

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

March 20, 2017

1. J Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. In attendance for the Select 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 March 13, 2017. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Open Forum for Residents:** The Board briefly discussed the request for a second Town Hall key made at last week's meeting by the 2 fitness class teachers. The Board agreed that there was sufficient reason to approve the issuing of a second key as the instructors teach on different days and at different times. Instructor Lorraine Morrissett was present and was asked to see Chief Breen to sign the agreement to get their second key.
4. **Highway Department:** J. Huebner will follow up with DOT on their cancellation of the local Small Bridge Program celebration. It has been rescheduled and moved to Boston to be held on March 29. T. Johnson did not receive an invitation.

Regarding the Middlefield bridge, J. Huebner said that we will be putting that reconstruction project out to bid. We will need the abutment information from P. Clark before we can write the bid package. We also need the name of the DOT contact. We do have the \$250,000 grant to work with but would like to know if we can apply any funds not used for Middlefield to other badly needed small bridge projects.

P. Clark told the Board that we have a form he needs to give to the Eden Glen culvert contractor. He expects that at next week's Board meeting he will have the Eden Glen project documents for signatures. More documents will be forthcoming after that.

T. Johnson told the Board that there has not been much activity on Washington Mountain Road (WMR). He continues to find signs of deterioration on WMR. Sections of the road edge have become “wavy” due to the passage of very heavy trucks. The road was supposed to have been built to bear such traffic without damage. He said that Baltazar has not addressed the problem of Lillian Fox’s well being contaminated with salt. He said it could be due to a leaky curtain drain. J. Huebner asked him to contact Baltazar about this and to get it fixed. Lillian is writing a second letter about the problem to Baltazar.

T. Drugmand raised the subject of Summit Hill Road access during the construction of the new Summit Hill Bridge. She was following up on comments made by resident Mary Jarvie at last week’s meeting. Mary asked who would be responsible for making the very rough road accessible for school buses, emergency vehicles etc. J. Huebner said that the Town made it clear to DOT at the pre-construction meeting that it was their responsibility to improve and maintain that road. He said that we should wait until April 20 and delay the bridge construction unless the road is fixed.

- 5. Police:** Chief Breen reported that his recent negotiation with Johnson Ford had not been successful. J. Huebner will follow up on the problem with Ford.

Chief Breen told the Select Board that a long-term, part time resident, who has become a full-time resident, named Nick Rockoff, donated to the Town a small portable oxygen tank and a defibrillator. The Chief has these items in his possession and will store them in the back seat of his car parked in his garage. He said that we could use a smaller rig like this at the Town Park. He is trained to use this equipment. He will have the oxygen tank inspected. If it is not safe he will take care of disposal. He requested a thank you letter to Mr. Rockoff from the Select Board. J. Huebner made a motion to accept

the donated emergency equipment from Mr. Rockoff. M. Case seconded the motion and the vote to accept was unanimous.

6. **Town Cemeteries:** Sexton Dick Grillon discussed the condition of the West Branch cemetery with the Board. He would like to get the Sheriff's work crew involved in cleaning up the cemetery and erecting the fallen gravestones where possible. He has discussed the work of repairing or creating foundations for the stones with Dave Drugmand. We need to consult state regulations for fixing and raising stones. He would also like to research sources of grants for on-going cemetery maintenance at West Branch and the Old Town Hall. He hopes to meet with Peter Blake on cemetery-related issues.
7. **Public Records Officer:** Allison Mickaniewicz has accepted the responsibility of serving as the Town's Public Records Officer. Jodi Hostetter will serve as Secondary Public Records Officer.
8. **Special Town Meeting:** At 7:30, as scheduled, the Select Board turned the meeting over to Ed Bond who proceeded to moderate the Special Town Meeting (STM). Clerk Allison Mikaniewicz took the minutes of the Special Town Meeting. A copy of the warrant articles is attached to these minutes. All articles were approved unanimously. At 7:30 Ed Bond made a motion to adjourn the Special Town Meeting. J. Huebner seconded and the STM was adjourned by acclamation. At 7:40 J. Huebner called the Select Board Meeting back to order.
9. **Finance Committee Discussion:** Chair Kent Lew told the Board that he has been working to reduce the number of our revolving accounts. He has drafted language for the ATM on how the accounts should be managed. His goal in this effort is to clarify the amount that is spent overall through revolving accounts and to cap each item. He has communicated to Ed Gibson, the Becket Town Administrator, his thoughts on Washington's fair contribution to the two towns' shared service expenses. K. Lew is awaiting

