

Meeting of the Washington Board of Selectmen at Washington Town Hall

January 22, 2018

1. J. Huebner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Attending for the Board were J. Huebner, Tricia Drugmand and Richard Grillon.
2. After leading the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance J. Huebner made a motion to accept the minutes from January 8, 2018 as written. T. Drugmand seconded the motion and the minutes were accepted unanimously.
3. **Highway:** J. Huebner reported receiving an email update from P. Clark that the Eden Glen close-out is moving ahead. Regarding Middlefield Road bridge, J. Huebner said that we have no news from our contractor, Foresight. Tom Johnson told the Select Board that he has ordered another warning sign for the steep downhill section of Washington Mountain Road (WMR). A car hit the guard rail there. There was discussion of the speed limits on WMR and in Dalton. J. Huebner said that he will attend the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) tomorrow in Pittsfield.

J. Huebner reported that he had been notified by Francisca Heming, Director of DOT Division One, that there will be a post-construction meeting for the Summit Hill Bridge project at Division One Headquarters in Lenox on February 6 at 10:00am. He will be unable to attend and expressed hope that T. Johnson could attend. He also extended the invitation to T. Drugmand and R. Grillon. J. Huebner said that he received a letter from Ms. Heming informing him that DOT has officially turned Summit Hill Road back over to the Town of Washington.

T. Johnson told the Select Board that DOT is compiling a Berkshire Road Inventory which will list all of the roads in each town. There was speculation that we may lose some of the roads over in the forest and on its edge. T. Johnson is in touch with DOT about this program. He mentioned

to the Board that he helped DCR by putting down gravel for them which was left after the WMR construction.

Discussion followed about our highway crew being called out by the State Police late on a recent Saturday night at 3:00 am to salt a section of WMR which had already been salted. T. Johnson said that there was some indication that the driver was drunk and that this, and not the road condition, may have been the cause of the accident,. The Board asked him to tell Chief Breen that we want a report from the State Police on this incident. We want know if a sobriety test was administered. T. Johnson also reported that one of the granite pillars on the Town Common had been broken off, perhaps by someone backing into it. He also mentioned that he will soon be ready to move ahead with lettering the new small truck.

4. **Police:** J. Huebner asked Chief Breen if he has made any progress in finding a trained officer who would work for the Town as his back-up. Chief Breen responded that he has been working on it and has identified 2 candidates. T. Drugmand asked if he has a job description yet. In answer to another inquiry from the Chair, Chief Breen told the Board that he is quite certain that there are no homeless people living in Washington at present. J. Huebner asked Chief Breen if he has been able to get a statement to the effect that he was not at fault for damaging her vehicle from the woman who claimed the school bus scratched her car upon leaving the school driveway. He responded that he is trying to find her. J. Huebner asked if there had been damage on WMR to a guard rail by the entrance to the Appalachian Trail.. Chief Breen told him that it had been hit and ripped out. J. Huebner asked him to provide a written report to the Board the next time such damage occurs.
5. **Tax Collector:** Gina Campbell complained to the Select Board about our lack of a secure mail box to accept express deliveries from Fed-Ex or UPS. Tax payments are often sent via the express services and there is seldom anyone at Town Hall to accept them. This complicates the timely receipt of

some property owners' checks. J. Hostetter explained that by previous arrangement, UPS deliveries go to the Town Clerk's home and Fed- Ex deliveries are sent to her home. The Tax Collector was not aware of this. J. Huebner asked J. Hostetter to contact Fed-Ex to be sure they understand the arrangements and to inquire about how we could get a box here to accept the deliveries.

- 6. Park Commission:** J. Hostetter told the Board that the Park Commission had just met and discussed issues related to the use of the Park by organizations from other towns. Both the Becket Federated Church and the Hilltown Brouhaha have asked to hold events in our park this summer. The Park Commission learned that non- Washington organizations have to buy a one-day insurance policy to hold their events. Jim Huebner said that he will get more information on insurance requirements from town counsel. T. Drugmand emphasized that we need to charge a fee for use of the park in order to cover maintenance and other event-related costs. The Park Commission will meet again on February 5th.
- 7. Treasurer:** G. Grogan told the Select Board that the new tax law may affect municipal bonds and our ability to borrow money. He met with our banker to discuss these issues. He also told the Board that the Town has finally received its FEMA money. On another note, G. Grogan said that he had been instructed by John Les on how to replace the Wi-Fi terminal to keep Town Hall online.
- 8. Administrative Assistants:** Jim Huebner asked J. Hostetter about the status of the Conflict of Interest Certificates required from all Town employees. She replied that they are now coming in to her office. J. Huebner asked her to scan and email to the Select Board members a letter sent to the Town last fall by E. Shapira's lawyer.
- 9. DLTA grant:** No response has been received from Mr. Gagnon yet. J. Huebner said that we did receive a response to our planning inquiry from a

consultant at UMASS Boston. However, the Chair emphasized that we want to work locally.

10. Computer Equipment Bid: J. Huebner said that the Accountant had made a bid of \$25.00 for the surplus equipment advertised in Tracks. T. Drugmand made a motion to accept the bid. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Building Maintenance: Matt Taylor told the Board that he does not think we need an alarm system for Town Hall. He believes that we just need fire detection. He is still working on the Transfer Station repairs.

12. Residence Question: In response to a resident's question about the primary residence of E. Shapira of Pugzee's farm, the Board asked Town Clerk Allison Mikaniewicz to check whether his primary residence is Washington or Lenox. She was able to quickly research and confirm that he is a registered voter in Washington and is not registered in Lenox.

13. Small Town Summit: J. Huebner reported that he and Dick Grillon attended the recent Small Town Summit meeting in Dalton. The Summit is a volunteer organization seeking to serve all local small towns. The meeting was not a waste of time, but not much was accomplished. There was a good deal of complaining about various issues. Donations support the organization's work. The diverse group of towns has been hard to organize. He believes we would be better served working through our legislative delegation or the Berkshire County Selectmen's Organization. The latter group has been getting more active lately and is currently working in support of improved rail transportation in our region.

14. Neighbor to Neighbor Organization: J. Hostetter researched the Neighbor to Neighbor organization and found it to be an appropriate way too administer donations to help residents pay for heat.

15. Board of Health: J. Huebner said that he has signed the contract for our Public Health Nurse service for 2018.

16. Assessors: The Select Board requested that we invite Karen Avalor, our Assessor Consultant, to attend the January 29th Board meeting to discuss the residential questions that have arisen lately.

17. Chair's Schedule: J. Huebner announced that he will not attend the Select Board meeting on February 5. He will leave agendas to post. T. Drugmand will chair the meeting.

18. Adjournment: J. Huebner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. T. Drugmand seconded and the vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Accepted: _____ Date: _____

Accepted: _____

Accepted: _____

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Nelson