

## Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – March 9, 2015

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, M. Case and S. Lennon.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from March 2, 2015. M. Case seconded and the motion to accept was unanimous.
3. J. Huebner, as Chair of our Board of Health (BOH), asked the Town Clerk to define the Board of Health's authority. She told the Board that they are the Board of Health unless there is another. Once the legalities are clear non - Select Board BoH members will be appointed.
4. Attending the meeting were Barbara Keyes and Vera Cormier. Both have volunteered to serve on our Board of Health. J. Huebner informed them that they will need to attend a Mass Association of Boards of Health training session. One is scheduled in Northampton on April 11 at the Blue Bonnet Diner. Lunch is included. The Town will pay the training fee and mileage. They agreed to attend the training and signed the registration for the event.
5. General discussion of the status of work on our bridges followed. D. Fish agreed with J. Huebner that Middlefield does not seem interested in helping us with either labor or a financial contribution toward getting that bridge restored. They indicated a few weeks ago that they might help, but have not responded to the Board's inquiries since. P. Clark requested a speedy turnaround from DOT on approval for our plan to complete the Middlefield bridge repairs. D. Fish commented that if we could repair without major new construction it would save a lot of money. He thought we may be able to use some amount of Chapter money for bridge repairs, but not for the loans. He will look into that. We might be able to reduce

the warrant item if Chapter money can be used. J. Huebner told him that he received a request for more fill be added to the uphill ramp on the Cross Place Road Bridge. There is no news from the state or CSX on the Summit Hill Road Bridge. D. Fish reported that he has finished the Snow and Ice Survey. He said that he looked, but has not seen any new guard rail installed on Upper Valley Road by CSX.

6. The Board reviewed a proposal from Mike Moro to organize concerts in the Town Park on evenings this summer. These would be open mike performances like those held at the Dream Away. J. Huebner made a motion in support of this proposal. The vote to support was unanimous pending approval by the Parks Commission. The Board asked J. Nelson to inform Ed Bond and Chief Breen about the proposal. J. Huebner will draft a reply to Mr. Moro.
7. D. Fish gave the Administrative Assistants a package he put together with all of the forms needed to apply for curb cut permission. Copies will be made and given to any applicants. The forms will also be placed on the Town website. Applicants' plans must be approved by the Conservation Commission.
8. J. Huebner asked D. Fish about the drainage from Mrs. Darcey's Cellar out onto Johnson Hill Road. He replied that it was still draining, but P. Clark was working with her on this. She has not made any complaints to the Town.
9. J. Huebner summarized a letter sent to the Board last week by former resident Sybille Baier. In response to the item in last month's Tracks she wrote in support of removing the Eden Glen dam. He drafted a response to her letter agreeing that there was no longer a swimming hole there, contamination of the stream was suspected, and the continued flooding onto Frost Road was unacceptable. He made a motion that the Board sign this response. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

10.S. Nelson, our WiredWest delegate, reported on the status of their effort to bring broadband internet to homes and businesses in western Mass towns. He told the Board that a large mailing of 18,000 pieces had gone out on Monday to all who had signed the support cards. He apologized on behalf of the WiredWest cooperative for the delays in getting this out. Customers can sign up using a credit card online for service with a \$49.00 refundable deposit on the website at wiredwest.net. They can also sign up using a check and the envelope enclosed in the mailing for that purpose. A stack of brochures including mailing envelopes is on the literature table at Town Hall and at the Becket Athenaeum.

S. Nelson mentioned that there is a counter on the website that tracks sign-ups from each town in the coop. The response has been good to date. About seven hundred people had signed up as of Monday night. We need to get 40% of our households signed up before annual meeting in May. He is doing map checking to clarify the number of those households. He requested time to do a very brief presentation on the broadband effort at the Annual Town Meeting. The Board agreed to a five to ten minute presentation. A 2/3 vote is needed there to finance the Town's share of the network construction cost. J. Huebner agreed that broadband internet is critical for the economy and development of the county.

