

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen - January 25, 2016

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. 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 January 11, 2016. S. Lennon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. D. Spencer told the Board that he had a reply from Blue Wave Capital. They told him that our local electrical infrastructure is inadequate to support solar development. The Board briefly discussed Eversource's possible influence discouraging solar locally as well as the impact of the state's current restrictive net metering cap.
4. K. Lew, Finance Committee Chair, brought the Select Board up to date on stumpage fees and timber sales. He mentioned that in October the Town Received \$1500 from the Forest Products Trust Fund for stumpage fees for timber harvesting on DCR land in October Mountain State Forest. \$1100 of that was the balance of stumpage fees for the cutting along Watson Road. The remainder was our portion of the deposit on the current project underway back behind Schoolhouse Reservoir. When the Schoolhouse project is finished we can expect the balance of stumpage fees after the end of this fiscal year. The amount on that distribution from the Forest Products Trust Fund should be about \$14,000. He will be looking at the Pittsfield watershed for work done there which may not have been reported and from which Washington may not have been paid our rightful stumpage fees. His goal is to get an accounting of stumpage on a regular basis from Pittsfield.

M. Case confirmed that Governor Baker wants to change the way PILOT funds are structured. Assessment of timber value may change and stumpage may change. D. Spencer added that the legislature never fully funded the PILOT program. K. Lew mentioned that he is reviewing all of the

Town's electrical usage and rates including Town Hall, Old Town hall, the Town Park, Chapel etc. for possible savings. J. Huebner said that we should shut off the electricity to the Old Town hall now as that is strictly seasonal. Ed Bond suggested that we do the same at the Town Park and have it restored in the spring.

5. J. Huebner asked T. Drugmond for a quick summary of her reading of the BRPC report on FERC and the pipeline project. She will bring the report in to be posted at Town Hall.
6. Peter Blake, Chair of the Soldiers' Memorial Committee, updated the Board on progress in planning the memorial. After a site visit a representative from a supplier of monuments offered both a design and special pricing. She agreed that the new memorial should be installed at the same Old Town Hall location as the current memorials. She gave specific input on how to design the plaque. She recommended using stone similar to the granite tablets there now. She provided an estimate of \$20,500 for the project. The three new stones should be about four feet square. P. Blake asked the Board to consider this. He has learned that the property lines at the Old Town Hall need to be clarified as a critical step in the planning process. He is unfamiliar with the stone S. Connors offered to the Town for the memorial. J. Huebner asked Chief Breen if the Memorial Committee had solicited any donations yet and asked if we had received the funds generously offered by Al Shapira. He will send a letter to Mr. Shapira.
7. D. Spencer mentioned that he had heard that State Representative Ben Downing is stepping down from that office. Ben will not be a candidate in November. J. Huebner to draft a letter of thanks for his service.
8. K. Lew and M. Case will attend the Seven Town School District Advisory Meeting on February 18 at Nessacus at 7:00pm. J. Huebner cannot attend. A ten year budget review is on the agenda as are issues related to Cummington's stated interest in withdrawing from the school district.

9. Chief Breen told the Board that MEMA is still planning to come to Town Hall this month. He will respond to their email and confirm the date. At Chief Breen's request J. Huebner signed the paperwork for \$2200.00 of Highway Department equipment. The funds were received from MEMA. D. Fish agreed that the safety equipment would be very helpful.
10. Dave Fish told the Board that someone had backed into the Bucksteep back gate. No activity has been reported at Bucksteep. Chief Breen said that it has not been plowed out.
11. D. Fish reported that he has repaired the hole in the middle of Washington Mountain Road with PermaPatch.
12. Ed Bond asked D. Fish to use less salt on that short stretch of Frost Road onto which both of their homes face.
13. J. Huebner proposed an addendum to the Town's Personnel Policy. The Addendum concerns hours worked by the Highway Department Superintendent. The addendum requires the Highway Superintendent to attend the Select Board meeting every week in addition to working 40 hours each week. The Superintendent will be paid for a single hour of overtime for attendance at the weekly Select Board meeting or for time actually spent at the meeting if over one hour. D. Fish responded by asking that the Highway crew receive overtime pay if called out on a holiday. K. Lew will research the law on this point. J. Huebner made a motion to amend the Personnel Policy as requested. The motion was seconded by M. Case and passed unanimously. A copy of the Addendum is attached to these minutes.
14. Phil Clark told the board that he is wrapping up the road maintenance plan. The Plan will include hard numbers. In response to J. Huebner's question, P. Clark said that he has an inventory of all Town culverts 24 inches or larger.

He has that information in rough shape and will clean it up for the Board. K. Lew would also like to see it.

15. P. Clark will request a copy of the Washington Mountain Road engineering plan from Balthazar to post at Town Hall. Work won't begin in earnest until Spring. He gave the Board an update on Eden Glen. Regarding the culvert construction, impoundment surveys, probings and taking sediment samples have all been done. The sediment will be sent to the state lab for analysis. For the cleanout under dam he prefers to have one contractor do the work. The bid phase of the project will start during February. Regarding repairs to the Middlefield bridge, he was able to use drawings of the abutments that Jodi Hostetter found in our files. By studying them he was able to conclude that we will most likely need to construct new abutments. He will send the drawings to DOT for their review. New abutments will add considerably to the estimated cost of the repairs to the bridge. Kent Lew said that this may affect our bonding. He needs to review the project with Phil and Glenn.

At J. Hueber's request P. Clark said he would prepare a report on the value and contents of documents sent by Holden Engineering relative to their work on the Cross Place Road bridge. At this point P. Clark does not believe we have received any written material of value from Holden. He will give a letter proposal to J. Huebner next Monday recommending what the Town's next steps should be. The Board wants to see what the Town has paid to Holden to date and what value the Town has received for the money.

16. Chief Breen told the Board that additional exterior lighting will be installed at Town Hall for security reasons. Ed Bond is to take charge of this work.
17. J. Huebner reported that S. Nelson will be able to attend the next meeting and will provide a full report at that time.
18. J. Huebner made a motion to approve the monthly Selectmen's Letter to the tracks. M. Case seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

19.M. Case announced that he has been appointed Regional Director DCR Western Region. He will be sworn in by Governor Baker On February 5 at the State House in Boston. He has also been named to the Board of Trustees for the Holyoke Soldiers Home

20.J. Huebner reported that the Board had received a check for \$788.81 from WiredWest in payment for the recent special election on the debt exclusion.

21. Westfield Wild & Scenic plans to ask DOT for the old Summit Hill Bridge when it is removed. Apparently the span was part of a historic railroad roundtable. The Board has had no response from Dot regarding our concerns with the planned new bridge.

22.J. Huebner asked J. Hostetter to post a copy of the Financial Stability Report written by the Finance Committee on the website.

23.Consulting Assessor Karen Avalue told J. Huebner that she has completed work on the 2016 assessors' report and that results look positive.

24.J.Huebner expects to attend the MPO meeting tomorrow in Pittsfield.

25.J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 pm. S. Lennon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Respectfully submitted, Jan Nelson