

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen at Washington Town Hall

August 14, 2017

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, T. Drugmand and R. Grillon.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance, J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from August 7, 2017. T. Drugmand seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. T. Drugmand was recording the meeting.
3. **Highway Department:** J. Huebner reported receiving payroll data from Maxymillian for their work on the Eden Glen culvert project for the period 7/20 to 8/4. Tom Johnson said that they have most of the rebar in place to build the headwall for the culvert. He thought the work would be completed in September. Frost Road may be passable before then. He told the Board that the Summit Hill contractor, Tully, has been pouring concrete. They are replacing the abutments, though that was not part of the initial plan. Foresight began work on the Middlefield Road bridge today. T. Johnson said that Baltazar did some work on the flooding situation at Watson Road this week. They did nothing else. J. Huebner asked if there was some simple way we could address the driveway flooding problem at the Dorval property on Washington Mountain Road. Water is draining off the road into the driveway. T. Johnson will get an estimate for paving between the new culvert and Route 8. He will inspect the reportedly deteriorated status of Upper Sargent Road tomorrow. J. Huebner said that the USDA came out to assess the work needed to clear debris out of the pond at Eden Glen. They will work on trying to get us some funding.
4. **Transfer Station:** M. Lampro, Manager of the Transfer Station, submitted her annual performance review form to the Select Board. J. Huebner thanked her for the great work she does managing all aspects of the Transfer Station. She told the Board that Ed Bond had made an emergency

repair to the bottle bin. She and T. Johnson discussed the damage and how to make it easier for White Wolf to maneuver in the Transfer Station yard. She asked him to sink some poles so that she could put up signs at the plastic and metal bins. J. Huebner asked her to try to stay in closer touch with the Board on any issues affecting the Transfer Station.

5. **Conservation Commission:** M. Lampro confirmed to the Board that she had followed up with resident Leonard Bennett about the question of his burning coal for heat. She consulted DEP on the issue and was told that it is illegal in the state of Massachusetts. She communicated this to Mr. Bennett. Mr. Bennett reported to her that he has a problem with water washing back across Route 8 and onto his property. She told him she would pass this on to the Highway Department. T. Johnson said that he would look into the situation.
6. **Boundary discussion – Schulze Road:** The Board received a letter from Mr. Coyle of Schulze Road. Mr. Coyle has for some time objected to the Highway crew's plowing and general work on the road. He believes that they are trespassing on his property. The Town disagrees with his assessment. T. Drugmand said that it may be time we took measurements of the right of way in front of his property. She questioned whether the widening of the road might have eaten into his land. The Town believes that the ditch in front of his house is on Town property. J. Huebner said that the letter does not represent the facts as we know them. T. Drugmand will try to draft a response to Mr. Coyle's letter.
7. **Board of Health:** J. Huebner arranged for the Berkshire Regional Health Alliance (BRHA) to send a septic inspector to a property on Washington Mountain Road at the request of our Board of Health. Our regular inspector Charlie Kanieki is on vacation. BOH member V. Cormier will be informed of the inspection date and results by Jennifer at BRHA.

8. **Personnel Policy:** The Select Board continued last week's discussion of weapons in the workplace and how our policy should be amended to clarify and strengthen it as a deterrent to workplace violence. Treasurer Glenn Grogan, who also works as Human Resources Manager for Town employees, researched and discussed weapons' policy with several towns. He shared language from several towns' policies. After discussion the Board agreed to add additional language to our existing policy about the punishment that would be imposed on an employee found in possession of a weapon in any Town workplace to the effect that this person ..." would be subject to an immediate 2 week suspension without pay if so violated." J. Huebner made a motion that the Town adopts the amended language. R. Grillon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
9. **Tax Collector:** Melissa Martinetto resigned her position as Tax Collector due to family responsibilities in a letter dated 8/7. The Select Board accepted her resignation as of tonight. She will be paid up to 8/7. Assistant Collector Gina Campbell, who is a trained and experienced Collector, will now serve as our Tax Collector. J. Huebner made a motion that we hire Gina Campbell as Tax Collector at \$10,000 annually. She is also entitled to fees for outstanding debt she is able to collect. T. Drugmand seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The Finance Committee will transfer funds saved by the switch from Becket to County Ambulance to support the new salaries. The new Assistant Collector, Peggy DiSantis, will have to come in to go through the official hiring process including CORI check.
10. **Building Maintenance Director:** Mr. Matthew Thomas of Frost Road addressed the Board about the Building Maintenance position. He had spoken with Ed Bond about the job and wanted to apply. He told the Board that he had considerable experience in home building and was multi-skilled in general construction. K. Lew told him that the salary is \$550 per year. He will work for the Town as the consultant who hires contractors as needed to maintain our buildings including the Old Town Hall and Old South Center School. The issue of his managing the Town Hall custodian was left open. J.

Huebner made a motion to hire him as our new Building Maintenance Director. T. Drugmand seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

11. Long Term Disability Insurance: The Treasurer told the Board that he had information on long term policies. Jim asked him to give it to K. Lew for the Finance Meeting.

12. Letter to Mr. Shapira of Washington Mountain Road: J. Huebner had written a letter to Mr. Shapira in response to a letter received last week by Select Board member T. Drugmand from an abutter to the Shapira property at 249 Washington Mt. Road. The abutter complained about excessively bright perimeter lighting on the Shapira property which prevented her from getting a good night's sleep. J. Huebner made a motion to accept the letter as written. The motion carried unanimously. All Board members signed the letter.

13. Virginia Lakes Working Group: Dick Spencer reported to the Select Board that they have found 2 plot plans. One is from 1960. There was tax taking in 1972 and also this year. The Nature Conservancy bought several lots in 2013. The Town owns 20+ acres. Average valuation is \$400. The Coles Brook Road bridge is gone.

General discussion followed. There was a recommendation to get legal advice from a real estate law specialist, not Town Counsel. There are still a fair number of property owners who owe taxes. It was proposed that we could write to the owners and ask if they wanted to sell. D. Spencer will write a draft letter to be approved by the Board. We will need a Special Town Meeting to get approval to sell the rest of the land. We still have to clarify our final numbers. There is another area of land down closer to the road that has the advantage of being accessible. It may have some value. D. Spencer said that we should do the North Lake area first. We will have to re-file with the Planning Board.

14. Bucksteep: Chief Breen said that there has been no activity at Bucksteep lately. He pointed out that the manor building is unoccupied and so becomes an attractive nuisance, inviting vandalism which could include a fire. The Board agreed that we should have the building inspected. They asked the Board of Health to take over responsibility for this action.

15. Wired West/Broadband: Our EOHED liaison, Bill Ennen, assured us that our funding for the fiber network is working its way through the bureaucracy. He is monitoring it. We have signed the contract with Westfield Gas and Electric for the network design work.

16. DOT Town Contact form: Completed and sent to Division 1 Director Francisca Heming.

17. Pittsfield Watershed stumpage: K.Lew told the Board he discovered that a plan had been filed. He will ask Sean Connors to follow up on this.

18. Beaver Permit: The Board granted a beaver permit to DCR. J. Huebner signed the permit.

19. Adjournment: J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:39pm: T. Drugmand seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Accepted: _____ Date: _____

Accepted: _____

Accepted: _____

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Nelson