

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
7:00 p.m., November 20, 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: Joseph Burke, Russell Burke, Pat Mullins, Gerry Cormier

1. Call to order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Bill led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Approval of Minutes

Michael moved to approve the minutes for the May 2, 2018, August 1, 2018 and August 28, 2018 meetings. Bill seconded. Motion carried with Chris abstaining due to that he was not present at those meetings.

Chris moved to approve the minutes for the November 6, 2019 meeting. 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 provided an update via e-mail to the BOS. Several items included in his update included:

- Construction bids will be opened on November 26th, at Westfield Gas & Electric. Bob Gross and Bill Caldwell will attend.
- There are problems with two of the MA Turnpike crossings. Still waiting to get the details. We are waiting to hear from DOT regarding a redesign for one of the Route 20 locations. Hopefully they will be completed before the ground is frozen.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group members are actively working on the hut. We hope to have the exterior excavation and repaving done in the next few weeks. Becket's Building & Grounds Technician David Shorey continues with interior construction.

5. Patricia Mullins from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to address the BOS to seek a vote of approval to submit a FY20 CDBG Grant application.

Pat Mullins stated that the FY20 CDBG Grant Applications will be due in late February or March and asked if the BOS wishes to apply. She described and fielded questions about

the program. She briefly described the status of the FY17 CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Grant project: The Town obtained a \$600,000 grant and provided \$60,000 through Community Preservation funding. Eighteen units have been completed. There were 33 applicants of which 15 were eligible that were not selected for the grant.

Michael moved for the Town of Becket to specify its interest for Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to proceed with the FY20 Community Development Block Grant Application for housing rehabilitation as outlined by Pat Mullins. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Pat had asked if the Town wishes to apply with another community. It was the consensus of the BOS that it serves no benefit for Becket to join with another community since there is ample need within Becket.

Pat provided a copy of the FY17 Becket CDBG Program Grievance Policy. She described the tiered process which includes a Citizen Advisory Committee. Her recommendation is for the BOS to appoint a three member committee. Chris indicated his willingness to serve and he stated that he thinks his background in construction would be useful. On December 4, 2019, the BOS will discuss and possibly vote on appointments for a Citizen Advisory Committee. The Citizen Advisory Committee meets and may render a decision if a complainant or another affected party wishes to appeal the CDBG Program Manager's decision to respond to a formal written complaint.

Pat will attend the BOS's December 18th meeting. She will share information she has acquired from her attendance at a December 9th grant informational session.

6. **Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**
None.
7. **BOS to discuss and possibly vote on responding to Community Health Care's request for placement of Community Health Care Mobile Unit on Town-owned property**
Chris moved to approve and welcome Community Health Care's request to place a Mobile Health Unit once a month in the following Town-owned parking lots:
 1. Preferred location: Town Park Pavilion Parking lot next to the Town Hall, 557 Main Street
 2. When Summer Camp is in session, the Mobile Health Unit may locate at the North Becket Fire Station Parking lot, 108 Washington StreetMichael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
8. **BOS to review and vote to sign letter to Ray Robert to inquire about 51 Maple Street (Map 206, Block 88) Property due to possible interest**
The BOS discussed with Gerry Cormier its draft letter to Ray Robert inquiring about the availability of his parcel located at 51 Maple Street due to that the BOS is specifically interested in a portion approximately 150' x 250' adjoining the existing North Becket Park for use as overflow parking for school functions. Mr. Cormier, a tenant of 51 Maple Street, has the first right to purchase the property. At this time, Mr. Cormier stated that he does not have an agreement with Mr. Robert. Mr. Cormier indicated that he does not have a problem with the BOS sending the letter to Mr. Robert and that should he (Mr. Cormier) acquire the property, he would be amenable to working out an arrangement with the Town

of Becket. Chris also discussed the potential for an easement on this property for access to Town-owned land.

Chris moved to send the letter to Mr. Ray Robert as drafted. Michael seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

9. BOS to acknowledge Letter of Retirement:

- Bill Girard, Building Inspector / Zoning Enforcement Officer, effective February 1, 2020 (last day of work: January 31, 2020).

The BOS acknowledged Bill Girard's notification of his upcoming retirement, and signed a letter of appreciation to thank him for his service.

Bill Elovirta indicated that when the Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer's job description is reviewed, he would like the update to list that duties include initiating enforcement of the building codes and zoning regulations observed and that a written complaint would not be a prerequisite for enforcement.

10. Update: Recruitment of Assessor's Clerk

Bill Caldwell indicated that Jessica Perotti (currently the Clerk of the Board of Health/Planning Board and ZBA Committees) has applied for the internal posting and has been accepted to work as the Assessor Clerk. She will continue her employment as the Planning Board's Clerk. Effective December 9, 2019, Jessica will work four days per week as the Assessor's Clerk and one day per week as the Clerk to the Planning Board. Jessica will continue receiving her current payrate through June 30, 2019. Bill Caldwell will recruit to fill the Board of Health/Zoning Board of Appeals Clerk opening. This position will be up to eighteen hours per week and may entail providing assistance to the Conservation Commission.

