

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – November 9, 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. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of November 2, 2015. M. Case seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.
3. J. Huebner welcomed Representative William “Smitty” Pignatelli to the meeting. Smitty told the Board that he had come to Washington to discuss the Community Compact program and to ask the Town to support it. This program originated with Governor Baker and its purpose is to support towns’ efforts to regionalize and save money by sharing professional personnel and services with neighboring towns for their mutual benefit. Initially the program focused on school systems but has since expanded to include such non-school shared services as public works, and shared personnel such as building inspectors and fire chiefs.

The program originated in the Southern Berkshires with Lenox and Lee cooperating to save money on school administration. Smitty hopes to see it adopted throughout the Central Berkshires also. He indicated that grant money will be offered by the state to participating towns. Governor Baker has said that he is coming to the Berkshires for the signing of the Community Compact on December 22nd. Kent Lew, Finance Committee Chair, asked what the grants would be for. Smitty indicated that the money would initially go to school districts for technology to make inter-administration cooperation more efficient.

Smitty urged the Board to sign the Compact. Member towns will have more leverage in applying for the grants. He emphasized that we have to start working with our neighbors for the simple reason that there is not enough money around to keep going it alone. Infrastructure maintenance will

bankrupt many small towns. Smitty said that we must make regional services our top priority. After Representative Pignatelli left J. Huebner made a motion that the Board sign the Community Compact. M. Case seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Dan Parnell gave the Select Board a brief update on the status of the community solar electric service proposed by Becket. He is a member of the Becket group working on this project. Garth Klimchuck of Becket, who is leading this effort, was unable to attend tonight's meeting. D. Parnell told the Board they have learned that the local electric grid is maxed out. Becket would have to pay for additional transmission capacity if a site in Becket was used. Becket has identified several alternative grid options which they will continue to explore and will update us on progress. The opportunity to buy low cost solar-generated electricity would be offered to all of our residents. J. Huebner mentioned that we have a 42 acre site at the rear of the Town Park that might be a suitable site for the solar array. He said that Washington would be very interested in working with Becket. He has been looking for an opportunity like this for several years.
5. J. Huebner commented that the arrangement of the Williams College furniture looks very attractive. Jodi Hostetter, who directed the placing of the furniture, told the Board that the Highway Department did all of the heavy moving, both here and in Williamstown. At her request the Board agreed to cover the cost of a "Thank You" lunch of pizza and roast beef melts for the highway crew.
6. J. Nelson told the Board that J. LaPier will come to Town Hall next Monday to do the wiring for the emergency phone.
7. J. Huebner reviewed the Emergency Management Team plan. Chief Breen told him that by law Paul Mikaniewicz has to be head of the team. Victor will identify grant opportunities and communicate with Paul.

8. J. Huebner reported that Holden Engineering has sent documentation to the Town that may be a bid package. Phil Clark, who is out of town currently, will review that information when he returns and make a determination of the value of the Holden documents at that time. The Army Corps will come to look at the Cross Place Road site next Thursday at noon.
9. Senator Ben Downing will be here next week on November 16th from 2:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon for coffee and conversation with residents. All are invited to Town hall to get acquainted with our State Senator. Bring your questions and concerns.
10. We are awaiting confirmation from Phil Collins of Hinsdale that he is ready to take over as our temporary veterans' agent. M. Case said that Pittsfield has still not moved forward with opening a regional veterans' office.
11. Saturday, November 14 from noon to four pm there will be a special election at Town Hall to exclude from Proposition 2.5 borrowing for Broadband.
12. J. Huebner said that the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance has asked if we want our Board of Health to take part in training for retail food standards. Vera Cormier of the Board of Health declined as we don't have any retail..
13. M. Case mentioned that there will be a Veterans' EXPO at the Crowne Plaza on November 12.
14. J. Huebner reported receiving an email from Tracy Osimboni, Project Manager of the Accelerated Bridge Program at DOT, informing us that they are at 25% design stage for the reconstruction of the Summit Hill bridge. They have asked for a hearing to inform the public of their plans at Town Hall. J. Huebner will respond and request the hearing be held on December 7th.

15. J. Huebner reported receiving a letter from HCOG offering us a chance to participate in another aggregation activity. Given the collapse of their previous scheme, the offer is not attractive. J. Huebner will look into this.
16. Public Notice was received from the Town of Peru about a November 24 meeting of their Zoning Board of Appeals to consider a variance to build an attached garage.
17. We received a lengthy document from NSTAR and WMECO detailing their approval of an energy plan. J. Huebner will review it.
18. The Town received a check in the amount of \$100 from Betty Arnold for a well permit for 732 Lower Valley Road. The Property owner is Mr. Schnop.
19. J. Huebner requested that J. Hostetter advertise the Downing visit to the Town at the transfer station and on the Town Park board. She mentioned that she had inserted a notice of the meeting in the Country Journal.
20. There will be a Seven Town Advisory meeting on 11/19 at Nessacus at 7:00pm.
21. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Respectfully submitted,

J. Nelson