

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
7:00pm, September 16, 2020
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees

Board of Selectmen: William Elovirta (BE), *Chairperson*; Michael Lavery (ML), *Vice Chairperson* and Chris Swindlehurst (CS), *Clerk*

Staff: William Caldwell (BC), *Town Administrator*; Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Others (remote participation): Mark Sevastino (2020 U.S. Census)

Others (in person): Bob Gross (MLP Manager), Cathy Terwedow, Al Blake, and Tommie Hutto-Blake

1. Call to order

BE called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

BE led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. BOS to review and possibly vote on appointment application:

• **Cathy Terwedow, Cultural Council, effective 9-16-2020 through 6-30-2023**

Cathy Terwedow met with the BOS to introduce herself and discuss her interest in serving on the Cultural Council. Ms. Terwedow, a part-time resident for the past ten years, is now a full-time resident of Becket and she wishes to become involved in the community. She was encouraged by current members of the Cultural Council to submit an application to the BOS. CS moved to appoint Cathy Terwedow to the Cultural Council effective 9-16-2020 through 6-30-2023. ML 2nd. Vote: unanimous. BE announced that Tracy Wilson submitted an application indicating that she wishes to rejoin the Cultural Council (due to family matters, a few years ago she needed to resign). ML moved to appoint Tracy Wilson to the Cultural Council effective 9-16-2020 through 6-30-2023. CS 2nd. Vote: unanimous.

4. Broadband Update and BOS to discuss and possibly vote on policies and decisions relating to the Broadband Project

MLP Manager Bob Gross indicated that the drive-through to review remedial work required has been completed and he discussed handouts:

1. List of Remediation within Fiber Services Areas ("FSAs") (# of remediations needed, # of poles replaced). Bob also specified that the Town awaits information pertaining to the MBI 123 Cable remediation.
2. Remediation within FSAs 2, 1, 5, & 9. Bob reported on Broadband Ad Hoc Group's discussion with Westfield Gas & Electric. The BOS was amenable to the Broadband Ad Hoc Group's preliminary recommended sequence for build based on remediation and logistics of the design of the Town's Broadband system based on discussion with Westfield Gas & Electric. The preliminary recommendation is to prioritize FSAs 2, 1, 5 & 9. Bob stated that after the Town receives a commitment from the utilities about

completing remediation (Make-Ready), a kick-off meeting will be scheduled with construction estimated to begin up to 30 days later.

3. Map of FSAs 2, 1, 5 & 9 (sketch with division of FSAs). Bob indicated that at this point, it is premature to announce the sequencing of the FSAs.

Other areas discussed:

- Underground Work: Family Court and Frederick Court have been completed. Bob received the majority of the paperwork for underground from Parsons Way. Parsons Way will be trenched by Raymaaker, a Westfield subcontractor. Raymaaker and Westfield will work together to finalize the design before work is started. William Holmes and Becket West have submitted most of their paperwork and they are opting for above ground with poles which will be done by Burke, a Westfield subcontractor. Burke and Westfield will work together to determine where and what is required for the poles.
- The Building & Grounds Technician is completing the construction of the hut. Westfield Gas & Electric's engineer ordered the technical supplies.
- Sertex builds network completely within the FSA. Once testing is completed, TriWire, a Westfield subcontractor, will start installing the drops. It is hoped that early next year, some premises will acquire service.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group anticipates discussion with the BOS on drop policy, payments, and budget.

5. Discussion to promote the U.S. Census

Mark Sevastino spoke about the importance of the U.S. Census and discussed how the Town of Becket may increase its response rate. He indicated that in 2010, Becket had a 34.6% response rate. Currently Becket has a 39.9% response rate. Mark advised that response is needed not only for the primary residence but for all dwellings. Although the deadline may be extended, currently September 30th is the deadline to participate in the Census. Mark provided a Seasonal Home Flyer.

Actions to be taken:

1. BC will send the Seasonal Home Flyer via e-mail blast to the Town's MailChimp subscribers.
2. The BOS will ask some of the officials/contacts of the Lake/Road Districts and homeowner associations to distribute the Seasonal Home Flyers to its members.
3. CS will provide Mark with the contact info. for the Food Pantry. Mark will ask permission for a representative of the US Census to assist individuals with filling out the Census at the Food Pantry.

6. Approval of the September 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes

CS moved to approve the September 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes. ML 2nd. Vote: unanimous.

