

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen at Washington Town Hall

September 12, 2016

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, Mike Case and Tricia Drugmand.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of August 29, 2016. M. Case seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
3. **Open Forum for Residents:** J. Huebner reported receiving a note from Lillian Fox requesting all minutes pertaining to conversations of the Town with Baltazar and DOT regarding the construction near her home. He will contact her for more details and will provide the information she has requested.
4. **Highway Department:** Tom Johnson reported that there is still flooding on Upper Valley Road from beaver activity. J. Huebner will contact CSX about this problem. The paving work on **Blotz Road** is done. The Highway crew's efforts saved the Town about \$10,000. They will leave cones at the low areas until the lines are painted. T. Johnson will be back there tomorrow. Regarding **Washington Mountain Road**, he told the Board that Baltazar will be starting on the shoulders next. They will be adding another 2.5 inches of asphalt to the material they have already laid down. They will also add reflectors. Baltazar will use all of the milling. Construction on **Cross Place Road** culvert is expected to begin in September. P. Clark said that the contractor has materials ready to start. There will be a public hearing at Town Hall requested by Eversource on October 17th on the electric company's plan to move some poles in conjunction with the reconstruction of **Summit Hill Road**. J.Huebner asked T. Johnson to review a Chapter 90 local road funding survey. There will be a new equipment show in Hinsdale Friday, September 16th. The Highway crew will attend as will selectwoman Trish Drugmand. The back hoe has been fixed. D. Fish has got his regular

driver's license back. He can drive the pick-up. The ruling on his CDL won't take place until February. T. Johnson related details of a complex major truck repair that D. Fish successfully carried out which saved the Town close to \$7,000. J. Huebner spoke to Town Counsel about using some of the Town's large supply of 2 foot plastic pipe for small residential culvert repair. The cost would only be about \$300 per installation.

- 5. Police:** Chief Breen is looking into using a computer-based combination lock system for Town Hall access instead of the key card system which we have been using. Each person approved for access would have his or her own combination. Regarding the illegal dumping behind Woody's, he said that he will continue to use registered mail and voice mail messages to press Mr. Witter to remove the debris. He can threaten to make a formal complaint but seeks to bring about a solution short of legal action.
- 6. Wired West:** S. Nelson reported to the Board that he and Town Wired West Delegate Kent Lew had an extensive phone call on Tuesday with Todd Corcoran, our MBI liaison, about the status of the project. Washington has received its approvals from DOR. We have our greenlight letter now. Todd will recommend us to MBI as having fulfilled all of our readiness tasks. We expect a reply next week. Then there will be a memorandum of understanding to sign which will indicate that we are ready to develop a stand-alone network, but does rule out a regional network. This is the path most Wired West towns have taken so far. Contractors for the pole survey work have been identified. That work will go forward in October. S. Nelson will inform the Board of the pole survey start date for inclusion in the next Tracks.
- 7. Tax Classification Hearing:** Assessor Consultant Karen Avalle presented the Washington Fiscal Year 2017 tax levy as determined by the Town's Assessors and approved by the Commonwealth. For the fifth year in a row the Town will have a timely tax rate. Tax bills will be mailed on November 1, 2016 and May 1, 2017. The Washington Fiscal Year 2017 Total Taxable

Value is \$81,311,784. The average single family home value is \$233, 057. The total amount of money to be raised through taxation is \$1,141,617.44. The Select Board signed the LA-5 Certification document.

This figure represents a 2.2% increase over fiscal 2016 or 31cents on the dollar.

- 8. Veterans' Memorial:** Peter Blake told the Board he believes that as residents paid for the two existing granite memorial stones up at the Old Town Hall, so should residents pay for any additional memorials. Based on the design quote he solicited, the cost estimate for an additional memorial could be about \$22,000. The new memorial would cover the Revolutionary War, Korean War, Spanish-American War, Civil War, Vietnam War and any others to which Washington sent soldiers. Only World Wars I and II are covered in the existing tablets. J. Huebner said that we need a clear plan to present to the Town to get a fair hearing on a new memorial. We should target the Annual Town Meeting next spring for a decision. P. Blake agreed to serve on a committee along with Chief Breen and Eyal Shapira to research and draw up a reasonable proposal for the Town.

- 9. Grant Funding for Middlefield Road Bridge:** J. Huebner signed the certification letter for a MassWorks grant and asked P. Clark and T. Johnson to work with him on an application for the new small bridge funding program.

