

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

December 4, 2017

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Attending were J. Huebner and R. Grillon.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes of 11/27 as written. R. Grillon seconded and the vote to accept the minutes was unanimous.
3. **Virginia Lakes:** J. Huebner said that he had received a certified letter today which should have been addressed to D. Spencer, Chair of the Virginia Lakes Working Committee. He gave the lengthy, handwritten letter to D. Spencer for his review. After quickly scanning the letter, D. Spencer told the Board that it was sent by a couple of Virginia Lakes land owners. Both own waterfront property. They indicated that they and a number of others are interested in buying more land. They expressed dissatisfaction with The Nature Conservancy. D. Spencer said that Attorney Pollard had responded to some of his questions, but has not been very helpful overall in explaining the key issues in disposing of the land. J. Huebner advised he update Town Counsel and continue discussions.
4. **Highway Department:** J. Huebner said that he had received notification from Mass DOT Div. 1 Director Francisca Heming that Washington has been approved for the full \$500,000 Small Bridges Program grant for rebuilding the Middlefield Road Bridge. We were already approved for \$250,000. We do not have the paperwork yet for the additional \$250,000. In addition, J. Huebner said that he had received a letter from Director Heming inviting us to the Summit Hill bridge close-out Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am on site at Summit Hill. T. Johnson told the Board that he had signed paperwork for the grant which will cover the design of Upper Frost Road culvert repair. He mentioned that he had done some research on automated, lighted weather warning signs for Washington Mountain Road. In addition to being expensive (\$2200 per sign) the signs would have to be manually controlled. There was general agreement that the cost was not justified for road conditions which were only occasionally bad.

- 5. Treasurer:** Glenn Grogan told the Selectmen that complications have developed with the Eden Glen project accounting. The reimbursement of funds from MEMA to the Town has not flowed smoothly. The Treasurer assured the Selectmen that we are under the contract price. On several occasions though we have run uncomfortably low on funds because of slow reimbursement from the state. It may take from 6 to 8 weeks to catch up. G. Grogan said that the contract is a complicated document with many cost categories.

Adjustments to cost categories over the course of the project were to be expected. As T. Johnson said, Maxymillian may have decided to use less concrete and more steel. However MEMA did not adjust the budget as the work went along and because of that we have a backlog of accounting to get through before we can close out the project. J. Huebner said that we need to know just what MEMA needs to complete the sign off. Then we can get the necessary information together. MEMA has to be responsive. G. Grogan said that we have the final invoices now from Maxymillian and from Horizon. K. Lew wondered if MEMA is meeting us half way in getting the final accounting settled. We hope to be able to take down that large Eden Glen sign at the new culvert site soon.

- 6. Police:** Chief Breen told the Selectmen that he has seen activity at Bucksteep on recent nights. Lights have been turned on and off while he was there. He also mentioned that he has learned of the largest crime in the Town's history. Someone has cut down a 75 foot tall evergreen and driven off with it. Chief Breen located Ralph Simmons' veteran's grave marker and arranged for its installation.
- 7. Bognis Landfill:** J. Huebner said that he had talked to Town Counsel about the landfill. Attorney Pollard told him that the Town certainly does not own that land. The documents at the registry of Deeds have no bearing. However, we are not free of liability.
- 8. Administrative Assistants:** J. Hostetter gave J. Huebner a copy of the original survey of the 5 acres of land on Washington Mt. Road that the city of Pittsfield has agreed to cede to Washington. He asked her to file the map copy with the original and our other oversized documents in the

Conference Room. He said that he had written a cover letter to Richard Dohoney, the Pittsfield City Attorney and made a motion to sign the letter. R. Grillon seconded and the motion passed unanimously. He asked J. Hostetter to mail the letter and a copy of the survey to Atty. Richard Dohoney to begin the land transfer process. J. Huebner and R. Grillon signed the cover letter for the shipment to Mr. Dohoney. J. Huebner also asked J. Nelson to contact absent Select Person Tricia Drugmand and ask for her permission to sign her name to the letter. In other business, J. Huebner also asked J. Hostetter to compile a directory of Washington Town Hall employees and the locations of their offices and to post that on the Town website and the hallway bulletin boards.

- 9. MPO meeting:** J. Huebner reported that he had attended the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting in Pittsfield last week. There was much discussion of the need for a better, more widely accessible, public transportation system in the Berkshires. Attendees were told that people are willing to pay for this vital system. In this context the proposed rail spur into the Berkshires from New York Amtrak in the Hudson Valley was discussed also. Mass DOT is adopting performance standards starting with safety measures.
- 10. Berkshire Public Health Alliance Board meeting:** J. Huebner also attended the BPHA meeting last week. He learned that the shared service health organization is growing. It is almost financially self-sustaining.
- 11. Christmas Contribution:** J. Huebner reported receiving a letter from the Becket Federated Church announcing that they will again be hosting their Annual Free Community Christmas Dinner at 12:30 pm on December 25, 2017 and would greatly appreciate a contribution. After brief discussion the Board agreed to send \$50.00 from the Selectmen's Expense Fund.
- 12. Planning for Washington's Future:** J. Huebner made a motion to send out letters to people invited to serve on the Town's strategic planning committee. R. Grillon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The Board and K. Lew signed the seven letters.

**13. Green Communities:** J. Huebner said that he had done some research on the various programs available to Green Communities towns. There are two basic kinds of programs. One helps with planning to be a Green Community and the other helps with planning a project. The grants open up in the Spring and are in the amounts of \$7500 and \$ 12,500. Another program is the META. This also starts in Spring and establishes a group buy of technologies. K. Lew spoke briefly about below market rate group contracts available to towns which join forces and act together.

**14. Broadband:** K. Lew and S. Nelson had their scheduled update phone call with Bill Ennen of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) last week. They discussed details of the preliminary broadband wiring route through Washington. One of the topics of discussion was the question of which undeveloped areas in Town should be wired in anticipation of future development. We expect to respond to the preliminary wiring plan with a rough draft by mid-January.

**15. Community Compact:** J. Huebner reported that we received information regarding a potential grant opportunity available to Community Compact Program subscribers. K. Lew said that he will look into this.

**16. Holiday Schedule:** J. Huebner said that there will be no Selectmen's meetings on Monday, December 25 or on Monday, January 1.

**17. Adjournment:** J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. R. Grillon seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Nelson