

## Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – March 30, 2015

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, S. Lennon and M. Case.
2. M. Case made a motion to accept the minutes from March 23, 2015. J. Huebner seconded and the motion to accept the minutes was unanimous.
3. J. Huebner recognized Lauren Gaherty of Berkshire Regional Planning and asked her to come to the Board's table as he signed the many forms required by the grant application for the Depot Brook Watershed Study. J. Nelson had prepared the forms for signing. The Clerk certified J. Huebner's signature and applied the Town seal. L. Gaherty checked all documents for completeness and finding no problems thanked the Board for their help in satisfying the grant requirements. She will submit the completed grant package to the state on April 2.
4. Ed Bond addressed the Board to express his opinion of the warrant article on restoring the Eden Glen dam and pond proposed for Annual Town Meeting. He consulted Roy Bryan, our delegate to Westfield Wild & Scenic (WW&S), about the dam's status with that organization. Roy told him that as the dam predates WW&S, it has no jurisdiction over that structure. Ed informed the Board that the dam needs a tremendous amount of repair and ongoing maintenance which will be very costly to the Town. The dam gate will have to be modified and installed. The current debris in the watercourse will have to be removed as will any new debris on a continuing basis. There are also liability considerations. He understands the fond memories of the "swimming hole" described by the residents who wrote the warrant article but believes the project is too costly for the Town to undertake and maintain.

E. Bond also provided the Board with an update on building maintenance and Park Department developments. He turned over plans of the old town hall and chapel to J. Nelson, member of the Historical Commission. He said our historic buildings are not being taken care of. He put together an estimate of repairs currently needed and gave that to the Finance Committee for consideration as they work on the budget. His estimate came to about \$14,000. He has made arrangements to have the park bathrooms repaired. He will review the park usage rules with the group planning regular concerts there. The rules must be explained to any others wishing to use that space. He will meet with the Lacrosse league if they want to continue using the field. The most urgent need at the old town hall is replacement windows. He priced out some options for the Historical Commission to consider. Shaun Lennon will try to arrange for inmates from the county jail to scrape and paint the old town hall exterior. The little red school house is seldom used but needs grass mowed on a regular basis. The Historical Commission needs keys to access that building.

Ed explained that he has worked on maintaining St. Andrews Chapel over the years, trying to keep up with fixing the exterior and the roof. However the woodwork is in rough shape now and needs attention badly. Kent Lew added that we have about \$1500 in the chapel account now. Ed said that the chapel committee has done a good job of taking care of the interior of the building. He mentioned that he is considering semi-retirement and more travel in the near future and wanted to give the Town current status on the historic buildings and all the work that needs doing as he may be less available to help. Lauren Gaherty of Berkshire Regional Planning told the Board that there is a new grant available for historic preservation. She will send the Historical Commission a link to this site.

5. Steve Nelson, the Town's delegate to WiredWest, asked the Board for permission to place lawn signs at the Town Park and Transfer Station asking residents to sign up for Broadband service. J. Huebner asked M. Case and S. Lennon if they had any objection to this request. Neither had any

objection and he told S. Nelson to go ahead and place the signs as requested. He also mentioned that the Board had received a letter from the Town of Tolland Select Board which raises questions about the future management of WiredWest. Tolland pointed out that the organization's Executive Committee is currently an all-volunteer effort. Tolland also wrote that they intend to continue to support the WiredWest initiative as the region's best path to broadband, though they were hoping that the state would provide more money. S. Nelson noted that release of the \$40,000,000 in funding by the state to MBI was still pending. J. Huebner said that he will discuss the initiative with our legislators on April 16 at the Berkshire Selectmen's Dinner. S. Nelson asked the Board if they accepted the revised language submitted by WiredWest for their Annual Town Meeting warrant. The Board had no objections to the revised warrant submitted.

