

**Town of Becket  
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes  
7:00 p.m., November 6, 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 Bob Gross, Madelaine Elovirta (Parks & Recreation Committee); Rita Furlong (Parks & Recreation Committee), Jenn Beatty, Adele Levine (Co-Chair Becket Arts Center), Susie Dworkin (Co-Chair Becket Arts Center), Mary Cohen, Alison Atlas, Robert Cohen, Jeffrey Atlas

**1. Call to order**

Bill E. called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. 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 10-16-19 meeting minutes. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Parks & Recreation Committee to discuss and recommend for the Town to acquire land on Maple Street**

Parks & Recreation Committee Chairperson Rita Furlong discussed the Parks & Recreation Committee's recommendation for the Town to acquire land on Maple Street. The Parks & Recreation Committee discussed the following documents with the BOS.

- Becket Map 206 highlighting Parcels 89 (Town-owned 110 acres), and 88 (Ray Robert owns this 5.1 acre parcel)
- Assessor Property cards for 2 Maple Street Parcels (Map 206, Block 89 and Map 206, Block 88)
- Parks & Recreation letter proposing for the BOS to send a written offer to Ray Roberts of Dalton, for the Town of Becket to purchase his property. The Parks & Recreation Committee's letter lists potential uses of Mr. Robert's property.

The BOS is amenable to considering exploring the purchase of this parcel or a portion of the parcel. Discussion ensued about interest in a portion approximately 150' x 250' adjoining the existing North Becket Park to use for parking for the park and overflow parking for school functions. The Selectmen agreed they would need to learn about the 21E status as part of the process to determine whether this idea is viable. The BOS will draft a letter of inquiry to Ray Robert for discussion at the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**5. Becket Arts Center Draft Proposal for an agreement between the Town of Becket, Town of Washington and Becket Arts Center**

Susie Dworkin and Adele Levine, both Co-Presidents of the Becket Arts Center, discussed and fielded questions regarding Becket Arts Center's Draft proposal for an agreement between the

Town of Becket, Town of Washington and Becket Arts Center. In order to hire a full-time Executive Director and expand to year-round operations, the Becket Arts Center is requesting for the Town of Becket to contribute up to \$25,000 (minus what the Town of Washington contributes) per year starting FY2021, and to agree to a 5-year extension of their lease with a \$5,000 annual allowance for reimbursements to cover costs of repair, replacement and upkeep of the building. Bill Caldwell indicated that the Finance Committee will discuss this on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The BOS indicated that they would like to receive feedback from the Finance Committee and the Town of Washington on this proposal.

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

Bob Gross, MLP Manager, provided an update to the BOS. This update included the following topics:

- The Broadband will not switch from Westfield Gas & Electric (Owners Project Manager) to Holyoke Gas & Electric. Westfield Gas & Electric is estimating 22 months to build the entire network. Some of the FSAs will be lit up sooner. Holyoke did not offer a faster timeline. It is anticipated that bidding will occur in December and construction will commence in February or March.
- Westfield Gas & Electric is checking the wire mid-span between poles.
- Becket Woods has a site visit with Eversource and Westfield Gas & Electric on Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> at 1:30 p.m. to discuss underground/trenching options.
- Town Counsel advised that separate easements must be created for Becket Woods and six other areas.
- Skyline Ridge authorized a pole.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group discussed letters re: estimates for subsidies to be sent to Underground groups, homeowners associations, and individuals belonging to homeowners associations.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is looking into contracting a service to use radar to determine ledge.
- The state has added five million dollars for Broadband and may offer municipalities participating in their Last Mile program \$500 per drop subsidy for 70 percent of the initial premises that participate in the initial Broadband sign-ups.
- The Hut will be located at the Town Hall Pavilion with construction to begin in December. There will be a site visit with an architect and Westfield Gas & Electric to determine the plans for the hut and generator.
- To facilitate marketing, Jenn Beatty designed a website for Becket Broadband [www.becketbroadband.org](http://www.becketbroadband.org) The website will include frequently asked questions, contact information, and will include a link to a survey to aid with the planning process and help determine which FSAs will likely have the greatest take-rates. There will be a 2-page tax insert. One side will provide an update on the Broadband project, and the other side will contain a survey which may be also be completed on-line. Bob Gross provided a draft copy of the tax insert and indicated that the website is being tweaked.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will discuss funding/burden of debt with the BOS after the bidding for construction occurs.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will provide a recommendation whether to use WiredWest as the operator.

**7. Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item)**  
None

8. **Assessors Staffing - Position Description and Recruitment of Assessor's Clerk**  
Bill Elovirta moved for the BOS to accept the Town Administrator's position description and recommendation for the Recruitment of the Assessor's Clerk position on the condition that the Finance Committee approves. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
9. **BOS to review and possible vote to amend the Beach Permitting Policy**  
Bill E. moved to approve the amended Beach Permitting Policy. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
10. **BOS to review and vote on Approval of the Town of Becket Financial Policies Manual**  
Michael moved to approve the Town of Becket Financial Policies Manual. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
11. **ABCC Seasonal Population estimate as of 7-10-2020**  
Michael moved to provide 9,000 to the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission as the estimate of the Town of Becket's temporary seasonal population as of 7-10-2020. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
12. **BOS to review and possibly vote on Selectmen's License Fees.**  
Bill moved to adopt the following Selectmen's miscellaneous license fees effective January 1, 2020. Motion carried unanimously. The BOS will give a copy of the license fees to the Board of Health.

