

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen Meeting
7:00 p.m., August 21, 2019
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees

Board of Selectmen: William Elovirta, *Chairperson*; Michael Lavery, *Vice Chairperson* and Chris Swindlehurst, *Clerk*

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

Others Present: MLP Manager Robert Gross, Andrea Nix, Kaylee Fuller, & Crystal Brainard

1. Call to order

Bill E. called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. He indicated that the BOS was recording the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Bill E. led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Approval of Minutes

Michael moved to approve the 8-7-19 meeting minutes. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. BOS to review and possibly vote on Appointment Application: Andrea Nix – Cultural Council (Term: August 21, 2019 through June 30, 2022) Susan Purser - Energy Committee Alternate Member (Term: August 21, 2019 through June 30, 2020)

The BOS reviewed appointment applications for Andrea Nix (Cultural Council) and Susan Purser (Energy Committee Alternate Member). Bill E. indicated that he has known Ms. Nix who had served on the Cultural Council before, and she is retired and would like to resume serving on the Cultural Council. Bill E. moved to appoint Andrea Nix to the Cultural Council effective August 21, 2019 through June 30, 2022. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The BOS welcomed back Andrea Nix.

During discussion it was conveyed that that Susan Purser has been attending the Energy Committee meetings, she has a background in alternative energy, and the Chair of the Energy Committee supports appointing her to serve on the Energy Committee. Michael moved to appoint Susan Purser as the Alternate Member of the Energy Committee effective August 21, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

MLP Manager Bob Gross provided the following update:

- He is pleased to announce that former Becket WiredWest delegate Jeff Piemont has returned as a full-time resident to town and he has joined the Broadband Ad Hoc Group. Jeff has bond counsel expertise which will be helpful for town legal agreements.
- The Broadband's focus will be for the town to go out to bid in October. They will determine if bidding documents may include different options for private areas that have not yet decided on their commitment to utilities (plowing, short-poles, trenching). They hope to

have final estimates from Westfield Gas & Electric. It may be necessary to request bids on the most expensive option.

- They have until the end of December to determine whether to select using WiredWest or Whip City Fiber (Westfield Gas & Electric)

6. BOS to review and consider approval of the Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Nonresident tuition application submitted to the Town on 8-7-19 (one student to attend Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School during 2019-2020).

The BOS discussed the above captioned application with the parent and the potential student of Smith Vocation & Agricultural High School. They indicated that the student had moved to Becket in December and after having an opportunity to attend Wahconah Regional High School, and giving it additional thought, she realized that she wished to study animal science at Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School. Bill C. advised that additional funding would not be required if the BOS approved the application because one of Becket students slated to attend Smith Voc. H.S. will not attend Smith. He also indicated that the bus company is able to accommodate the applicant. Chris moved to approve the Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Nonresident tuition application submitted to the Town on 8-7-19 for one student to attend Smith Vocational & Agricultural H.S. during 2019-2020. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

7. 1Berkshire letter of support

Michael moved to authorize the Town Administrator to send a letter of support for 1Berkshire (which promotes Economic Development (the Town had sent a letter of support to 1Berkshire in the past). Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

8. BOS to acknowledge Judith Cromwell's resignation from the Becket Cultural Council effective August 3, 2019

The BOS announced that Judith Cromwell tendered her resignation from the Becket Cultural Council effective August 3, 2019. The BOS expressed kind wishes for Ms. Cromwell and signed a letter of appreciation to her.

9. BOS's Comments and Announcements

Chris indicated that he will attend the Conservation Commission's upcoming meeting (discussion on an application for mechanical weed harvesting at Buckley Dunton) but will be doing so personally at the request of a friend, and not as a representative of the Board of Selectmen

Michael inquired about a grader that he regards as an eyesore located at Jester Lane. During discussion, it was clarified that this grader does not belong to the Town and belongs to a contractor working on Sherwood Forest Roads.

The BOS gave Chris the green light to explore how and where to erect a Town-owned windmill to generate revenue (Otis has a windmill which yields approx. \$53,000 per month). The town's zoning regulations restrict windmills.

10. Town Administrator's Report

Bill C. provided an update of several items that he has been working on:

- FY2018 Audit – Finishing up final items. Working with UMASS Boston on part 2 – forecasting. He is working on forecasting with the Town Treasurer, Town Accountant and Assessing Consultant.

