

**Town of Becket  
Board of Selectmen Meeting  
6:00 p.m., October 2, 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*  
Kristopher McDonough, *Chief of Police*; Christine Bleau, *Treasurer*

**Others Present:** MLP Manager Bob Gross, Sally Baumer, Kenneth Pettibone, Trae Balardini, Elizabeth Zipp, Madelaine Elovirta, Esther Balardini, Tom Balardini, Taren Balardini, Travis Mickle

**1. Call to order**

Bill E. called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He specified that the BOS was recording the meeting.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Bill E. led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Anticipated Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. After Executive Session, the Board of Selectmen will return to open session.**

After Bill E. declared that an open meeting may have a detrimental impact on the negotiating position of the public body, he moved for the BOS to enter Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. After Executive Session, the Board of Selectmen will return to open session. Chris seconded. Roll call vote: William Elovirta – yes, Michael Lavery – yes, and Chris Swindlehurst – yes. At 6:03 p.m., the BOS entered Executive Session.

At 6:48 p.m. the BOS returned from Executive Session.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

Chris moved to approve the 9-11-19 meeting minutes. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**5. BOS to review and possibly vote on Andrea Pecor's, and Sally Baumer's Appointment Application to serve on the Becket Cultural Council (effective through 6/30/2022).**

Chris moved to appoint Andrea Pecor and Sally Baumer to the Cultural Council effective 10-2-19 through 6-30-2022. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Sally Baumer introduced herself to the Board of Selectmen so that they would have a face to put to the name, and she indicated that she wanted to say how happy she is to be a full-time resident and to be part of something she knows she will enjoy.

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

MLP Manager Bob Gross recommended for the Town to participate in an Inter-Government Agreement (IGA). He indicated that signing this agreement would allow the town to apply for a Federal Government Grant re: Connecting to Broadband and the benefit to the town is that over a ten-year period, the Town may be eligible to receive up to ¼ of a million dollars for Broadband. He indicated that there is no downside to signing this agreement. Town Counsel reviewed the agreement and recommended signing the agreement. Bill moved to authorize the MLP Manager to sign the Intergovernmental Grant Administration Agreement relating to the Federal Communication Commission Connect America Grant Program between the City of Westfield Gas & Electric Light Department and the Town of Becket Municipal Light Plant. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Bob Gross provided an update:

- He explained that Westfield Gas & Electric (WG+E) indicated that the timeframe for construction may be greater than anticipated (28 months). He discussed possible scenario options for construction sequencing of Fiber Service Areas which will be something the Broadband Ad Hoc Group will discuss and ultimately provide recommendations for BOS decisions.
- Take-rates. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group may send a mailing to households to ascertain levels of interests for various broadband services and willingness to commit.
- Many of the Town of Washington's poles lack sufficient space between the utilities for make-ready. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will be mindful of this potential problem and will arrange to check poles in Becket.
- Becket has 3 out of its 46 utility licenses.
- Bob will see the Town Accountant to discuss a June 2019 Verizon invoice he only now received.
- Parsons Way Association wants underground utilities. Skyline Ridge wants poles.
- Jeff Piemont will provide information about use of Sonar Penetration to detect utility lines, rocks and ledge.
- WG+E has increased its underground estimates.
- Make-ready at the Overpasses

**7. BOS to vote on approving the Town Administrator's Recommendation for appointments:**

**Kenneth Pettibone and Trae Balardini – Probationary Part-time Reserve Officer (effective 10-2-19 through 6-30-19)**

Chief McDonough fielded the BOS's questions and spoke in support of appointing Kenneth Pettibone and Trae Balardini Probationary Part-time Reserve Officers. Police Chief McDonough indicated that Kenneth Pettibone had worked for the Becket Police Department in the past and currently works for Hinsdale and Otis, he is a Becket resident and knowledgeable about Becket Police Department operations as well as the roads within Becket. Police Chief stated that Trae Balardini is a 2018 graduate of the Berkshire County Sheriff's Office's Police Academy (Pittsfield, MA), he worked as a Gate Attendant at the Town Beach, and as a new officer, under the training of the Becket Police Department, he would acquire good habits,

Michael moved to approve the Town Administrator's recommendation to appoint Kenneth Pettibone Probationary Part-time Reserve Officer (effective 10-2-19 through 6-30-20).

Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Police Chief McDonough indicated that it is likely he will shorten Mr. Pettibone's probationary period due to his prior experience with the Town.

Michael moved to approve the Town Administrator's recommendation to appoint Trae Balardini Probationary Part-time Reserve Officer (effective 10-2-19 through 6-30-20). Chris seconded. Motion carried. Due to that Trae Balardini is his grandson, Bill Elovirta recused himself from this vote.

**8. BOS to vote on Amended Pay Rates for Police Department**

- **Police Officer Shaun Courtney who has successfully completed his probationary period**
- **Possible new hires Kenneth Pettibone and Trae Balardini**

The BOS acknowledged the Police Chief's letter stating that Shawn Courtney has successfully completed his probationary period and that he recommends that his status be changed to Part-time Reserve Police Officer. Bill moved to accept the Town Administrator's recommendation to appoint Shawn Courtney Part-time Reserve Police Officer effective 10-2-19 through 6-30-20. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Michael moved to approve the Amended pay rate for police department employees Shaun Courtney (\$18.99 per hour), and new hires Kenneth Pettibone (\$17.99 per hour) and Trae Balardini. (\$17.99 per hour). Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Due to that Trae Balardini is his grandson, Bill Elovirta recused himself from this vote.