11. BOS to review Departmental Reports

- Ambulance Department - October 2019
- TBA

The BOS reviewed the Ambulance Department's October 2019 report. The Town Administrator will request reports from the Fire Department and Animal Control Officer.

12. BOS's Comments and Announcements

Chris brought up a Town vehicle for the Fire Chief to use for inspections and town business. Bill C. indicated that the town is using all of its vehicles (the older cruiser is being used for Details and will be used for Broadband related details). The Town earns money for use of the older cruiser during details. The Fire Chief's capital plan request submitted to the Town Administrator included \$60,000 for purchase of a Fire Department vehicle.

Chris inquired if a Foreman was assigned at the Town Garage. Bill Caldwell will discuss this with the Highway Superintendent.

- 13. BOS to discuss and possibly vote on the Town Administrator's merit increase**
In accordance with Bill Caldwell's employment contract, Michael moved to approve the Town Administrator's annual salary at \$78,000 effective January 1, 2020. Chris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

14. Town Administrator's Report

The Town Administrator provided an update of items he is working on:

- OPEB
 - ~\$4.5 million liability
 - PARS - Meeting with PARS Rep Thursday
- Working with UMASS Boston on part 2 – forecasting, nearly complete. Waiting on CBRSD info for school debt.
- Tax Title auction – will send letter to all owners in TT. Another auction in spring
 - Waiting on 6 to close
- Telematics grant – grant app approved, waiting on delivery
- Broadband Hut – construction underway
- Green Communities Annual Report
- HVAC/Generator @ Town Hall
 - Article 21 of 2015 ATM approved \$120,000 to be borrowed
 - Town has ~\$40,000
- 11/21 meeting at Becket Woods with Eversource on MR project
- 11/26 Bid opening for Broadband Construction
- MRF Contract – 1/31/20 due. Bill suggested the BOS may wish to consider raising Transfer Station fees to help defray a significant increase in costs.
- MRF Meeting 11/21 in Northampton
- BAC Lease to be negotiated
- 12/4/19 6pm – Joint Meeting with FinCom and BAC
- Assessing Clerk – J. Perotti, position for Clerk of Committees – Health and ZBA (# hours) – discussed earlier in the meeting.

15. Any other business to come before the Board

It is Chris's turn to produce the Selectmen's column for the Becket Bulletin. The Democratic Committee will send a notice that additional Census workers (Elected Officials may not apply) are needed.

Bill Caldwell attended a Mass Trails DCR Grant writing workshop. Due to many restrictions in the DCR Grant program (Becket, in the eyes of this program, is an affluent community lacking diversity), he suggested that the Community Preservation Fund may be a more realistic way to fund a trail.

DOR gave information for setting up accounts for the Town Hall Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations: Bill C. is now in a position to arrange for the stations to issue user fees.

The BOS will consider ideas for the 2019 Annual Town Report cover.

The members of the BOS advised that they did not have any documents that relate to a public records request received today.

16. Correspondence:

- **11-11-2019 MassDOT re: National Bridge Inspection Standards Bridge Rating and Posting: No posting is required for Bridge No B-03-053 (Bonnie Rigg Hill Road / W BR Walker BK)**
- **11-15-2019 Becket Police Association re: 3rd Annual Children's Holiday party on 12-19-2018 and request for continued funding of this annual event.**

The BOS reviewed the above listed correspondence. The BOS signed a letter of appreciation to Nicole Miller and other members of the Becket Police Association and a letter of appreciation to Becket Chimney Corners YMCA & Outdoor Center.

17. BOS to review and sign payable warrants.

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

18. BOS to adjourn the Meeting

Michael moved to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded. At 8:47 p.m., Bill adjourned the meeting.

Approved by the Board of Selectmen on 12-4-2019 Date

Signed by



William H. Elovirta, Board of Selectmen Chairperson

Documents discussed at the Meeting:

- Correspondence listed above
- Minutes for Meetings: 11-6-19, 5-2-18, 8-1-18 & 8-28-18
- Town Administrator's Report
- BOS letter to Ray Robert
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission 12-21-2016 letter from Pat Mullins re: FY17 CDBG Grant Application
- FY Becket CDBG Program Grievance Policy
- Employment Agreement between the Town of Becket and William Caldwell
- BOS letter of appreciation to Nicole Miller and other members of the Becket Police Association
- BOS letter of appreciation to Becket Chimney Corners YMCA & Outdoor Center.
- Bill Girard Notification of Retirement
- BOS letter of appreciation to Bill Girard
- Ambulance Dept. October 2019 Report
- Mobile Health Care Unit e-mail request and information