

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen at Washington Town Hall

March 27, 2017

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, and T. Drugmand.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from March 20 as written. T. Drugmand seconded and the vote to accept was unanimous.
3. **Monthly Select Board Letter:** J. Huebner made a motion to approve the April monthly letter as written. He mentioned that the letter does urge residents to vote for approval of the CBRSD Feasibility Study. Town Counsel approved this action as a non-political recommendation based on the Board's study of the subject. T. Drugmand seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
4. **Board of Health:** V. Cormier reported that she had contacted Eversource about their spraying plan for the Town. She learned that their policy is basically to spray wherever they see vegetation climbing up the poles. Their goal is to protect the lines. They will send hard copy of their vegetation control plan and the BoH will keep it on file. She has received no word from Mr. Shapira about the summer camp on his property. We have proof that he picked up the Town's letter on that subject. J. Huebner asked her to wait for a week or two and then contact our Health Agent about the situation. Vera also mentioned that the state will be testing the water quality at Town Hall under the new well regulations because it is a public water source. DEP is handling this. V. Cormier will schedule the test.
5. **Finance Committee:** K. Lew told the Board that we have no update yet on our borrowing authority. We need to contact DOR for counsel on obtaining approval of a grant anticipation note to address our current cash shortage. This would be a short-term note. There was discussion of the calendar for

ATM preparations. It was agreed that the warrant must be posted by April 24th. K. Lew said that the major budget numbers are in place.

6. **Summit Hill Access Road:** The Board confirmed with Mary Jarvie that the closing date for the bridge will be April 29th. We have clarified that DOT will be responsible for upgrading and maintaining the access roads during construction of the new bridge. The Board assured her that the Town will not let the work start until the roads are in good condition.

7. **Assessors:** The Assessors received a letter from Richard Lovezey, the Executive Director of Family Unity International (FUI). FUI is the owner of the former Bucksteep Property on Washington Mt. Road. They have requested an extension on the filing deadline for their non-profit status documents. We are charging them property tax starting this year based on their failure over the past 2 years to use the property for the charitable purposes they intended.. They indicate that they have been using the place to provide therapy and for meetings. Chief Breen reports that there has been no use of the property for any purpose. The Board of Health pointed out that the septic system and well have both failed inspection.

8. **Planning Board –** T. Drugmand reported speaking with M. Wiley for an update on the Planning Board’s current work on bylaws. M. Wiley reported that they have been focusing on the Right to Farm bylaw. They have not yet done any work on a bylaw to govern the building and operation of a marijuana growing facility in Washington. K. Kew said that we should plan now for such an eventuality. J. Huebner added that there is a strong possibility of such a pot- growing facility opening in Becket. A firm has already purchased land there for this use.

9. **Shared Services:** Ed Gibson, Town Administrator of Becket and K. Lew have not had a chance to meet further. J. Huebner said that Washington has been given a grant to develop shared services by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. He will follow up with Tom Matusko for further

details. M. Case will speak with Hinsdale about their interest in possibly providing our ambulance service.. The Board seeks to identify options that will be in the best interests of the Town.

10. Assistant Electrical Inspector: Ed Bond told the Board that he had found a qualified inspector to supplement the service provided by Jim LaPier. His name is Dana Spring. He is currently inspector for Hinsdale and Becket. J. Huebner made a motion to appoint Dana Spring our Assistant Electrical Inspector. T. Drugman seconded and the motion to appoint was unanimous. E. Bond will inform D. Spring.

11. Park Commission: Ed Bond told the Board that he has called a meeting of the Park Commission to try to identify volunteers to help out with the work needed to keep the park beautiful for all to enjoy. The meeting will be scheduled shortly.

12. Highway Department: J. Huebner mentioned that the DOT will hold a ceremony in Boston celebrating the Small Bridges Program. As there has already been a ceremony out here, no one from the Board or Highway Department will attend.

Regarding Washington Mountain Road Tom Johnson said that there are continuing signs of deterioration. T. Drugmand mentioned that Baltazar's landscaping and paving have left no room for many of the mailboxes on WMR. There is no room to safely pull over. Also large puddles have been created at the end of many driveways.