- 10. Pre-fabricated bridges:** Jodi Lampro told the Board he thought that using such bridges would be a good idea for the Town. He had recently visited one such bridge in Monterey. Erecting the pre-fabricated bridge instead of constructing a new one had saved that town about \$120,000. P. Clark told him that the process is neither that simple nor inexpensive. The hydraulic planning requirements of DOT represent the greatest cost for any of our bridges and they are required of all bridges, new construction or pre-

fabricated. J. Huebner added that the new DOT Small Bridge Program may help the Town repair the bridge near the Lampros' home.

11. Sons and Daughters reunion: Ed Bond told the Board that despite the morning storm, a goodly number of people turned out for the event. The sun shone, the wind blew, the food was delicious and plentiful. The reminiscences and personal stories about growing up in the Town were fascinating. The music was lively and the singers in good voice. Guests travelled from as far away as Florida. The Board thanked Ed and Ellen for their hard work organizing the event. J. Huebner told Ed that the Old Town Hall looked wonderful after the recent exterior painting and interior work, including replacing windows.

12. Historical Commission: In conjunction with the Sons and Daughters, the Commission opened the Old South Center School (little red schoolhouse) on Washington Mountain Road from 10:00 am to noon. Sixteen curious people visited. A number of them told stories of friends and family members who had attended the Town's one-room schoolhouses, adding to our understanding of how the Town's "school system" worked in days past.

13. Eden Glen Culvert: Bidding will not take place on the culvert and Frost Road project until October 3rd at 7:30 pm. There will be no construction there until early 2017. P. Clark will give us an update on the Department of Environmental Restoration's (DER's) site visit.

14. Eden Glen Recreational site: The Board was asked if the Town would consider selling that portion of the site owned by the Town to a private individual or to a group who would maintain it as a park for residents. J. Huebner said that the Board would be open to considering such an offer. He added that the sentiment in Town seems to be that some residents want to restore the site as a park, but no one wants to pay for it.

15. Car Show: The Board reported receiving a check for \$50 as a liquor license permit fee from caterer Heather Anello. There was brief discussion on waiving this fee. T. Drugmand pointed out that we are setting precedent here which we might regret for a different event. The Board agreed and accepted the \$50.00 check. The Board approved and signed Ms. Anello's application after Chief Breen reviewed and approved it. J. Hostetter wrote the One Day Liquor License Permit which the Board also signed. She will give the permit to Ms. Aiello.

16. Westfield Wild & Scenic Free Program: Watershed Blitz - For adults, families and older children. On September 17th from 9:00 to 3:00 take a guided hike or paddle through the West Branch watershed in Washington and Becket with a river specialist. Call Meredyth at 413-623-2070 to register.

17. Transfer Station: The Board reported receiving a check for \$122.18 from George Apkin & Sons for our scrap metal.

18. Dry Hydrant request: J. Hostetter told the Board that Becket Fire Department wants to use the stream on Upper Valley Road as a dry hydrant. The Board asked her to inform the Fire Department that they must submit a proposal for this project to the Select Board.

19. Tax Collector's Office: J. Huebner announced that Assistant Tax Collector Sue McGrath has given her notice. He said that she has served the Town ably and he will write her a letter of thanks. She has accepted a full-time position as Tax Collector for Savoy, her home town.

20. Meetings: There will be legislative breakfasts in Amherst and North Adams on the 30th and the 14th respectively. J. Huebner may attend the Amherst meeting. No word has been received yet on the annual Fall Selectmens' Dinner. J. Huebner will attend the BRPC Vision and Goals meeting 9/16.

21. Public Notices: From the Town of Lee – 3 notices: ZBA Public Hearing on Wed. Sept. 21 at 7:00pm regarding application of BDC for special permit to remove and replace the pavement around the car wash building; Public Hearing on Sept. 21 at 7:30 pm regarding appeal of a ZBA decision to deny permit for raising poultry or fur bearing animals in R20 zoning with less than 5 acres of land; Planning Board hearing on October 17 at 6:15 pm on application of Pittsfield Cellular Telephone Co, DBA Verizon Wireless, for the addition of several types of electronic equipment on an existing water tank at 1085 Pleasant Street. From Berkshire Regional Transportation Authority – Public meeting for more efficient bus service on Thursday, from 1:30 to 3:30 in the Intermodal Center 2nd Floor Conference Room

22. Brief Items: There is no news on the 5 acres of cemetery land; There will be no meeting on Columbus Day, 10/10/16.

23. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8: 26 pm. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Nelson