

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

October 24, 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 October 17, 2016. M. Case seconded and the minutes were accepted unanimously.
3. **Fire Department:** Paul Mikaniewicz informed the Board that the funds which we send to Becket each year for the Town's fire protection go into a general fund. He explained that there are six or seven Washington residents on the fire corps. Currently they need to purchase their own gear at considerable expense. He asked if it might be possible to earmark a portion of our annual payment to Becket for the equipment needs of Washington firefighters. The Board thanked him for bringing this to their attention. They will review the situation with the Finance Committee and see if there is some way of earmarking an appropriate sum from our annual payment.

P. Mikaniewicz also mentioned that he would like to use a site on Upper Valley Road for a dry hydrant from which the pumpers could draw water as needed. J. Huebner asked if there is enough water available from this location. The Fire Chief told the Board that there is a steady pool at the spot he has in mind. This is located near White Wolf on Town property. Frost Road is not an option for reasons of access and also the danger in winter of a considerable amount of water spilling on the road during pumping which would then freeze and make Frost Road impassable. J. Huebner asked who would do the engineering for the dry hydrant facility. P. Mikaniewicz told the Board that there is a grant available currently which we may be able to get. Discussion followed on the feasibility and cost of such a project. Other pond and stream sites were mentioned and generally

dismissed as too shallow. The Board encouraged P. Mikaniewicz to continue researching the project and to keep them in the loop.

4. **Board of Health:** Board of Health (BoH) members Vera Cormier and Jan Paxton Huebner reported that they continue to work on organizing the BoH files. For ease of use, the contents of many of the older files need to be sorted through and re-labeled by street name, not by property owner name. They expect to finish this task in about another 2 hours.

The BoH also reported receiving electronic equipment to be used in a “trial run” of online permitting. This trial is at no cost or obligation to the Town. If at the end of one year’s time we do not want to continue we can return the equipment and resume our current practice. After training this spring, our Health Agent will be able to use the equipment to record on-site inspections on a tablet computer and to print out the permits, thus building a data base of these records. Currently we issue paper permits written out by the Administrative Assistant.

The Select Board asked J. Hostetter to turn over the permitting responsibility to the BoH. She reminded the Board that copies of all permits must be given to the Clerk. She also mentioned that one of the reasons the permitting process was assigned to the Administrative Assistant was to insure continuity in processing. She pointed out that BoH membership can turn over on a regular basis creating a loss of training and knowledge. She added that BoH procedures are very labor intensive. The Select Board asked her to review the new BoH procedures and to follow them until official clarification is made. T. Drugmand urged her to try the new procedures. The Board of Selectmen discussed that the BoH should share the Building Inspector’s office instead of using the Meeting Room as they are currently. J. Huebner mentioned that the annual meeting of the Berkshire County Board of Health Associations BCBOHA will take place on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

5. **Town Hall Security:** Maintenance Director Ed Bond agreed with the Board that we should change all of the individual office locks in Town Hall. T. Drugmand asked him to price out the cost of all new locks. Although we are certain that no one person has keys to all or even many of the existing locks, we should take this precaution along with the installation of the new card key system which is being researched by Chief Breen. M. Case added that we have had things reported missing. T. Drugmand stated that we need to write new protocols for access.

J. Hostetter informed the Board that there are 2 secure key lock- boxes in the building which could be used to store copies of all new keys for an emergency situation. E. Bond agreed that it is very important to have a complete set of copies available. J. Paxton Huebner added that we also need keys for all filing cabinets. T. Johnson will remove the old Meeting Room file cabinets which are not being used.

6. **Pumpkin Walk:** E. Bond told the Board that all is in readiness for the Pumpkin walk this Friday the 28<sup>th</sup>. Everyone on the Committee has done a great job.
7. **CBRSD Superintendent visit:** Superintendent Laurie Casna will attend the Selectmen's Meeting November 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm to update the Board and the Town on the status of our schools.
8. **Administrative Assistants:** J. Hostetter told the Board that she has been cross-trained by Allison to assist in conducting the early voting. She also reported that Public Notices for the upcoming Lovers lane hearing requested by Eversource will be published today and next week in the Berkshire Eagle. Abutters cards have been mailed. The hearing will take place in Town Hall on November 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30. Sandwich boards will be set up to remind the public. The Board discussed having a permanent signboard outside Town Hall for public notifications.

