



November 6, 2018
Volume 1, Issue 2

THE BECKET BULLETIN

INFORMATION ON TOWN GOVERNMENT ISSUES
AND ACTIVITIES FOR RESIDENTS OF BECKET

THE ROUTE 20 SPRING

On October 30, the Board of Selectmen conducted a public informational meeting on the Route 20 Spring. Selectman Bill Elovirta reviewed the background involving the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection order to the Town to eliminate coliform bacteria or close the spring.

The Annual Town Meeting appropriated up to \$15,000 to contract with an engineering firm for a design and a cost estimate to bring the Rt. 20 Spring into compliance with state DEP standards.

The Town contracted with Housatonic Basin of Lee to perform the work, and they delivered their report in early October. The estimated cost to install a U-V water purification system is \$85,430, not including costs for easement agreements with the two private property owners, a back-up generator and insurance. A rough estimate of the complete cost is in the range of \$100,000. Housatonic Basin estimates the annual operating costs to be \$2,515, not including electricity.

The design and cost estimates from Housatonic Basin are available on the Becket website. The Selectmen will review options for the Route 20 Spring at their next meeting on November 7.

For more news on Town Government issues and activities, download the complete newsletter from the Town website:
http://www.townofbecket.org/Public_Documents/index

To subscribe to the Town of Becket meeting agendas and public notices, please visit:
<http://townofbecket.org/subscriber>

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November Meetings *(subject to change)*

- 7th:** Board of Selectmen
Board of Health
Finance Committee
- 8th:** Cemetery Commission
- 10th:** Sherwood Forest
Road District,
Sherwood Forest
Lake District
- 13th:** Historical Commission and
Zoning Board of Appeals
- 14th:** Planning Board
- 15th:** Energy Committee
- 26th:** Broadband Ad Hoc
Group
- 27th:** Conservation Commission

THE SELECTMAN'S COLUMN

Reminder about

Property Taxes:

The 3rd installment of property taxes was due on Nov. 2nd, and the 3rd installment of property taxes will be due on Feb. 1st.

Building Inspector

Winter Work Schedule:

Monday through Thursday

8:30 a.m. till 4:30 p.m.

Closed on Friday effective
Nov. 30th through Feb. 23rd.

Town Hall Closed:

Mon, Nov. 12th in observance
of Veterans Day, and on
Thurs. & Fri., Nov. 22nd &
23rd for Thanksgiving.

As we get ready for winter here in the Berkshires, our town has seen some new growth with the addition of a K-9 unit to our police force. Recently the town received a grant for Police Officer Michael Hunt to receive training and obtain a German Shepherd puppy to go out on patrols with him in a retro-fitted K-9 patrol car. This will add many benefits to our police force including search and rescue, contraband sniffing capability and an additional member of the force to locate criminals. It is hoped that the puppy can visit Becket Washington School to teach the children about our four-footed friend. Congratulations Becket Police Department and Officer Hunt.

In addition to our Police update, our Fire Department will repair or replace the antenna tower on the side of Fire Station #1 due to loosened guy wires on the tower attached to the roof and the ground. We thank Chief Hanford for the update and a sharp-eyed resident for pointing out the maintenance issue. We expect to sell some of the Fire Department's surplus gear in the coming weeks if approved at the next Selectmen's meeting on Nov. 7th.

In this month of giving thanks, let us thank all of our town employees and volunteers for their continued work to keep our community safe, clean and clear of snow. Thank you to all the men and women who work in the Town Hall, Police, Highway, Fire and Ambulance Departments and all of the many volunteers in the many committees and boards that keep our town running. Thank You all and Happy Thanksgiving!

Michael Lavery, Vice-Chair, Board of Selectmen



Police Officer Michael Hunt & Kain



NEW TOWN HALL HVAC SYSTEM

The Town has received a \$12,500 grant from the state Department of Energy Resources to hire a consultant to review the options for a new Town Hall HVAC system. The initial plan, funded at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting, was to replace the existing oil fired system with a new propane based plant.

More recently, there have been advances in electricity based, heat pump technology, and some communities are taking advantage of a state subsidy program to install this technology. One interesting proposal is to use the green field adjacent to Town Hall to develop a land-based array of solar panels which could provide power for heat pumps and supply a significant portion of the electricity consumed at Town Hall.

There are a number of questions that need to be resolved before the Town makes a decision on a new HVAC system: Are new heat pumps reliable on the coldest days? Will heat pumps require an electrical baseboard back up system? Can the state grant fund the cost instead of using the funds appropriated at the 2017 Town Meeting?

