

Town of Washington Select Board Meeting

4/8/2024 7:00 – 9:00 PM Washington Town Hall

1. K. Lew called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Attending for the Select Board were K. Lew, D. Ellis, and Mike Case. After leading the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, K. Lew made a motion to approve the minutes from 3/11/24 and 3/25/24. D. Ellis seconded.

**2. Attendants:** Steve Deloye, Dave Drugmand, Meg Megas, Linda Levernoch, S. Curran, and Sherri Thomas. Dominic Sinopoli, Bonny DiTomaso, Mary Jarvie

**3. Approval of warrants:** K. Lew pointed out that the cost for the school bus emergency rental was put through on the bus driver account instead of the repair and maintenance account. K. Lew will pass the information along to the Finance Committee for decision.

**4. Public comment:** M. Jarvie explained that a resident's mailbox was damaged by the plow and would like to have it repaired. K. Lew asked her to bring the issue S. Curran to schedule the repair.

**5. Bonny DiTomaso – SHINE services discussion:** B. DiTomaso explained that she is a certified SHINE counselor with Elder Services and offered her free and confidential council for individuals seeking subsidized healthcare. There is opportunity to save on drug plans. She explained the Medicare savings program which has changed to not include assets. More people can qualify and they also automatically qualify for SNAP benefits. After discussion the Select Board agreed to accept Bonny's services. She will inform Elder Services. S. Deloye will put her in touch with Rose Borgnis so she can meet with the senior community at a COA dinner. K. Lew will put the information on the next issue of the Tracks and the website.

**6. Execute Purchase & Sale for Virginia Lakes Unit 1 parcels:** K. Lew made a motion to enter into sale and agreement with Nature Conservancy for the transfer of the Virginia Lakes unit 1 parcels. D. Ellis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**7. Review of 2024 Becket Beach pass fee:** There was discussion about raising the fee of the Becket Beach pass to help offset the cost of the assessment. D. Sinopoli explained the money collected for the Beach Pass is placed into a revolving fund that is used to pay the \$2500 assessment fee. However, Beach Pass sales have not come close to covering that fee. Becket raised the cost from \$5 to \$10, undercutting the margin for revolving fund. Parks Commission suggested increasing our fee accordingly. There was discussion amongst the Select Board and the other attendants of the meeting in regards to the value of the Beach pass for families in Washington. K. Lew made a motion to approve the Becket Beach pass to \$30. D. Ellis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**8. FY25 Budget review with Fin Comm, continued:** Tuition for McCann and Taconic went down and Smiths went up. S. Curran will sort out with Kathe in Becket how many students are going to Taconic and McCann to determine cost and space on the bus. There was discussion on the bus driver's salary and 10 more days for holidays were noted. The amount required to raise the bus driver salary neutralizes the school tuition savings. There was discussion on having a sub that meets the driving requirements. The Finance Committee reported a possible overage for transportation. They still require updated numbers

from the bus companies. There was discussion on repairing the school bus, because it won't pass inspection next year. S. Curran reported a \$10k estimate to fix the rust but no one has been found willing to do the work. There was discussion on using one-time funds and not putting the repair on the taxes. D. Ellis questioned the value of putting more money into repair and whether instead it should be replaced at this point. K. Lew questioned whether it would make sense to keep running our own bus in the future. Long term strategy is still unfolding. There were reductions made to the VA funds, the Tracks budget, and summer help.

**9. Pay increase requests:** There was discussion on the custodian's request for a pay raise. K. Lew explained that COLA has gone up 3 percent. However, that doesn't bring the hourly rate close enough to the \$20 per hour that was requested. There was discussion on also raising the pay of the Transfer Station employees as well because they are in the same category. The Finance Committee explained that the budget is already very tight. S. Curran explained the importance of paying Washington employees comparable wages to other towns as well as reward them for a job well done. He is gathering data on the topic. The Board asked S. Curran to work with B. Gelb to do an overhaul on the personnel policy that can assist in making such decisions. The Finance Committee will update their report with correct numbers for further discussion at the next meeting.

**10. Becket EMS agreement update & presentation planning:** There was discussion on the logistics of the event. There was discussion on the 911 signs and the program needed to implement the project.

Adjournment: K. Lew motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:35PM. D. Ellis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

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Respectfully submitted,

Tykesha Nothe

Correspondence:

Lee Planning Board in regards to a special permit applicaton to build a house in an industrial zone.