

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – September 21, 2015

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, S. Lennon and M. Case.
2. J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from September 14, 2015. M. Case seconded and the vote to accept the minutes was unanimous.
3. J. Huebner asked the Administrative Assistants to take Richard Lovesey off the Action Items List as Bucksteep is barred by the state from operating in any capacity. Both the Bucksteep wells and the septic system have failed inspection.
4. M. Case mentioned that he hopes to have some encouraging news on the cemetery land transfer after the Pittsfield mayoral election as he has good relations with the front runners.
5. As planned, Director Eric Nakajima of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), joined the meeting to discuss the status of the effort to bring high-speed internet to the unserved and underserved towns of western Mass. In his brief introduction and overview Mr. Nakajima recognized that we are a WiredWest member town and he expressed MBI's support for, and close working relationship with, WiredWest.

Discussion began with questions from the Board about Washington's position in the order in which towns will be connected to the broadband network that MBI will build and which WiredWest and its member towns will own and operate. J. Huebner told Mr. Nakajima that he heard we would "go to the back of the line" because we have not yet had our debt exclusion vote. He expressed our frustration with this treatment as MBI did not warn the towns of a set deadline for this requirement. We could have taken the vote at our spring Annual Town Meeting but did not, thinking

there was no urgency. Mr. Nakajima replied that this information had been sent out but conceded that it had not been effectively communicated.

J. Huebner emphasized that we want to be in the first group of towns to be served. K. Lew, Finance Committee Chair, asked Mr. Nakajima if our overwhelming vote to approve the borrowing article, 102-7, was not proof enough of the Town's commitment to the project. He added that we do not even need to have debt exclusion in place to go to a bank for our bond funds. Jim Drawe, Finance Chair for WiredWest, suggested that we go ahead with scheduling our debt exclusion vote to minimize any negative impact on our place in the pecking order. The debt exclusion vote requires an actual election. Jim Drawe mentioned that the cost of this election, which the Town Clerk estimated at \$1000 for a half-day election, could be covered by WiredWest from an MBI grant of \$5000 ceded to the coop by the Town. Mr. Nakajima agreed that this was an appropriate use of those funds. Jim Drawe added that as long as we get the debt exclusion done before the end of the calendar year we will be equal to all other towns at that point. He said there is no guarantee when any town will be connected. Much will be determined by geographical location and by the number of households which sign up for WiredWest service in each town.

The Select Board agreed to move ahead right away and that they needed to publicly pose the debt exclusion ballot question for the Special Election. K. Lew gave J. Huebner the text and Mike Case read it into the record. A copy is attached to these minutes as Exhibit A. J. Huebner made a motion to hold a Special Election for the purpose of voting on this ballot question on Saturday Nov. 14 from noon to 4pm. M. Case seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

At this point Eric Nakajima described in some detail what MBI will be doing for the rest of this year to support the western Mass push to build the Last Mile infrastructure which will link homes and businesses to broadband. MBI plans to put out an RFP for engineering design. Additionally MBI will

put together bid documents for construction. These efforts will continue through the winter and spring. They will also be finalizing contracts with WiredWest as WiredWest contracts with the towns. K. Lew asked Jim Drawe if he had a timeline to guide the Town in anticipated borrowing and paying. J. Drawe said that there will be no borrowing by the towns in FY 2016. FY 2017 will be the first draw from the towns. WiredWest won't draw more than is required at that time. We will be provided a schedule of anticipated payments. The town will need updates to be sure that we are in a position to respond.

6. D. Spencer reported on the public informational meeting he attended on September 14 conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The purpose of the meeting was a discussion of the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement Concerning the proposed expansion of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. The conservation plan is a lengthy report. D. Spencer obtained a summary of the report. The public comment period on the overall plan ends on November 14. He was able to interest one of the public officials, Andrew French, in our North Lake property. J. Huebner will contact him at andrewfrench@FWS.gov. We should inform him of what properties we own and are willing to sell. J. Huebner said that the voters should make a decision on this.
7. P. Clark told the Board that by the end of this week he will have completed his estimate on the cost to either remove the Eden Glen dam or to repair and maintain the dam for recreational purposes. There will be a special Town Meeting on October 26 at 7:00pm to vote on whether the Town wants to remove the dam or repair and maintain it.
8. Chief Breen will ask for better road signs welcoming people to Washington at the upcoming Washington Mountain Road (WMR) construction meeting. He told the Board that he will bring the list of emergency equipment available to the Town from MEMA next week. D. Fish did get the "Hidden

Drive” sign for Chief Breen but has not installed it yet. Chief Breen will confer with Jeff Sawtelle of the COA on any additional names which belong on the Oldest Resident plaque.

9. J. Huebner reported that he had consulted with Town Counsel Jeremia Pollack about ownership of the former dump on the Borgnis property on Frost Road. Town Counsel was emphatic that we do not own this property. He will communicate to the Registry that the Town at Annual Town Meeting voted not to acquire it.
10. The Board reviewed new figures on the cost of installing a free “emergency only” phone in the Town Hall. The cost being higher than expected, the Board asked J. Nelson to try again to get it reduced.
11. M. Case reported nothing new from Pittsfield on their preparations to offer area veterans’ services. He suggested that in the interim we ask Hinsdale to take over servicing our veterans. J. Huebner asked him to look into this.
12. J. Huebner asked D. Spencer to inquire of M. Lampro if she can set up a way for the Town to dispose of unwanted prescription drugs.
13. J. Huebner mentioned that Barbara Keyes has resigned from the Board of Health. He made a motion to name Jan Paxton to fill that vacancy. M. Case seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. J. Huebner also nominated Vera Cormier will be our representative to the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance. Mike Case seconded and that nomination too passed unanimously.
14. J. Huebner commented briefly on the following:
 - a. He will not attend the meeting on October 19.
 - b. There will be no meeting on October 12 in observance of Columbus Day.

- c. Received abutter notification from the Pittsfield Zoning Board of Appeals(ZBA) to allow a medical marijuana dispensary at 531 Dalton Avenue. Meeting at 7:00pm September 30 at City Hall.
- d. Also from Pittsfield ZBA abutters notice concerning solar array installation on the city landfill. Meeting time and date same as above.
- e. Received notice from Town of Dalton regarding special permit application from Shire Enterprises. October 6 at 7:45.
- f. Also from Town of Dalton variance application from Michael Garvey. Hearing same as above.
- g. Berkshire County prescription drug collection on September 26 10am to 2pm at Dalton CRA, Lenox Town Hall and Lee ambulance service.

15.J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:49pm. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Nelson