

## Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen at the Washington Town Hall

July 18, 2016

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, M. Case and T. Drugmand.
2. Following the Pledge of Allegiance M. Case made a motion to accept the minutes of 7/11/16. J. Huebner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Open Forum for Residents:** Tom Delaney, owner of Summit Hill Campground, protested the Select Board's requirement that he hire two police officers to manage traffic at his car show this year. He explained that this will be his fourth show. Last year's show was the only time he had any problems with attendees speeding. The Board told him that they had a number of complaints from Summit Hill residents after that show. T. Delaney said that at the rate of \$40 per hour each he cannot afford to hire two policemen. In order to avoid trouble at the show this year Chief Breen offered to police the event himself at the above rate and to drive up and down the street to show residents that the Town has responded to their safety concerns. He believed that by making his presence known and T. Delaney warning attendees to drive slowly, we could do the job with just one officer. He can call in for backup if needed. He had spoken about this with T. Delaney. The Board agreed. The show is scheduled for 7/30.

Resident Frank Polizzi of Washington Mountain Road (WMR) told the Board that he had asked the Clerk tonight for a copy of DOT's plans for the reconstruction of the road. He learned that the Town has only one copy. It is hard copy and about 500 pages long. He will try to get his own copy. When he built his home he was careful to use a professional engineer to be certain that he was not contaminating the brook on his land. He is worried

now that Baltazar may be doing just that. The brook flows eventually into the Westfield River. J. Huebner suggested that he speak with DOT and Baltazar. They have been very responsive to the Town's concerns so far. Mr. Polizzi had gotten the contact number from the Clerk for the DEP and DOT. T. Drugmand told him that she had looked carefully through the plans herself and offered to help him. Ken Walls volunteered that Westfield Wild and Scenic told him that proper erosion controls were not being used on WMR. J. Huebner asked Mr. Polizzi to call him if he did not get a good response from Baltazar, DEP and DOT.

A resident asked what the weight limit is on Blotz Road. T. Johnson told him that it is posted for 17 tons maximum. J. Huebner added that it is posted for 3 classes of trucks. Empty trucks, even if large, pass through under that limit. It is the heavily loaded trucks, such as cement trucks, that cause problems.

4. **WiredWest:** S. Nelson told the Board that he had received back the pole application agreement from Verizon. Verizon will charge the Town a filing fee of \$425.00. Based on an estimate of 562 poles @ \$10.00 per pole Eversource will charge us \$5620.00. Driveway poles may have to be surveyed too. Verizon and Eversource own the poles jointly. He told the Board that we can delay paying for a while. He believes that will not delay the pole work. K. Lew, Finance Chair, said that we may need to have a Special Town Meeting to appropriate for this. These fees are the result of the Towns now having to own their infrastructure individually. It is expected that the pole survey work will start in the Fall. Six towns are ahead of us in the queue. Washington will be in the second group to be surveyed.

5. **Highway Department:** T. Johnson told the Board that he has no schedule yet on the Cross Place Road culvert or Blotz Road. The Eden Glen culvert project has not been put out to bid yet. He said that he will inspect the road to the Summit Hill Campground for low hanging or downed branches

mentioned by T. Delaney. Any access problems will be taken care of right away.

- 6. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC):** BRPC has asked the Town to send a new delegate to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). Mike Case has been our representative to TAC but cannot continue with that responsibility due to a meeting time conflict. J. Huebner asked T. Johnson to take over the position. He said that our active presence at TAC is important to the Town and contributed to our being awarded funding for the WMR reconstruction. The Committee meets in Pittsfield at BRPC headquarters the third Tuesday of each month. T. Johnson agreed to accept the post. J. Huebner made a motion that the Town appoint him to the TAC. M. Case seconded and the vote to appoint Tom as our TAC representative was unanimous.
- 7. Further BRPC:** M. Case said that he is able to continue in the BRPC Alternate position that is also open. J. Huebner thanked him for stepping forward for this and made a motion that the Board re-appoint M. Case as BRPC Alternate. T. Drugmand seconded the motion and the vote to re-appoint M. Case was unanimous. Marilyn Wiley is the Town's principal representative to the BRPC. M. Case told the Board that while at the BRPC meeting last week he learned that Brian Domina, who has been so helpful to the Town in the past, will be leaving the Commission to take a position as Town Administrator in Hadley.
- 8. Veterans' Memorial:** There was brief discussion on plans for a possible new Veteran's Memorial. No money has been raised. Funds would all be from voluntary contributions if the voters decided to go ahead with the project. The idea of placing it on the other side of WMR from Old Town Hall on the Old Common land was generally supported on the basis that the memorial would be more visible at this location than out behind Old Town Hall. The Historical Committee had been informed that the Old Common location was under consideration and did not specifically oppose that, but

wanted more information on just where it would be placed, the design plans and size of the memorial before making a decision. The Select Board decided to reach out to Mr. Shapira to see if he was still willing to lead the effort. T. Drugmand will draft a letter.

9. **Finance:** Sandra Cameron, Tax Collector, presented the her case for changing from a twice annual real estate tax billing schedule to quarterly billing. Quarterly billing could be timed to support payment of our obligation to CBRSD and thus ease the Town's cash flow challenge and avoid the potential need to borrow and incur interest charges to meet our obligations. Currently we avoid this problem by borrowing from Stabilization or use a short-term loan from a bank when cash flow is not adequate. She is concerned that Stabilization is to be used for emergencies; bad winter expenses etc. and may not be adequate to cover cash flow at some point. She asked that the question of whether or not to switch to quarterly billing be put to the voters.

She added that 90% of our voters pay their taxes on time. Others ask to budget their payments and are charged interest. J. Huebner said, and Sandra agreed, that our collections are much better now than they were a few years ago. He expressed his opinion that quarterly payments will put more pressure on the residents than they face with our present scheme of Fall and Spring tax bills. K. Lew said that the Finance Committee has no consensus on this issue. He said that the Town will need to have an informational meeting on the question before any voting takes place. D. Spencer will speak to the Town about the issues. D. Spencer said that the change would be a hardship for many people. He agreed that the question should be on the warrant at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting.

10. **Energy:** J. Huebner reported receiving a call from the solar company SynCarpa. Becket is working with them. They are offering electricity at a 12% discount from Eversource's price. He is watching developments with

them and Becket closely. T. Drugmand suggested that we invite them to come talk with us.

**11. Review of Executive Session Minutes:** Continuing work begun last week the Select Board reviewed four more sets of sealed Executive Session minutes. J. Huebner made a motion that the minutes of 7/16/12 not be released. M. Case seconded and the motion to hold those minutes in confidence was unanimous. J. Huebner made a motion to release the minutes of 8/4/2012 and 3/31/14. M. Case seconded and the motion to release these was unanimous.

**12. Brief Items:** Received from George Apkin and Sons a check in the amount of \$147.00 for scrap metal processing; Received Notice of Hearing from Dalton Board of Appeals regarding special permit renewal application for Light Auto Repair & Sales of 302 North St., Dalton . Hearing date is August 2 at Town Hall at 7:30 pm; Received Notice from Lenox Zoning Board of Appeals of Hearing on August 3 at 7:00pm at Lenox Town Hall regarding property owned by 55 Cranwell LLC at 55 Lee Road for extensive development, construction and re-purposing of several buildings; Received Berkshire Health Systems 2015 Annual Report.

**13.** J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57pm. M. Case seconded the motion and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Accepted: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted: \_\_\_\_\_

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Nelson