7. BOS to discuss and possibly vote on the "Not In Our County" Pledge

BE inquired why Tommie Hutto-Blake suggested using the "Not In Our County Pledge" rather than the "Not In Our Town" Pledge. Tommie stated that the "Not In Our Town" Pledge was created in reaction to a tragic event whereas although the language of the "Not In Our County" Pledge is appropriate for an event, it is primarily designed to promote education, to serve as a proactive measure and as a reminder to support, look out for and stick up for one another. ML moved for the Select Board to sign the "Not In Our County"

pledge (wording listed below), and display the message as follows: 1. hang the pledge with the Select Board's signatures in the Town Hall 2. place a pledge sticker in the window of the front door of the Town Hall and 3. Place a lawn sign (not during winter) on the Town Hall property near Main Street. CS 2nd. Vote: unanimous.

I commit to working together with my neighbors to create safer, more integrated communities for all residents in Berkshire County. I do not stay silent in the face of intolerance or hate based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, country of origin, ability or any other factor. I work to acknowledge and heal all forms of hate, bigotry and bullying. I pledge to renew my commitment to this work every day.

After the Select Board members signed and filled out their individual pledge cards, Tommie collected the informational portion of the cards to mail to the Multicultural BRIDGE organization in Lee, MA.

8. Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).
The BOS had no public input at tonight's meeting.

9. BOS to review Departmental Reports

- Building Inspector – August 2020
- Others TBA

The BOS reviewed the Building Inspector's August 2020 report.

10. BOS's Comments and Announcements

ML initiated discussion on whether the BOS should allow Trick or Treating this year. The BOS will discuss this matter on 10-7-2020. CS, a member of the Volunteer Fire Department, mentioned the VFD is formulating plans to give candy to the children in a socially distanced manner.

CS brought up that the Fire Department tested its recently acquired extraction tool located on Rescue 6 and it works great.

CS mentioned that he is pleased that the house on Benton Hill Road was demolished.

11. Town Administrator's Report

BC provided an update of several items that he been working on:

- Ambulance Garage – will pour the concrete flooring tomorrow, grade/prep outside
- Town Hall HVAC – nearly complete
- HL Fuel – propane tanks to be installed on September 18
- Broadband Hut – working on finishing construction
- Green Communities Competitive Grant – awarded for heat pumps and insulation
- Police Dept. construction nearing completion
- Waiting on new septic numbers for Mullen House/Becket Arts Center/Athenaeum septic system bids
- TH reopening – T/R 10am-2pm starting 10/6
- On 10-21-2020, the BOS will revisit whether they will allow the Council on Aging to meet in the Town Hall.
- DER grant award Ceremony

- Halloween – discussed under agenda item 10.
- Excise tax ATM local option (Veterans) – BC requested language from Town Counsel for an ATM Warrant Article

12. Any other business to come before the Board

Per BE's inquiry, BC advised that Construct Inc. is moving forward (supplies have been ordered) on renovation/repairs of the Town's affordable housing unit.

13. Correspondence:

- ♦ 2020.9.2 Planning Board Notices of Public Hearing scheduled on Oct. 14th to review Special Permit Applications submitted by: 1) Elton Ogden and Jan Salzer-Ogden to reconstruct after demolition of a 1 family dwelling at 308 Old Pond Road; 2) Donna M. DiCarlo to build a pre-fab log home at 345 Friar Tuck Drive and 3) Robyn McGlynn to construct a new one-level log cabin (24'w x 34'l) at 209 Sherwood Drive.
- ♦ 2020.9.7 E-mail from David Pierce, President of The Chester Foundation, Inc./Friends of the Keystone Arches, Inc to convey that both nominated properties (Keystone Arches and the Railroad Station at Chester), advanced with a unanimous vote of the National Park Service's Landmark Committee to the Dept. of the Interior that they be granted Landmark status.
- ♦ 2020.9.3 Zoning Board of Appeals Notice of Public Hearing scheduled on Oct. 6th to review a special permit application submitted by Jacob's Pillow dance Festival, Inc. for a Site Plan Approval to construct an addition to the existing Blake's Barn structure at 358 George Carter Road.

The BOS reviewed the above captioned correspondences.

14. BOS to review and sign payable warrants.

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

15. BOS to adjourn the Meeting

ML moved to adjourn, CS 2ndL: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 8:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:



William Elovirta, Chairperson

/ 10-7-2020

Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- ♦ 2020.9.2 Meeting Minutes
- ♦ 2020.9.2 Town Administrator's Report
- ♦ Building Inspector's August 2020 Report
- ♦ NOT IN OUR COUNTY Pledge
- ♦ Appointment Applications (Cultural Council): Cathy Terwedow & Tracy Wilson
- ♦ Correspondence (listed under Agenda Item 13)
- ♦ Broadband Documents listed under agenda Item 4