

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen in Washington Town Hall

February 6, 2017

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were James Huebner and Tricia Drugmand.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of January 23, 2017. T. Drugmand seconded and the minutes were accepted unanimously. J. Huebner mentioned that Selectman Mike Case would not be attending that evening. He had been admitted to the Veterans' Hospital for stress. He will remain on the Select Board, but will resign many of his other volunteer positions.
3. **Shared/Purchased Services with Becket:** Ed Gibson, Becket Town Administrator and Bill Elovirta, Select Board Chair, joined the meeting for a discussion of emergency services shared and purchased by the two towns. They distributed a copy of their estimated budget for the services in FY 2018 and reviewed it, mentioning that it had been a long time since the two towns had done such a review.

The three emergency services budgets discussed were Becket Parks and Beach Program Security Guards (\$19,600), Fire Department (\$50,665) and Ambulance Department (\$355,644). Capital costs are not included in these estimates. Washington's current appropriations for these services are: \$10,000 for Fire Protection; \$250 for Volunteer Fireman's Association; \$1,000 for Parks and Recreation and \$0 for Ambulance. They made the point that Washington's appropriations have not increased in many years while Becket's costs have increased every year.

Discussion followed with J. Huebner stating that Washington certainly uses and needs the services from Becket and we will have to look closely at our budget. Kent Lew, Finance Chair, stated that we want to be fair and need to understand more about the history of our 2 towns' financial relationship. K.

Lew suggested that he and Ed Gibson meet next week and begin the analysis. We need a broader sense of what services Washington uses and how much we use them. We would aim to create a budget formula and review it each year. In this context J. Huebner mentioned our application for a DLT grant (District Local Technical Assistance). We partnered with Becket, Hinsdale and Dalton on the application which seeks to identify opportunities for shared municipal services among the four towns and the funding to do the analysis.

- 4. Highway:** T. Johnson told the Board that Ford has refused to reimburse the Town for the \$4739.00 repair bill we incurred on the School Bus. Two bolts had come loose in the engine. J. Huebner will consult Town Counsel and contact the regional Ford representative. T. Johnson also mentioned that he has identified repairs needed to the new Washington Mountain Road. It was supposed to have been designed to withstand damage by heavy trucks but he has noticed bumps and troughs. Regarding snow fencing at the summit of Washington Mountain Road, T. Johnson determined that we would need three rows of fencing to contain blowing snow and keep it off the road. T. Drugmand thought that we should investigate cost and get a quote on the fencing for next year. It is a safety issue and affects both Town and private property. T. Johnson told the Board that he had put in a claim for the work on the Lower Valley Road icing problem.

J. Huebner reported that the Town has received authorization from the Army Corps to go ahead with the work of replacing the culvert on Frost Road at Eden Glen. P. Clark is scheduled to come to next week's meeting to brief us on start date and other details of the project. We can finally award the contract for the Eden Glen work. We have learned that the Town will not be able to pay for the Cross Place Road change order work with our available Chapter funds. The cost exceeds those funds.

The Town received a copy of a letter from Nat Karns, Executive Director of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, sent to the Governor

reminding him, our Legislative Delegation and Mass DOT of the critical condition of much of our Western Mass infrastructure and the lack of funding to address this problem, especially funding for smaller bridges. He asked the Governor to direct MassDOT to streamline the design process and increase use of prefabricated bridge elements to help us with this challenge.

5. **Police:** Chief Breen told the Board that he met with the State Police about a mattress dumping episode on Washington Mountain Road. Constable Sean Lennon caught the perpetrator in the act of littering who will be billed for the retrieval of the litter. Chief Breen also mentioned that the exercise group has asked for a second Town Hall Key. The Board did not approve this request as the number of keys in circulation must be strictly limited for security purposes.
6. **WiredWest:** S. Nelson updated the Board on the current status of the broadband project. He noted that there has been much coverage in the Eagle. At the informational meeting for town officials on Jan 28th recent changes in MBI's policy were discussed. Following their unsuccessful attempt to attract any major private sector providers of broadband service to the project, MBI has decided to relegate to the towns all responsibility for engineering and construction oversight of the network. MBI would oversee design only.

While MBI was busy pursuing media giants Comcast and Charter, WiredWest was in discussions with local Westfield Gas and Electric, a 100 year old company and also an MLP. Westfield is currently building its own fiber network and is interested doing the same for WiredWest. A company called OTT from Maine, with local headquarters in Granby, has also approached WiredWest about providing fiber to the home. They currently provide service to 25,000 fiber customers.

P. Blake told S. Nelson that he had read some of the WiredWest coverage in the Eagle and was unsure who would own the network. S. Nelson replied that each town will own their individual network. This is at MBI's insistence. WiredWest's role is to select and oversee a contractor who will provide services and network management.

At the February 4th monthly Delegates' meeting in Becket WiredWest decided to send a Resolution to all Member towns with Delegates and Alternates present asking the Selectmen to confirm their preference to build a municipally owned fiber- to- the- premises Broadband network. Member towns were also asked in the Resolution to declare their support for the WiredWest Regional Broadband Solution to manage and operate the town network on a regional basis in conjunction with other towns that subscribe to the services. The Resolutions will be delivered to the Governor and MBI. J. Huebner made a motion to adopt the Resolution. T. Drugmand seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- 7. Cemeteries:** J. Huebner asked D. Grillon if he intended to write a proposal for building a Columbarian Wall at the old cemetery. The Town would need a proposal with costs to make a decision on such a project. K. Lew said that we currently have \$8500 in the cemetery budget with \$1500 earmarked for the wall. To D. Grillon's comment that a number of stones at the old cemetery need repair, P. Blake said that by law all stones removed for repair have to be re-set at a depth of four feet. J. Hostetter requested a process sheet from the Sexton bringing the town up to date on recent burials. She has completed her work updating the old burial records.
- 8. Schools:** J. Huebner said that the Town has received a letter from CBRSD informing us that the School Committee voted unanimously on January 26, 2017 to appropriate \$850,000 for the Wahconah Feasibility Study. In accordance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 16 (n) we have to conduct a ballot vote on whether or not to approve this appropriation. The ballot vote is to take place on April 8, 2017 from 8:00am -2:00pm in all seven towns.

There will be further discussion of this at the seven town meeting to be held on February 16, 2017 at 7 pm at Wahconah High School.

9. **Board of Health:** The BOH has voted to adopt the new state well regulations on sale of property.
10. **Tax Collector:** J. Huebner made a motion to appoint Melissa Martinello of Washington as the new Town Tax Collector. T. Drugmand seconded and the vote to accept was unanimous.
11. **Pipeline:** J. Huebner said that the BRPC has asked us to consider continuing to budget for the pipeline working group in case the project re-surfaces.
12. **STM:** We do not have a date for the STM yet. K. Lew is looking at our options. It could be a while before we can set the date. D. Parnell needs to be involved.
13. **Brief items:** The Board received notice of a Manufacturing Technical Training program. The information will be posted at Town Hall.; Seven Town Advisory meeting will be held at Wahconah on Feb. 16, 2017; J. Huebner signed the 2020 Census Local Update form for the Town; There will be no Select Board Meeting on Feb. 20th; The Board thanked Dom Sinopoli for his insurance guidance.
14. **Adjournment:** J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 pm. T. Drugmand seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Accepted: _____ Date: _____

Accepted: _____

Accepted: _____

Respectfully submitted, Jan Nelson