Regarding the collapsed Frost Road culvert, P. Clark estimated that \$650,000 will be the cost of repairs. J. Huebner said that we must find a less costly way to do this work. We will explore boring out the existing structure. Tom Johnson said that repairs to the head wall had cost \$1400.00.

Regarding the Middlefield Road Bridge, Phil Clark was hired to do the design work. The construction will be put out to bid. The status of the abutments was discussed. P. Clark is still completing his assessment of whether or not the abutments are fit to use. J. Huebner and T. Drugmand both expressed surprise that this was not a settled issue. P Clark said it was not and he was still completing an assessment. He estimated that \$50,000 would be the cost to replace them. K. Lew said that we have already spent \$25,000 on the Middlefield Road Bridge. He emphasized how important it is for us to be clear with DOT from the start on who pays for what in this project. P. Clark indicated he agreed. K. Lew also asked about DOT qualifications and Phil stated that he had a letter of certification.

Phil Clark asked about payment for Cross Place Road. J. Huebner told him that the Treasurer is working on this.

13. **Eden Glen:** Phil Clark brought the Eden Glen contracts for the Board to sign. The winning contractor was Maxymillian. J Huebner made a motion that the Town sign the contracts. T. Drugmand seconded the motion, making it unanimous. J. Huebner signed the contracts. The Treasurer also had to add his signature. The Town will disperse the funds. J. Huebner attested that the funds are available. P. Clark will schedule a pre-construction meeting. He expects it will take most of the summer to complete the project.
14. **School Bus Repair Bill:** Ford has denied ever promising to pay for the initial round of repairs to the School Bus. The work they did was justified by the 80,000 miles on the vehicle. J. Huebner did not see any basis for continuing the dispute with Ford and agreed that we should pay the \$4779.00 bill.
15. **Tax Collector Assistance:** T. Drugmand contacted Peggy DeSantis , an experienced tax collector in Tyringham and Goose Pond in Lee who had been strongly recommended by our Assessor Consultant Karen Avalue. Tricia told the Board that she found her to be well qualified to train Melissa

Martinetto our new Collector and to assist the Treasurer if needed. Ms. DeSantis was interested in learning about the opportunity, but not ready to make any commitment. K. Lew wondered if we might use her services to help us recover some of the Town's missing tax revenues. We should ask what her hourly rate would be for this work. T. Drugmand has arranged for Peggy DeSantis to meet with M. Martinetto and G. Grogan on Monday April 3 and to stop into the Select Board meeting afterward. J. Huebner will put her on the agenda.

16. **Sexton:** R. Grillon told the Board that he had been approached by a man who wanted to buy our cemetery at the four corners. He told the man that it was not possible to sell such property as it was in the state forest.

17. **Administrative Assistants:** J. Hostetter told the Board that she expects to have all of the department and committee annual reports ready for the Washington Annual Report. She confirmed the reservations for the BCBOHA dinner. She mentioned that some employees are having trouble printing out the certificate at the end of the online Ethics Course. She complained that Electrical Inspector Jim LaPier still needs to get his reports in to us more quickly. She has assigned him a file cabinet for his paperwork. T. Drugmand offered to talk with him and explain our expectations. J. Hostetter said that the response to the appeal for funds from the Emma Bailey Scholarship Committee continues to be strong with over \$1200.00 received already.

18. **Emergency Equipment Donation:** J. Huebner made a motion to approve the Board's letter of thanks to Dr. Nicholas Rockoff of Upper Valley Road who generously donated an oxygen tank and defibrillator to the Town. T. Drugmand seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

19. **Brief Items:** J. Huebner to pass Geospatial Planning letter on to Planning Board; We received an inquiry from the Census Bureau regarding public employment and payroll. J. Huebner will pass this on to Glenn; J. Huebner

will complete a survey we received on transitional assistance; J. Huebner will review a grant form from the Mass Office on Disability Act Improvement program. Ed Bond mentioned that we could use the funds to repair the parking lot behind Town Hall making access to the ramp easier; J. Huebner will attend the Municipal Planning Organization meeting in Pittsfield tomorrow.

20. Adjournment: J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:12. T. Drugmand seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Accepted: _____ Date: _____

Accepted: _____

Accepted: _____

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Nelson