9. **Wired West/Broadband:** During a brief discussion of the pole surveys S. Nelson told the Board that we expect the work to start a week after Thanksgiving and to take 2 to 3 weeks to complete. Phone numbers for residents to contact MBI with any concerns about its pole data collection contractor will be published in the December Tracks. S. Nelson attended the Wired West Board meeting in Plainfield on Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and reported that the meeting focused on the details of how Wired West would choose and use contractors to manage the network.
  
10. **Highway Department:** J. Huebner signed a letter to Kathy Stevens of DOT informing her that the Town does not plan to proceed with the micropaving on Frost Road at this time. He requested she unencumber our \$75,000 for other projects. Tom Johnson will deliver the letter to Ms. Stevens at a meeting planned for tomorrow.

Tom told the Board that the paving work on Washington Mountain Road is slated to start during the week of October 31<sup>st</sup>. Baltazar still has more guard rails to install. T. Johnson will check the rails at the Lew's house. They should be replaced. T. Drugmand reported problems with the drainage south of Buddy Fish's house down to the corner of Frost Road on Washington Mountain Road. The Highway Department was not contacted by DOT regarding a Change Order for this drainage. It had originally been slated to be a paved swale.

The Highway crew will be paving behind Town Hall.

The Bailey bridge on Cross Place Road must be returned to DCR. T. Johnson said that he would like to offer to store it at our Highway Department yard for future use. The Board has applied for both a Small Bridge Program grant and a MassWorks grant. Finance Committee Chair K. Lew told the Board that the allocation for Middlefield Road bridge is \$125,000. That includes replacing the abutments. He said that the Lower Valley span is next. There was discussion on how best to proceed. T. Johnson will contact

pre-fabricated bridge companies for information about their capabilities. He will contact DOT to find out if they condemned the Lower Valley abutments or just the span. We need an interim resolution to the problem.

**11. Public Records Officer:** Clerk Allison Mikaniewicz has agreed to become the Town's Public Records Officer starting in 2017. J. Huebner made a motion to appoint her to this post. M. Case seconded and the vote to approve the appointment was unanimous.

**12. Illegal Dumping/Woody's:** T. Drugmand reported that a Town resident had contacted her to complain about the dilapidated appearance of Woody's building on Route 8. J. Huebner said that we will ask our Health Agent Charlie Kaniecki to inspect the building. It appears in worse shape than it was when last checked several years ago. At this point it is a public health issue, not a bylaw issue. There is no news on RJ Peltier writing a complaint about Woody's owner, Mr. Witter's, illegal dumping behind the old roadhouse.

**13. Cultural Council:** The Select Board received the Cultural Council annual contract from the state. J. Huebner will sign the contract after contacting the Council.

**14. Emma Bailey Scholarship Committee:** T. Drugmand reported that during the Committee's recent meeting a question was raised about whether or not a donation to the scholarship fund can be tax deductible for the donor. The Board discussed this briefly without reaching a conclusion. J. Huebner will investigate the question further.

**15. Veterans' Services Officer:** J. Huebner reported receiving an Award Certificate from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts confirming that James Clark successfully completed his Veterans' Services Course and Examination on October 29, 2015. Mr. Clark is to be our new VSO.

16. **Meetings:** The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Fall Conference will take place in Worcester on Sat. October 29<sup>th</sup>. The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association (MMMA) Fall Conference will take place in Amherst at UMASS on November 17 and 18. J. Hostetter will attend this conference.

17. **Public Notices:** The Town of Lee will hold a public hearing at the Planning Board Office located on the second Floor at 32 Main St. in Lee at 7:00 pm on November 30. The hearing concerns a variance request submitted by George and Noha Noujaim to construct a second means of egress from the properties at 94 and 95 Maple Street in Lee.

18. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 pm. M. Case seconded and the motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Nelson