

**Town of Becket  
Board of Selectmen Meeting  
7:00 p.m., Sept. 4, 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, Lawrence Abrams, Evan Triantafilidis (Berkshire Record), Dave and Kathy Dickinson, Kathy Baugh, Laurel Burgwardt, Alison Dixon

**1. Call to order**

Bill called the meeting to order at 7pm. He indicated that the BOS and Evan Triantafilidis from the Berkshire Record were recording the meeting.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Bill E. led the pledge of allegiance.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Chris moved to approve the minutes for the 8-21-19, 4-4-18 and 4-18-18 meetings. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Bob Gross presented an update of the Broadband project. Topics included:

1. The Town received four permits for the Mass. turnpike crossings. The work is scheduled to occur in the next couple of weeks. Bob has informed the Highway Superintendent and Police Chief. The Police Chief will determine detail arrangements.
2. Hut – The town did not receive a Green Communities grant to update its Town Hall HVAC. The hut requires climate control. The Broadband Adhoc Group is exploring options including using the MBI hut at the Athenaeum.
3. Contracts between the Town of Becket and Private Communities, and Town of Becket and other homeowners outlining financial responsibilities, payment process and town subsidies) relating to obtaining Broadband will be developed. Broadband Ad hoc Group Member Jeff Piemont is an attorney and will discuss and work with Town Counsel.
4. MakeReady options in private communities (including Becket Woods).
5. Bidding for construction is estimated to occur on Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> and bid openings estimated to occur mid-November.

**5. Departmental Reports**

- **Volunteer Fire Dept. July 2019 Report**
- **Highway Dept. Report dated August 29, 2019**

The BOS reviewed the above captioned reports.

**6. BOS to consider voting to declare Surplus Items:**

- **Historical Commission's Griscombe Microfilm Reader Model PB Serial Number 2808 – The Historical Commission would like to donate this equipment to an organization.**
- **Vehicle #7 2007 Chevy Silverado – The Highway Superintendent recommends auctioning this vehicle.**

Michael moved to declare the above captioned items surplus. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Larry Abrams' request for discussion relating to intervention with DOT's Working Group Study on a possible interchange on the Mass Pike between exits 2 and 3 on Algeria Road.**

Larry Abrams presented materials (listed under **Documents discussed at this meeting**) to request BOS intervention relating to the Coalition to Oppose an Algeria Road Interchange. Larry Abrams and other members of the Coalition to Oppose an Algeria Road Interchange discussed their opposition to the I-90 Interchange on Algeria Road in Otis. Mr. Abrams and the Coalition to Oppose an Algeria Road Interchange indicated that they are distressed that they have not received any response from MassDOT and the I-90 Interchange Study Committee. Mr. Abrams asked the Board of Selectmen for assistance so that the Coalition will have an opportunity to publically voice their concerns as part of the MassDOT's information gathering and decision-making process as it relates to installing a Mass90 interchange in Otis.

During discussion, the BOS described the process for instituting a heavy vehicle exclusion. The Selectmen explained that they originally requested that MassDOT explore a car-only (no trucks) interchange in the region but was told that this is not allowed since Mass90 is federally funded.

Bill Elovirta is the Town of Becket's representative who attends the I-90 Interchange Study. He will confirm that MassDOT will have a process to allow for input at Public Hearings.

The consensus of the BOS is that it is premature to take a position to present to the Mass90 Interchange Study Committee. In order to convey the concerns of Becket residents, the Selectmen will send a letter to Representative Pignatelli and Senator Hinds with a copy of the afore-referenced packet. The BOS will review the letter at its next meeting.

**8. BOS's Comments and Announcements**

Bill E. reported on a meeting he attended at the Becket Arts Center with one of its Co-Presidents. The BAC envisions operating year-round and would like to hire an Executive Director. The BAC will present to the Finance Committee and BOS a plan for additional municipal funding requests. This will include \$25,000.00 yearly town contributions toward an executive director's salary, and funding to upgrade the heating/ventilation systems and other repairs for the building. The town's lease for BAC occupation of 7 Brooker Hill Road ends 12-31-19. The BOS would like to have additional information from the BAC and discussed the extending the town's lease to the BAC to avoid any rush decisions.

