

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen – June 20, 2016

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, M. Case and T. Drugmand.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from June 6, 2016 as written. M. Case seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.
3. J. Huebner mentioned that on July 1 the Berkshire County Selectmen's Association will hold their annual dinner. Attending for Washington will be Chief Breen, Mike Case and J. Huebner.
4. Tom Johnson reported that CSX had taken care of the recent beaver activity at mile 138. They had cleared out the obstruction and told him that they will check the area regularly.
5. He also told the Board that the highway crew had agreed on coverage during their vacations and that he will be taking vacation over the fourth of July holiday and during the last week of July. He mentioned that D.Fish's hearing will be this Wednesday.
6. J. Huebner said that Baltazar had graded and re-seeded the Old Common on Washington Mountain Road (WMR). They have not set up any of the promised granite posts yet. There was some uncertainty over whether they would include installing chains connecting the posts or not. The posts would mark the legal parking area bordering the Common. T. Drugmand who, as a concerned neighbor had attended a few of the Restoration Committee meetings, added that there has been discussion of the distance between the posts and that they will bring this up with Baltazar before the plan is finalized.

7. J. Huebner asked T. Johnson if we had chosen a contractor for the Blotz Road project yet. He replied that no selection had been made but that we are in negotiations. He needs to see the cost of Cross Place Road before they decide how to proceed with Blotz.
8. J. Huebner reported that he had completed writing the dam removal proposal and sent it on to the Department of Environmental Restoration yesterday. Westfield Wild and Scenic did not provide the letter of recommendation they had promised. K. Lew mentioned the unfunded expenses the Town has incurred for some of P. Clark's work concerning Eden Glen. We may need to take some money from stabilization unless we find a funding source. The Town owes him \$5205.50. After brief discussion P. Clark agreed to accept partial payment in the amount of \$1500.00 for now. The Board agreed that a Special Town Meeting will be needed if we cannot pay the balance within 2 months.
9. Regarding Middlefield Road bridge, P. Clark told the Board that he had a meeting today with DOT on this. He had written a letter report based on his research into and testing of the existing abutments. His conclusion was that they will bear the required load and will not have to be replaced. He feels that we can make a case for this conclusion and that DOT will have to accept it. K. Lew added that DCR said that we can keep the current temporary bridge in place on Middlefield Road for one year. P. Clark said that DOT would not want us to keep that bridge because it is not rated for the required load.
- 10.M. Case told the Board that DOT will be closing upper New Lenox Road for several months for culvert work. This will not impact Washington. Schermerhorn Road has been graded and graveled for nearly its entire length and will re-open shortly.

11. P. Clark and K. Lew told the Board that the culvert inventory and the road maintenance plan were works in progress and will be reviewed and updated on a priority basis.
12. J. Huebner signed next year's contract for our public health nurse at the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance.
13. At 7:35 J. Huebner commenced opening bid packages for the Cross Place Road culvert. Two bids were received. C&A Construction bid \$247,990 and Virgilio bid \$287,245. He asked T. Johnson to review and discuss the bids with Cathy Stevens of DOT. J. Huebner also asked Tom to schedule the Blotz road work carefully as many roads are under construction at this time. He said that he would wait until after WMR is completed.
14. J. Huebner attended a legislative luncheon moderated by Smitty Pignatelli. Candidates for Ben Downing's seat attending were: Mr. Hinds, Mr. Del Gallo and Ms. Harrington. S. Nelson told the Board that there will be a similar meeting Tuesday night, 6/21, at Becket Town Hall also moderated by Smitty.
15. On Monday, 6/13 Select Board Chair J. Huebner and Selectmen Mike Case attended a Massachusetts Association of School Committees meeting at Nessacus. This was an opportunity to network with town officers and school committee members from across the state. The pros and cons of Charter schools and their role in the educational mix were a hot topic of discussion. There was also discussion of reducing the number of Berkshire school districts to 3 – 5.
16. There was a broadband meeting on Wednesday 6/15 from 10 – 12 at Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to continue work on an assessment of the Town's readiness to move ahead with bringing broadband to Washington. J. Huebner, S. Nelson and K. Lew attended for the Town. A representative from MBI led the session. The meeting was focused on

