

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen at Washington Town Hall

November 7, 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 of October 31, 2016. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. **CBRS**D: District Superintendent Laurie Casna updated the Select Board and meeting attendees on the developments at our schools. The main focus of her remarks was the budget process. We are just closing out the books from last year. Reallocation is under way. On January 12 the new numbers will be out. One of our challenges is the substantial increase in the cost of benefits. The school administration is looking for ways to mitigate the increases. They are considering setting up a Trust fund. There was brief discussion of such a fund with R. Spencer questioning whether it might complicate the situation unnecessarily.

J. Huebner asked for an update on activities of the Building Committee. He wondered if our capital plan for the schools is way overboard in light of forecasts of dwindling enrollment throughout the District. He asked if the plan to perhaps build a new High School is out of sync with reality. M. Case, our representative to the School Board, said that the first step toward making that decision is a feasibility study. That study is currently being conducted by consultants reporting to the Education Task Force. They will report soon. The next phase of the study will identify what our options are. We expect to have recommendations from the Task Force before we need to make a decision. The Superintendent told the Board that they are conducting building tours of Wahconah for residents interested in seeing the condition of the school. Regarding shared services, **the Superintendent** told the Board that they have conducted group meetings by grade and

interest area, but have not yet identified any opportunities for sharing services with other schools effectively. J. Huebner mentioned that he will not be able to attend the Seven Town Advisory Committee meeting next week on 11/17.

4. **Town Hall Security Upgrade:** Back at work after his recent illness, Chief Breen told the Selectmen that he has drafted a list of people whom he thinks will need to have swipe cards for access to the building. He will give the list of 25 individuals to J. Huebner. He will schedule the alarm company and the locksmith to come out on one day together to further assess our situation. Chief Breen and Ed Bond have received similar cost estimates. They will compare notes. No one will be able to access the building through the two rear doors. We will change the cylinders on all office doors. Other decisions still have to be made. The change will not happen immediately.
5. **Public Hearing Requested by Eversource:** At 7:20 J. Huebner called for the hearing requested by Eversource. Town Clerk Allison Mikaniewicz joined the meeting to take notes on the Board's decision and to sign and certify the documents. Cards had been sent to all abutters and notices had been published in the Berkshire Eagle for each of the two weeks prior to the hearing. The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the installation of electrical poles along the unserved stretch of Lovers Lane. As the poles are erected Eversource will drop a wire through conduit to connect to each home. The Select Board approved the plan as presented and all signed the documents. The Clerk in turn signed and certified the documents. The Board closed the public meeting at 7:40pm.
6. **Procurement process:** J. Huebner reported that the Town needs to appoint a procurement officer in order to participate in the state's CommBuys purchasing program. K. Lew agreed that there should be financial advantages to our purchasing goods and services through CommBuys. J. Huebner **contacted** Becket about sharing a procurement officer.

7. **Pumpkin Walk:** Ed Bond told the Board that the Pumpkin Walk had received a check from a friend of the Park. Also, donations at the Transfer Station amounted to about \$500.00. Excellent photographs of the Walk have been taken. He has posted some of them in the hallway at Town Hall on the bulletin board near the clerk's office. He hopes one of them may be used on the cover of next year's Annual Report.

8. **Office Moves:** T. Drugmand met with Building Inspector Paul Greene to discuss options for moving his office location. He told her that **he was flexible about moving, but must have locking file cabinets for his documents if his work space did not have a lock.** The Board discussed partitioning off part of the Historical Commission's room for his use. J. Nelson, member of the Historical Commission, objected.

9. **Bridges/Highway:** T. Johnson will research pre-fabricated bridge options for the Town. P. Clark told the Board that Maxymillian has been chosen as the contractor for the Frost Road/Eden Glen project. The contractor for the Cross Place Road culvert will start work tomorrow. K. Stevens of DOT refused to pay **Horizon** even through the contractor. We will have to get that money from the Roads and Bridges account. We will pay Phil Clark for his work on Blotz Road. He has filed for the DOT certification process. In a brief discussion of the final paving on Washington Mountain Road (WMR) it was observed that it will soon be too cold to lay down the pavement. It was 26 degrees up there this morning. The asphalt plants will be closing soon.

T. Johnson told the Board that Baltazar has offered the Town an amount of screened millings from WMR. This material could be used well on West Branch Road. The Board agreed with this idea. T. Johnson thinks he can negotiate a fair price because Baltazar will have to haul it off the mountain if we do not buy it. M. Case observed that DCR put money into West Branch and into October Mountain Park this summer. The Highway crew supplied the labor.

The Highway Department will try out a new cutting edge for the plows called Atlantic Broom. Sections of the “broom” edge break off as wear occurs leaving enough effective edge for continued use. The type of cutting edge we currently use must be totally replaced when worn down. We hope the new equipment will help save money on replacements in the long run. The crew will try it out on the big truck first.

10. Blotz Road: J Huebner told Chief Breen that more overweight trucks have been seen using Blotz Road despite the posted weight restrictions. He asked Chief Breen to keep an eye on the situation. There was discussion about stopping a few of the trucks for inspection and delaying them long enough that Blotz Road would no longer seem a convenient shortcut to or from Pittsfield.

11. Disposing of Supplies/Equipment: The Select Board discussed a “Policy for Disposing of Supplies and Equipment Valued at Less Than \$5,000”. J. Huebner made a motion that the Select Board adopt the policy. T. Drugmand seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The Board signed an agreement to adopt a policy pursuant to MGL 30B, Section 15 (f).

In summary, the policy requires, first, that any Town official, department or board wishing to dispose of such property must prove to the Select Board that the property to be disposed of is valued under \$5,000 using customary valuation sources such as Kelly Blue Book or similar references. Equally acceptable will be an opinion of value from a professional with no financial interest in the property who has a relevant field of expertise. This professional must conclude in writing that such property has a value of under \$5,000.

Secondly, the town official, board or department must also demonstrate to the Select Board that the property is no longer needed by the Town.

When the two conditions above are met, the property may be sold or salvaged for an amount determined by the Board to reflect the fair market value. The property may also be used to offset the costs of property (i) being purchased directly by the Town or (ii) property to be donated to the Town by a private organization, including a trade-in, provided that the property to be purchased by the Town or donated to the Town exceeds the value of the property used for the off-set. In the event that such property is being used to offset the costs to be incurred by a private party that intends to donate supplies or equipment to the Town, there shall be a written agreement to provide such supplies or equipment to the Town prior to utilizing the property for an off-set. These procedures do not apply to disposition of real property.

12. Brief Items: J. Huebner announced that Select Board member Mike Case has been awarded Lifetime Membership on the Berkshire County School Board. Chief Breen told the Board that he has received the \$900 grant for the Highway Department equipment.

13. J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm. M. Case seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____

Approved: _____

Respectfully Submitted,
Jan Nelson