11.J. Huebner asked that voters turn out for the Special Town Meeting to authorize borrowing authority for repairs to Cross Place, Middlefield and Frost Road bridges next Monday, March 16 at 7:15 pm.

12.Huebner reported attending an interesting Legislative Breakfast in Shelburn Falls last week. Discussion was lively on topics such as the need for increased local aid, level funding for school transport, even more complex new culvert regulations, 100% reimbursements for veterans' benefits, land trust abuse and widespread problems with failing bridges. The small town of Colrain reported that it has 30 bridges close to collapse.

13. The Board received from Marilyn Wiley, Chair of the Planning Board, a copy of a letter sent by that Board to Richard Loveszy, owner of Bucksteep. In her letter she noted that the Planning Board had not received the questionnaire they sent him asking for specific information on his proposed use of Bucksteep. This information was requested for a meeting on February 10 which he was asked to attend. He neither completed the questionnaire nor did he attend the meeting. He has not contacted the Board in the intervening month. M. Wiley expressed the Planning Board's concern about his lack of response. They expect him to complete and submit the questionnaire to the Board by April 7 and to attend their upcoming Planning Board meeting on April 14. She reminded him that no permits can be issued until there is clear understanding of his plans for the property and his business. She shared her concerns with our building Inspector, Paul Greene, and he shares those same concerns.

14. The Board received notice from the state that we must nominate our inspector of animals. Chief Breen serves in this post and must sign the form and have the Clerk notarize it. J. Huebner asked him about progress on designing a new Town flag to be hung in the State House. Chief Breen said there has been no progress. J. Huebner suggested that perhaps we should put a notice in Tracks asking for artist proposals. Chief Breen mentioned that he had the trailer for hauling emergency equipment, which he acquired through a government grant, parked outside Town Hall.

15. J. Huebner commented briefly on the following matters:

- a. Received notification from Amec Foster Wheeler and Mass Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) of a public hearing on CSX's Vegetation Management Plan. We can request a hard copy of the plan upon request. The public hearing will be held in Amherst at MDAR, 101 University Drive, on March 18 at 11:00am.

- b. Received notice of a public hearing from the Town of Lee taking place on April 13 at 6:15 pm regarding AJT Realty Trust's application for a Special Permit.
  - c. Received notice from BRPC of a meeting of the Commission on March 19 at 7:00pm.
  - d. Received a reminder of the Age Friendly Community Survey being conducted by Elder Services, BRPC, Berkshire Health Systems, several Towns' COA groups and a number of other organizations. Go to [www.surveymonkey.com/s/BerkshireAgeFriendly](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BerkshireAgeFriendly) to take the survey online or contact Elder Services for a hard copy at 413-499-0524.
  - e. Received notice from the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council of anti-terrorism training. Given to Paul Mikaniewicz.
  - f. Regional Public Health meeting at BRPC on Thursday at 7pm.
  - g. Received from Mass Fiscal, a non-profit group lobbying for more transparency in government, a report on the legislature's activities.
  - h. The Clerk confirmed that the Annual Town meeting this year will be held on Wednesday, May 6 at 7:00 pm. This is the Wednesday before Mother's Day.
  - i. J. Huebner heard that Sean Cameron's wife may be interested in the Tax Collector's job. He will try to call her. The Clerk told him that no one has taken out papers for the position.
  - j. The next Selectmen's Dinner will be held at Chrissey's Farm in Great Barrington.
16. Finance Committee members K. Lew, D. Spencer, M. Burke, D. Weissbrodt and S. Connor joined the meeting to discuss their preliminary draft of the Town budget. The group reviewed the spreadsheet that had been shared before the meeting. There will be further discussion and revised drafts as more information comes in from state agencies, the school department and from Town departments. D. Fish had submitted his draft budget request. The Finance Committee is looking for more information from P. Blake, veteran's agent, and from other departments. The goal is to have the

budget finished by the last Monday in April. The Boards will meet again on 3/23.

17.J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Nelson