chair, reported to the Board that he will be meeting with Tom Matuszko of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

(BRPC) tomorrow to discuss how best to position the Town to make a successful appeal for funding in the DLTA grant application which the Finance Committee is writing. They are applying for funding to cover professional assistance in developing the Town's long range financial plan. K. Lew expects to have the application for the Board to sign next week. He also mentioned that he and Dick Spencer will attend the MBI/WiredWest meeting for finance committees and Board members on 12/11.

16. The Board announced a change in its holiday schedule. They had originally decided not to meet on December 22 and 29. Now they will meet on the 22nd. The 29th remains a holiday.

17. To address a possible oversight, J. Huebner made a motion to appoint Sue McGrath as interim tax collector. M. Case seconded and the vote to appoint her passed unanimously. He mentioned that he put an invitation in Tracks for a qualified resident to come forward. If there is no response from a resident interested in the position and qualified for it, then the Board will move to make the tax collector position an appointed one rather than elected.

18. The Berkshire Regional Health Alliance (BRHA) has suggested that we appoint additional members to the Board of Health. J. Huebner will write an appeal for volunteers and place it in the Tracks. He mentioned that we have received a packet of information from BRHA on Brain Health. He asked that this be given to the COA. We also received from the state Board of Health a report on cancer incidence in Massachusetts.

19. J. Huebner asked S. Lennon to see that the emergency radio is in working order by the end of this week. He asked D. Fish to get a track phone.

20. J. Hostetter reported to the Board that copies of the 2010 and 2011 Annual Reports are available in the hallway on top of the mail boxes for residents to take. For the 2012 report, Allison has provided a report on the election

details. With this information Jodi can finish that report. She expects to be able to finish the 2013 Annual Report by the end of the year. Ed Bond will write a dedication of that report to John Keator. The Planning Board still has not responded to her request for feedback on her work on the By-Laws. She was unable to work on the scanning project this week. The Board asked her to search Board of Health files for Bucksteep septic records.

21. At 8:07pm J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Minutes written by J. Nelson