The consultant will be hired before the end of this year to provide advice and a recommendation on the best system. The Town anticipates applying for a new round of Green Communities grant funds in February 2019 which could fund the HVAC system.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SEARCH

The Town Administrator Screening Committee is continuing to work with Bernard Lynch of Community Paradigm Associates to identify a permanent Town Administrator. In September, the Screening Committee and Mr. Lynch completed their work and recommended a top notch candidate. The Selectmen interviewed this candidate but were informed that he would not accept an appointment unless the salary was increased by \$20,000 more than the \$72,000 budgeted at the Annual Town Meeting.

This was the second time this year that a high quality applicant for Town Administrator refused an offer from the Selectmen. Last summer, the Selectmen voted to hire a candidate who then declined to accept the appointment.

A number of towns in our region are in the market for a new Town Administrator. Salaries have been rising across Berkshire County and in the Connecticut Valley. It is likely that the Selectmen may bring the issue of the Town Administrator salary for discussion before a Special Town Meeting expected to take place in December of January.

The goal of the Selectmen is to identify an Administrator who will live in Becket or a surrounding town and who will commit to serving the Town for an extended period.

Robert T. Markel, Interim Town Administrator

BECKET ATHENAEUM NEWS

Pre-School STEAM Returns to the Becket Athenaeum!

Our 2018 STEAM program will return on Tuesday, November 6th, with Wendy Provencher working with local pre-schoolers in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math.

Did you ever think that some things are too hard to do at home with your kids? We will give you fun, easy, and not too messy ways to practice STEAM at home with your child/children. Join us for an hour of great fun! This is an opportunity to inspire your kids to engineer, create, design, explore, and build!

Tuesdays 1-2 pm at the Becket Athenaeum FREE!

Current Scheduled Dates: 11/6, 11/20, 11/27, 12/4, 12/11, 12/18.

The Central Berkshire Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

The Athenaeum has the following 14 museum passes available for All library card holders to check out for free/reduced admission:

Arrowhead, Pittsfield

Springfield Museums

Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield

Chesterwood, Stockbridge

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown

Hancock Shaker Village, Pittsfield

MassMOCA, North Adams

Ventfort Hall, Lenox

Springfield Museums

Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton

Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge

Mystic Aquarium, Mystic CT

The Mount, Lenox

USS Constitution, Boston

Berkshire Botanical Garden, Stockbridge

Evening Workshop: Winter Entertaining Appetizers Made Easy with Sally Soluri and Jodi Shafiroff Wednesday, November 7, 6-8 pm

Hosting a gathering for family and friends, but feeling the stress of planning and making the food? Join Sally and Jodi as they lead us through recipes for easy, delicious, and mostly make-ahead appetizers. We will serve wine, cheese, and crackers and sample our creations.

Preregistration is required for this FREE workshop. Please contact us by noon, Monday, November 5th. Email: jodi@bwlibrary.org or call 623-5483.

Winter Evening Workshops are funded by a grant from the Central Berkshire Fund of the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

COUNCIL ON AGING

Plans are being put in place for the Annual Christmas party for the Council on Aging members. We will not have potlucks during the 3rd Fridays of November and December due to the busyness of the holidays. Lunch continues at 11 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays with Bingo to follow. The lunches are from 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. followed by Bingo. Reservations for our lunches are required so that enough meals are ordered. You may sign-up to attend lunch by calling (413) 623-8934 extension 27. The deadline to sign-up for our Tuesday luncheon is on Friday. The deadline to sign-up for our Thursday lunch is on Tuesday. The cost for lunch is \$2.00 payable at the door.

Submitted by Joan Moylan, Director – Council on Aging

REGULARLY SCHEDULED TOWN OF BECKET COMMITTEE AND BOARD MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Board of Health 1st Wednesday, 5 p.m.
Board of Selectmen:..... 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Conservation Commission..... 4th Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
Energy Committee..... 3rd Thursday, 9:30 a.m.
Finance Committee 1st or 2nd Wednesday, evening
Historical Commission..... 2nd Tuesday, 3 p.m.
Planning Board: 2nd Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Zoning Board of Appeals..... 1st Tuesday, 7 p.m. as needed

For the most updated schedule, please see the calendar section of the town website:
http://townofbecket.org/Public_Documents/BecketMA_Calendar/?formid=158

TOWN OF BECKET

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