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Amusement Devise (per device/category) | \$ 25.00 |
| Auctioneer                             | \$ 50.00 |
| Auctioneer (Special One Day)           | \$ 50.00 |
| Auto Dealer Class I                    | \$100.00 |
| Auto Dealer Class II                   | \$100.00 |
| Auto Dealer Class III                  | \$100.00 |
| Bowling Alley (per Alley)              | \$ 10.00 |
| Common Victualler                      | \$ 25.00 |
| Conveyance Comm. (per truck)           | \$ 10.00 |
| Entertainment Annual (6 Day)           | \$ 50.00 |
| Entertainment Annual (Sunday)          | \$ 50.00 |
| Entertainment (One Day)                | \$ 15.00 |
| Inn Holder                             | \$ 25.00 |
| Pool/Billiards (per machine)           | \$ 25.00 |
| Lodging House                          | \$ 25.00 |

13. **BOS to review Departmental Reports**
  - Building Inspector – July 2019 through September 2019
  - 10/30/19 Report of the Highway Superintendent

The BOS reviewed the above captioned reports. Bill Elovirta indicated that he wants department heads to submit their reports in time for the 2<sup>nd</sup> BOS monthly meeting.
14. **BOS to review and approve Tax Stuffer(s)**  
Michael moved to authorize two tax inserts: 1) Sherwood Forest Road District tax stuffer

regarding voting rights expansion for property owners in the SFRMD and 2) Becket Broadband. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**15. BOS to review and vote on Highway Superintendent's recommendation for Winter 2019/2020 Road Closures.**

Michael moved to approve the Highway Superintendent's recommendation for Winter 2019/2020 Road Closures as listed below. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Bonny Rigg Hill Road from house # 982 to Otis Town line.
2. Corey Road from Captain Whitney to end.
3. George Carter Road from house # 1304 to Jacobs Ladder Rd. (Rte. 20).
4. Johnson Road from house # 733 to Otis Town line.
5. Plumb Road from house # 677 to house number # 398 (middle narrow section).
6. Tyne Road from house # 679 to Fred Snow Rd.
7. Tyringham Road from house # 358 to Tyringham Town line.

Signs will be placed at points of closure to alert drivers of no maintenance beyond that point. No maintenance will be provided from 11/14/2019 to 05/01/2020

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

None

**17. Town Administrator's Report**

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

- FY2018 Audit -nearly complete
- OPEB
  - \$4.5 million liability
  - PARS - will present to FinCom, Allows for investment with little work
- Working with UMASS Boston on part 2 -forecasting, gathering info
- Tax Title auction -23 properties sold. If all close, the town will receive \$118,000
  - When to have next auction
- Charging stations –operating. DOR to advise on account the TOB should establish for collecting user fees.
- Telematics grant -grant app approved, waiting on delivery
- Broadband Hut/Pavilion
- Solar RFP -no bids received
- Green Communities Annual Report
- HVAC/Generator@Town Hall
  - Article 21 of 20 15 ATM approved \$120,000 to be borrowed
  - Town has -\$40,000
- Berkshire Managers 11/5
- STAM 11/6
- MRF info session 11/7
- DOT bridge visit -Quarry Rd.
- Backhoe delivered
- Ambulance Garage floor – received engineering report.

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

The BOS will provide a copy of a memo to Cemetery Commissioner Bill Cavanaugh which reports a voicemail praising the fine condition of the North Becket Cemetery and expressing appreciation for the care involved in its upkeep.



**19. Correspondence:**

- CBRSD Continuing Disclosure Certificate in connection with the issuance of its \$32,005,000 General Obligation State Qualified School bonds dated 11-1-2019
- MIIA Health Benefits Trust Medex Renewal Proposal (effective 1/1/2020 – 12/31/2020). The Town Administrator authorized the Medex Renewal rates on 10/22/2019.

The BOS reviewed the above listed Correspondence.

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

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

**21. BOS to vote to enter into Executive Session for discussion and possible approval of Executive Session Minutes as explained below. The BOS will not return to Open Meeting.**


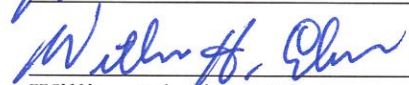
- October 2, 2019 Executive Session Minutes– BOS to approve but not release in compliance with MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property. Matter still pending.
- July 3, 2019 Executive Session Minutes – BOS to approve but not release in compliance with MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (5), to investigate charges of criminal conduct or to consider the filing of criminal complaint. Matter still pending
- September 21, 2018 Executive Session Minutes – BOS to approve but not release in compliance with MGL Chapter 30A Section 21 (a) (3) – To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. Matter still pending.

Bill Elovirta read the above captioned agenda item and moved to go into Executive Session and to not return to open meeting. Michael seconded.

Roll call: Bill Elovirta – aye, Michael Lavery – aye, and Chris Swindlehurst – aye.

At 8:47 p.m., the BOS went into Executive Session.

Date of Approval

 November 20, 2019  
  
William Elovirta, Chairperson

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*

**Documents discussed at the meeting:**

- ABCC Seasonal Population estimate as of 7-10-2020
- Assessors job description Nov 2019
- Becket Arts Center Draft Proposal for an agreement between the Town of Becket, Town of Washington and Becket Arts Center.PDF
- BOS Agenda 110619
- BOS meeting minutes 101619
- Building Inspector Report July 2019 through Sept. 2019
- CBRSD Continuing Disclosure Certificate document
- FINANCIAL POLICIES MANUAL\_09172019112539
- Insert from SFRMD for Dec Tax Mailing
- Highway Dept. Report 10-30-19

- MIIA Health Benefits Trust Medex Renewal Proposal
- Parks & Recreation recommendation to acquire land on Maple St memo, property cards, and maps
- Policy BOS Beach Permitting policy approved at 12-6-2017 & revised on 12-20-2017, draft revisions for 11-6-19 meeting to show changes requested
- Selectmen license fees
- TA Report 11-6-19
- Highway Superintendent's Winter 2019-2020 Road Closures Recommendations