6. Jane Pytko told the Board that repairs are needed to the wooden railing at the Transfer Station which was damaged when White Wolf had trouble replacing the container properly. The railing needs some shoring up. Ed Bond said he would look at the damage. It may be easily repaired and not require involving the insurance company.
7. J. Huebner announced that Barbara Keyes and Vera Cormier are officially members of the Town Board of Health as of this date.
8. He reported receiving a letter from Peter Niles at MassDOT addressing some of our concerns with the current bridge repairs. The state Department of Transportation will set up training on bridge construction issues. Phil Clark said that he will attend the training. P. Niles mentioned that P. Clark and Mr. Bardow, state bridge engineer, had been in touch on several issues affecting the Middlefield Road Bridge reconstruction. P. Niles also mentioned that MassDOT is working on plans and estimates for the repairs to the Summit Hill Road bridge. J. Huebner expressed his relief at finally receiving news of some progress from DOT on Summit Hill.

9. The Board asked D. Fish to attend a MassDOT workshop on the Chapter 90 process. The Town is interested in learning more about all the various types of work for which we might be able to use these funds.
10. Notice was received that the Mass. Municipal Association will hold its annual meeting at the Framingham Public Library on April 9th. None of the Board members will be attending. Similarly, none will attend the Berkshire County Boards of Health Association (BCBOHA) dinner on April 16.
11. J. Huebner asked J. Hostetter to complete a USDA form regarding the loan requirements on the Town Garage. This is an annual audit just to check if we are in compliance with the law.
12. He also asked her to make dinner registrations for seven attendees at the Berkshire Association of Selectmen's Dinner to be held at Chrissey Farms on April 16.
13. Two Public Notices were received from the Town of Lee. One concerned a subdivision plan and the other a variance request made to the Planning Board.
14. J. Huebner plans to attend the Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting at BRPC tomorrow. He has been attending the Pipeline Working Group meetings at BRPC on a regular basis. To date, the Group has spent \$3800. At the last meeting the Town of Deerfield shared the resolution they wrote to block the pipeline completely from crossing any section of their land. This was written using Chapter 97 of MGL. J. Huebner came away with instructions on how to do the same for Washington if the residents so decide. There is an April 27 training on pipeline disasters.
15. Lauren Gaherty of BRPC will look into the Borgnis landfill for the Town.

16.J. Huebner signed the Pavia well/septic permit documents.

17. P. Clark and J. Huebner met with Mass. Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) at Town Hall last Tuesday to discuss the process for receiving the grant funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency( FEMA). The funds will be passed from FEMA to MEMA and then to the Town.

18.After the Finance Committee filed into the room from their earlier meeting, the Board asked them to summarize the current status of their work on the budget. Extensive discussion followed focusing on the following accounts:

- a. Selectmen's expense account – to be reduced to \$3000 from \$4000
- b. Town building maintenance and repairs - more information needed. Significant impact on budget of about \$14,500.
- c. Highway department accounts – tree work to be funded at \$4000 and fuel use estimated to hold close to current level ay \$33,000. Gas prices forecast to stay low.
- d. Police fuel use – estimated at or close to this year's level
- e. Voc ED – more information needed. # students not yet established. D. Spencer to speak to school about this. Becket pays 2/3 cost.
- f. Sons and Daughters – Have used little of money in their account
- g. Veterans' aid – further information needed. Hope state will take this over.
- h. Reserve account as source of funding – information being developed for further analysis
- i. Pipeline working group – will stay at \$20,000 for now. May decrease.
- j. Current working estimate of tax rate - \$14.11. FinComm trying to get it down to \$14.00.
- k. Stabilization account – Dick Spencer would like to increase it to \$50,000 in light of some large expenses expected. Can use stabilization fund to keep borrowing costs down.

19. The Board asked Chief Breen to speak with Lt. Blackmer of the State police about many suspiciously heavily loaded trucks using the Mountain Road. We need to have weight checks done regularly to discourage this and preserve the road.

20. J. Hostetter told the Board that progress with the last two years of Annual Reports has been made. She still expects to have them completed by the Annual Town Meeting.

21. J. Nelson reported that work with Verizon on Chief Breen's phone situation is continuing. A Verizon tech was late to the appointment she had scheduled for last week and Chief Breen had to leave to drive the afternoon school bus. A new appointment will be scheduled for the coming week. She has requested cost estimates from both Verizon and Crocker for the Chief's phone line and for one in the kitchen.

22. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45. M. Case seconded and the motion to adjourn was unanimous. J. Huebner wished all a Happy Easter and Passover.

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted, Jan Nelson