Michael's items:

1. Bill C. advised that the Finance Committee will remove its 9-5-19 agenda item relating to the Police Chief's staffing recommendation. Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen discussion of the Chief of Police's staffing recommendations will occur during the FY21 budget cycle meetings.
2. Bill C. will arrange for the Highway Superintendent to trim the brush across the Becket Washington School at the bridge corner.

Chris: Bill C. advised that the town has arranged to hire a company to assist with complying with regulations pertaining to removing the oil tank at the Highway Garage.

#### **9. Town Administrator's Report**

Bill C. presented an update of several items for which he is currently working on:

- FY2018 Audit – Finishing up final items
- Working with UMASS Boston on part 2 – forecasting
- Town of Becket Financial Policies
  - Joint meeting to start @ 6pm 9/11
- Tax title auction – October 26, noon at Town Hall
- Charging stations – waiting on Eversource – Thursday/Friday
- TH Kitchen renovation – installation done, waiting on counters
- Highway position – interviews done
- EMT position hired
- 21 Maple Street – work should be finished today or tomorrow
- Telematics grant – grant app approved
- MMA Legislative breakfast 9/20/19 in Community Room, RSVP to Beverly
- Solar on next week's agenda
- Reuse grant – will use to buy container if eligible
- Insulation for Fire Dept.

#### **10. Public Input**

Per Bob Gross's inquiry, Bill E. advised the Tax Title Auction will occur in the Community Room.

Laurel Burgwardt brought up 4 items:

1. The Town Administrator will investigate her request to move the historical sign located at 10 Brooker Hill Road so that it will not block the view of drivers.
2. Laurel remarked that the center of town (N. Becket Village) needs attention (brush cutting).
3. She requested that Plumb Road be widened and smoothed out. Bill E. advised that since it is a very expensive proposition, the town prioritizes widening roads that contain dwellings.
4. Laurel reported problems at the Transfer Station. She has observed permits/bag stickers not being checked and a resident reported to her that when the recycling bin was full, the users had been directed to dispose of their plastics in the hopper. The Town Administrator will discuss this with the Manager of the Transfer Station. Chris suggested that perhaps

coordination of recycling pickup may be improved.

**11. Any other business to come before the Board**

None

**12. Discussion of Public Input and Review and possible vote to modify the Town of Becket Guidelines for Board of Selectmen Meetings**

The BOS will discuss this matter at their 9-11-19 meeting.

**13. BOS to review and sign payable warrants**

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

**14. BOS to adjourn the Meeting**

Michael moved to adjourn. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously. At 8:45 p.m., Bill E. adjourned the meeting.

Date of Approval

9-11-2019

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*



William Elovirta, Chairperson

**Documents discussed at this meeting:**

- 08-21-2019 Town Administrator's report
- minutes for the 8-21-19, 4-4-18 and 4-18-18 meetings
- Volunteer Fire Dept. July 2019 Report
- Highway Dept. Report dated August 29, 2019
- 8-14-19 E-mail from Sandi Jarvis re: Historical Commission Microfilm Reader
- Town of Becket Guidelines for Board of Selectmen Meetings
- Materials provided from Larry Abrams (agenda item 7)
  1. Executive Summary: The Case Against The Algeria Road Interchange
  2. Pollock Letter: The Problems with Dot's Study/ The Effect on Bonny Rigg Hill Road/Community Outreach
  3. Berkshire Eagle Editorial: Time To Roll Out Mass DOT Report
  4. Berkshire Eagle Letter: DOT is "Slow-Playing" Berkshire Hill Towns
  5. Berkshire Eagle Letter: Keep Becket Congestion Free
  6. Berkshire Eagle Letter: Berkshire Pike Would Disrupt Woods/Wetlands
  7. Berkshire Eagle Letter: DOT Should Explore Alternative Turnpike Exit
  8. Feb. 11, 2019 to Gov. Baker, Rep Pignatelli, Adam Hinds and DOT Officials for Study/Working Group to Consider Better Alternative Sites
  9. Berkshire Eagle Letter: New Pike Exit is a Waste of Money
  10. New Pike Exit Will Harm Community