**9. Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**

There was no public input at tonight's meeting.

**10. BOS to discuss and possibly vote on Financial Policies.**

The BOS tabled this agenda item until the 10-16-19 meeting.

**11. BOS to review and vote on approving Jacob Pillow Dance Festival Inc.'s One Day Wine & Beer Permit Applications for events occurring on 11-9-19 and 10-26-19**

After reviewing the above captioned applications, Chris moved to approve One Day Wine & Beer Permits in conjunction with Jacob Pillow Dance Festival Inc.'s events occurring on 11-9-19 and 10-26-19 (both from 8:00 p.m. till 11:00 p.m.). Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Michael brought up that he and Bill C. are looking into Mass. Government containers for the Transfer Station, and in October he anticipates they will complete a Mass Trails Grant application.

Bill: Last year, the Interim Town Administrator surveyed liquor license fees from several surrounding towns. On 10-16-19 the BOS will review and may vote to increase the Town's liquor license fees.

Bill: On 10-16-19 the BOS will discuss the Town's Beach Permitting Policy. The Collectors and Parks & Recreation Committee have been invited to provide their input.

Bill: He would like the Town to meet with officials from Marion Brothers (assumed ownership of the Kushi Institute) and Jacob's Pillow to discuss PILOT agreements. He indicated that the valuation of Jacob Pillow's property has increased substantially during the past few years.

Per Bill E.'s inquiry, Bill C. indicated that as of today, the Arts Center has not returned its lease renewal paperwork to the Town.

Bill reported that Al Blake inquired if the BOS had set up a Community Energy Aggregation Committee. The BOS agreed with Bill C.'s suggestion to ask if the Becket Energy Committee would be willing use their expertise to analyze options and provide their recommendation to the BOS for Community Energy Aggregation.

Bill announced that at today's meeting in Lenox, due to costs and environmental impact, the MassDOT Interchange Study Committee eliminated the Algeria Road location as a potential Mass 90 exit.

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

The Town Administrator provided an update of several items for which he has been working on:

- FY2018 Audit – OPEB portion Complete
  - \$4.5 million liability
  - Will be looking into options
- Working with UMASS Boston on part 2 – forecasting, still underway
- Tax title auction – October 26, noon at Town Hall – information on Sullivan and Sullivan website and Town website
- Charging stations – Eversource/Maverick connections/commissioning
- TH Kitchen renovation – cabinet installation done, waiting on counters. Should be Friday
- Telematics grant – grant app approved, waiting on delivery
- Solar RFP out. Pre-bid meeting 9/30, due in Oct.
- Reuse grant – not eligible for container
- HVAC/Generator @ Town Hall
  - Article 21 of 2015 ATM approved \$120,000 to be borrowed
  - Town has ~\$40,000
  - Connections to broadband – HUT in server room needs generator and cooling
  - Question for counsel – can this be rolled into broadband authorization?  
Bill C. will contact Tom Bowman who had conducted the feasibility study on the Town Hall HVAC system.

### **14. Any other business to come before the Board**

The BOS signed a letter of appreciation to Barbara Wacholder who due to term limits was required to step down from the Cultural Council.

The BOS signed a letter to the Planning Board to express the BOS's recommendation for deletion of Bylaw 4.3.3. Accessory Structures.

The BOS agreed that the revised (9-11-19) BOS Meeting Guidelines may be placed on the website.

**15. Correspondence:**

- **9-16-19 Planning Board Notice of Decision re: 9-11-19 Public Hearing re: Construction of Addition into the side setback areas to square off the house at 34 Western Avenue – approval granted**
- **9-16-19 Planning Board Notice of Decision re: 9-11-19 Public Hearing re: reconstruction of home located at 22 Dragon Way – approval granted**
- **Becket Woods Notice of Continuation of the 8-31-19 Annual Meeting and request to return proxies.**
- **9-18-19 MassDOT re: Bridge Inspection Quarry Rd. / Cushman Brook B-03-45 (03A)**
- **09-20-19 Attorney General re: Open Meeting Law Complaint re: 2-11-19**
- **09-11-19 Attorney General re: Open Meeting Law Complaint re: 9-5-18 and 10-3-18**

In response to the Attorney General's Open Meeting Law Complaint relating to 2-11-19:

1. Michael moved to approve the BOS 2-11-19 meeting minutes. Bill E. seconded. Motion carried with Chris abstaining. Chris was not present at the 2-11-19 meeting.
2. The BOS signed a letter to the Office of the Attorney General with a copy of the 2-11-19 meeting minutes.

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

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

**17. BOS to adjourn the Meeting**

Michael moved to adjourn. Chris seconded. Motion carried. At 8:03 p.m., Bill E. adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Beverly Gilbert, *Recording Secretary*

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on 10-16-19 Date

Signed by   
William H. Elovirta, Board of Selectmen Chairperson

**Documents discussed at the Meeting:**

- 2-11-19 and 9-11-19 Meeting Minutes
- Andrea Pecor application for Becket Cultural Council
- Sally F Baumer appointment application Becket Cultural Council
- Correspondence as listed above
- Letter of appreciation to Barbara Wacholder for serving on the Cultural Council
- Financial Policies Manual
- Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival One-day wine & beer apps 11-9 & 10-26-10
- Jacob's Pillow One day liquor license applications for events occurring on 11-9 & 10-26-19
- Agreement between the Town and Westfield IGA FCC 10.1.19
- Town Administrator's Report