financial details of our qualification to borrow the money to go forward. All unserved and underserved western Mass towns seeking state assistance with Broadband access will undergo this Readiness Assessment from MBI. They are looking to complete assessments of all 44 towns in the next 3 weeks. Pole surveys will start as soon as the state certifies a town's readiness. In a positive development, the state has agreed to pay for poles that were undercounted in the initial survey. Once the survey is done the poles will be made ready for the stringing of fiber optic cable. The state is moving quickly on this. However they still avoid addressing how towns can work together regionally to be able to afford the investment in broadband.

S. Nelson reminded the Board that they had designated themselves as commissioners of our MLP back at the start of this process. Now that Tricia has replaced Shaun she needs to be officially designated as a commissioner and Shaun removed from that designation. J. Huebner made a motion to this effect. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The Board will send a certified letter to Wired West informing them of the change. It was also decided that K. Lew will replace J. Nelson as Alternate Delegate to Wired West. He is to be sworn in by the Clerk. S. Nelson will continue as our Wired West Delegate.

17. J. Huebner was re-elected as Chair of the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance (BRHA) on June 6th and attended a recent presentation on the impact of climate change on our region. Information he received indicates the likelihood of steadily rising local temperatures. He expressed interest in investigating our options for air conditioning the auditorium as a cooling shelter and equipping the kitchen as a field kitchen. K. Lew said that if we decide to go ahead with this we will have to find funding somewhere.
18. J. Huebner said that Becket is moving ahead with plans for a community solar installation. A solar farm will be built and the power will be made available to Becket residents. The solar company is Syncarpa.

19. J. Hostetter told the Board that there had been no response to the call for a disability organization in Town. She also told the Board that Steve DeLoye has not been confirmed yet as our new Council on Aging Director. He wants to speak with Jeff Sawtelle first. The Select Board signed the COA contract forms. Jan Paxton-Huebner volunteered to be on the COA committee. J. Hostetter told the Board that we do have money for a chair cart in the COA account.
20. She told the Board that she is almost finished with all of the appointments calls. No one has resigned their appointed post so far. J. Huebner asked her to deliver a typed list next week.
21. Tricia Drugmand volunteered for the Emma Bailey Scholarship Committee and will be our representative to the Berkshire Regional Transportation Association.
22. J. Hostetter will continue shredding and has checked with Michelle Lampro to be sure that our shreadings will be accepted by the recycler. They will be.
23. She received a signed hauling contract from White Wolf at the same rate as the past 9 years. That is: \$185 for hauling household waste; \$230 for each of the 2 containers and \$92.50 for disposal.
24. J. Huebner reminded J. Hostetter that performance reviews are due next week.
25. K. Lew told the Board that he had contacted Eversource to have the power turned back on at the Town Park. They are insisting that an electrical inspector reviews the equipment first. That requirement was not mentioned when he asked for a temporary shut-off last fall. He also mentioned receiving a \$3000.00 credit for the Town from Verizon for 72 months of improper charges which he was able to identify.

26.J. Huebner mentioned the following items briefly:

- a. Full sized maps of the MBI Middle Mile installation can be found at www.berkshireplanning.org/reports-and-documents/broadband-maps
- b. There will be a meeting at the Blue Bonnet Diner in Northampton on June 23rd at 5:30 pm. The speaker will be Sean Cronin of Mass DOR discussing incentive grants for Compact Communities.
- c. Received general information from the Appalachian Mountain Club, Berkshire Chapter. Opportunities for community involvement in the AT are described.
- d. No updates on Summit Hill nor on the veterans' memorial or the cemetery land.
- e. The remainder of the big Pine Tree at the Transfer station will be cut down by Jeff's Tree Service for \$600. The Highway Crew will cut up and chip the tree once it is down.

27.J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm. M. Case seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Accepted: _____ Date: _____

Accepted: _____

Accepted: _____

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Nelson