- Town of Becket Financial Policies – Dan Parnell (Finance Committee Chair) discussed this with him today.
 - Joint meeting with Finance Committee to start @ 6pm 9/11. This meeting will also include the Police Chief's Police Department staffing recommendation.
- Tax title auction – getting fees, dates from auctioneers
- Charging stations –are installed as of today. Michael brought up that to make it economical for users, Bill C. will look into users paying by the kilowatt.
- TH Kitchen renovation – demolition has finished. Delivery of countertops will occur tomorrow or Friday of this week.
- Highway position posted
- EMT interviews Friday
- 21 Maple Street – White Wolf to complete work – Bill E. awaits an update.
- Telematics grant (Fuel Consumption) application was submitted.
- MMA Legislative Breakfast 9/20/19 in Community Room
- Census 2020 Al Blake is Becket's representative – will send a flier in the mail with local census. The BOS is amenable to having a tax stuffer for this due to the importance for all to partake in the 2020 census
- Historical Commission microfiche reader to be declared surplus (will put on September agenda)
- Chris will pen the Selectmen's column in the September Becket Bulletin.
- Energy Committee Informational Session is on Saturday
- The BOS will discuss its Public Comment Policy and consider placing Public Comment earlier on the agenda at a future meeting.
- Bill C. has been researching Highway Department structuring. Discussion ensued with ideas on longevity, skill-sets, abilities, pay step increases to motivate continued employment, job descriptions, and clarity on who is in charge. Bill E. stated he thinks it is important that before allowing employees to discuss a grievance with the Board of Selectmen, they should try to work out their concern internally by meeting with their supervisors, and if necessary, the Town Administrator who oversees the Department heads.
- The Town Administrator will address and is progressing on generating a proposed arrangement for the Highway Superintendent's accrued leave payout.
- Discussion ensued re: the Police Chief's staffing recommendations for the Police Dept. The Finance Committee will discuss this at their September 5th meeting, and will hopefully provide their recommendation to the BOS at the joint Finance Committee / BOS meeting scheduled on September 11th. Bill E. who had served as the Becket Chief of Police in the past, provided background about the duties of the police chief and officers, and developments of the Becket Police Department which received federal funding to increase its police coverage in 1996. Bill E. indicated that the number of breaking and entering events decreased significantly after the town increased police coverage. Bill E. stated that he personally favors the Police Chief's recommendation.
- Bill C. awaits communication from the owners of Camp Greylock re: town's interest in purchasing the parking lot at the Town Beach. Bill C. will pursue. The BOS suggested sending a letter to Camp Greylock.

11. Public Input

None.

12. Any other business to come before the Board

The BOS did not take action on Becket Woods Notification of their Annual Meeting (with materials including proxies for two parcels) scheduled on 8-31-19.

Michael moved to authorize an amended payrate (\$15.68 to \$18.45) for Meredydd Cooper in the Ambulance Department who completed training to move from basic to advance EMT. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Chris initiated discussion about the Marion Father's PILOT which Bill C. will pursue.

13. Correspondence • Planning Board Notice of Public Hearing scheduled on 9-11-19 re: Special Permit application for the reconstruction of a house at 22 Dragon Way

The BOS reviewed the above captioned correspondence.

14. BOS to review and sign payable warrants

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

15. BOS to adjourn the Meeting

Michael moved to adjourn. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously. At 8:14 p.m., Bill E. adjourned the meeting.

Date of Approval

9-4-2019

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*


William Elovirta, *Chairperson*

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- 8-7-19 Meeting Minutes
- 08-21-2019 Town Administrator's report
- 1Berkshire REDO Application letter
- Andrea Nix - appointment application - Cultural Council
- Becket Woods Community Association Annual Meeting (scheduled on 8-31-19) Notice & Proxy
- Confidential document - Chapt. 74 Vocational Technical Education Non-resident Tuition application for Smith Vocational H.S.pdf
- Judith Cromwell - 8-3-19 letter resignation from Cultural Council
- Planning Board - PH Notice scheduled 9-11-19 re John & Blanche Lennington re 22 Way to reconstruct house after fire
- Susan Purser – appointment application – Alternate Energy Committee member