a response from Becket. He told the Board that we need a grant anticipation note for Eden Glen. This would be a very short-term note. We would like to get it in place by Monday. It would be up to Glenn to make this happen.

**10. WiredWest/ Broadband:** Washington Delegate to WiredWest, S. Nelson, updated the Board on recent developments in the effort to bring high speed internet to Washington and other unserved towns in Western Mass .It was clear at the meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup> that MBI has undergone an attitude change with the involvement of Carolyn Kirk, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Housing and Economic Development. She is leading a very positive move to actively assist towns in accessing the funds designated by the state for last mile connections to homes and businesses. Two pools of money were discussed. The first was for engineering and the second for construction. The towns will receive their engineering money directly. There are a few candidates for construction. The strongest may be Westfield Gas and Electric Company, a 100 year old western Mass company actively engaged in the business of wiring municipalities for broadband. WG& E is also organized as a municipal light plant which makes them an even more attractive partner as procurement will be simplified for WiredWest towns. S. Nelson offered to arrange for a representative of Westfield Gas & Electric to come to Town Hall to address the Board, present his company's capabilities and answer our questions. J. Huebner requested that he go ahead and schedule this meeting.

**11. Board of Health:** Board member V. Cormier will attend the BCBOHA dinner along with J. Huebner and third Board member J. Paxton. V. Cormier will make the arrangements. She reported that the Select Board letter to Eyal Shapira concerning state requirements to continue operating his summer camp has been signed for and picked up at the Post Office. We have received another bill from Full Circle Technologies for the online permit software. J. Huebner asked that it be forwarded to Berkshire Public Health Association.

**12. County Workforce Data:** J. Huebner mentioned that he had attended a very informative meeting on March 3rd at which the State of the Berkshire County Workforce FY 2017 Report was presented. He gave copies of the report to the Board. A copy of the report will be kept on file.

**13. Administrative Assistants:** J. Hostetter told the Board that she has not yet received an annual report from our Town Electrical Inspector, Jim LaPier. She has become concerned about his availability to serve Washington residents. She suggested that we appoint a state certified alternate Inspector. She also mentioned receiving an invoice from Berkshire Graphics for our copier. Our contract for the copier expired last year. We are aware that the machine is old and that a number of parts for it have been discontinued.

**14. Tax Collector and Treasurer:** Assessor Karen Avasle has identified an experienced Collector from Lee who may be available to train our new Collector, Melissa Martinetto. T. Drugmand will follow up on this lead with K. Avasle. Clerk Allison Mikaniewicz mentioned that the Collector will have to be on the ballot in May as a write-in candidate. J. Huebner asked T. Drugmand to speak with Treasurer Glenn Grogan to assess his need for short or longer term assistance. He is currently carrying a heavy workload in the absence of the Town Accountant. Funds budgeted for former Assistant Collector Sue McGrath could be used to cover the cost of hiring additional help if needed.

**15. Tax Team Effort:** J. Huebner thanked all who worked over the past 2 weeks to coordinate with the state DOR, print and sticker tax bills, stuff and seal envelopes, apply postage, transport the tax bills to the Post Office and get them out in the mail to residents.

**16. Meetings:** The Select Board and spouses of J. Huebner and T. Drugmand will attend the annual Berkshire County Selectmen’s Association Dinner at the Skyline Country Club in Lanesboro on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

**17. Adjournment:** J. Huebner moved to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 8:15pm. M. Case seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

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

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

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

Respectfully submitted:  
Jan Nelson