

Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
6:00 p.m., January 8, 2020
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

Attendees

Board of Selectmen: William Elovirta (BE), *Chairperson*; Michael Lavery (ML), *Vice Chairperson* and Chris Swindlehurst (CS), *Clerk*

Staff: William Caldwell (BC), *Town Administrator*; Beverly Gilbert (BG), *Administrative Assistant*;

Broadband Ad Hoc Group Members: MLP Manager Bob Gross, Dan Parnell, Jeremy Dunn, Chuck Garman, & Jeff Piemont

Others Present: Jim Drawe (WiredWest Executive Director), Steve Carvalho, Stephen Santoro, and unnamed minor resident.

1. Call to order

BE called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He indicated that the BOS was recording the meeting. Michael Lavery was videotaping the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

BE led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Jim Drawe, Executive Director of WiredWest, MLP Bob Gross and other members of the Broadband Ad Hoc Group discussed three matters with the BOS:

- 1) The Town's option of contracting with WiredWest vs. Westfield Gas & Electric for its Internet Service Provider and Operator. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group specified that it unanimously supports for the Town to contract with WiredWest based on financial and administration advantages.
- 2) Status of the Contract between the Town of Becket and Westfield Gas & Electric for the construction of the Town's Broadband Network.
- 3) BOS decisions needed for the Town's Broadband Policy.

The following documents were discussed:

- Comparison of WG&E IGA and WW/WGE contract.
- Revenue Sharing Synopsis
- Budget Spreadsheet (Steady state model showing income and expenses when all towns are operational and assumes that the take rates do not change over time. Spreadsheet shows how changes budget during the ramp up of towns coming online).
- Policies to be considered by the BOS 1/8/20

CS moved for the Town of Becket to enter into a contract (through June 30, 2024) to authorize WiredWest to serve as Becket's Internet Service Provider and Network Operator. ML seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will continue discussion of the Town's Broadband Policy. It was agreed that the Broadband Ad Hoc Group will present a list of its recommended Broadband Policies for the BOS to consider approving at 6:00 p.m. on January 22, 2020.

4. Becket Arts Center Lease and Proposal

BC provided a copy of Becket Arts Center Lease to the BOS. BE recommended that the BOS approve the lease agreement between the Becket Arts Center (Tenant) and the Town of Becket (Landlord) from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2024, with the option to renew through December 31, 2029. ML seconded. Motion carried unanimously. BC will present the agreement to Arts Center to consider.

A discussion ensued about the Becket Arts Center's financial proposal. The BOS's position is that they would not favor recommending that the Town take on an on-going sizeable non-profit-related financial commitment in light of the town's upcoming school, broadband, and town capital obligations.

5. BOS to discuss and vote on possible approval of Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School Tuition for a new Becket resident

ML moved to approve the new Becket Resident's non-resident application to attend Smith Vocational & Agricultural High School during the 2019-2020 school year. CS seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Approval of Meeting Minutes

CS moved to approve the December 18, 2019 meeting minutes. ML seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

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

None.

8. BOS to discuss and possibly vote on appointment of members to the Citizen Advisory Committee.

The BOS tabled this agenda item until the January 22nd meeting.

9. Update on Recruitments: Board of Health/ZBA Clerk, Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer

BC advised that he hired Terese Lundberg as the Board of Health/ZBA Clerk with a start date of January 8, 2020. ML moved to approve Terese Lundberg's hourly rate at \$16.39. CS seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

BC provided the status of the Building Inspector recruitment. After BC obtains the Building Inspector's input, he will post the advertisement.

10. BOS to review Departmental Reports

- **TBA**

The BOS reviewed the Building Inspector's December 2019 report.

11. BOS's Comments and Announcements

CS initiated a discussion on a citizen's complaint he received concerning that individuals' perception that the Highway Department dispenses excessive salt on the winter roads. BC indicated that the Highway Department obtains guidelines about winter road treatments from Bay State Road trainings. CS expressed concern about the high salt content in the North Becket Village water supply.

The BOS agreed that ML and CS will attend the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's 5th Thursday dinner meeting (topic: Electric Cars and Charging Stations) on January 30th.

CS suggested educating town employees on the usefulness of the Telematics Grant's goals (reducing fuel use & waste).

For BOS review at the next meeting, BE will draft a letter addressed to local banks to encourage them to set up a branch or ATM in Becket.

12. Town Administrator's Report

BC discussed several items that he has been working on:

- OPEB
- Charging Stations – BC will aim to set up a special media event on the 1st or 2nd Thursday in February.
- UMASS Boston forecasting document – nearly complete. Waiting on one item
- Trails grant – working on application
- Broadband Hut – construction underway
- HVAC/Generator @ Town Hall
 - Article 21 of 2015 ATM approved \$120,000 to be borrowed
 - Town has ~\$40,000
 - Change language for cooling portion
- Broadband Construction – discussed earlier during the meeting.
- MIIA Grant – \$6,100 for speed trailer, worksite safety.
- Telematics Grant – received
 - \$6,500 to monitor driving patterns. 1 year term
- Dept. of Housing and Community Development
 - \$92,000 housing grant – main street project
 - Affordable housing project, Construct, Inc.
- Host Community Agreement
 - Grow Boys, LLC – cultivation

- Another potential cultivation facility
- MMA Conference – January 24/25
- MVP Workshop – January 11
- Budget requests due – will be working on budget
- Clerk of Committees – Tess Lundberg, started today – discussed earlier during the meeting
- CBRSD initial budget presented to SC tomorrow

13. Any other business to come before the Board

CS initiated discussion re: a town-owned windmill. Ideally, to avoid NIMBYism, the preference is to build within Becket.

BE authorized ML to vote at the January 25th MMA Business Meeting.

14. Correspondence:

- **12-10-2019 MassDOT Bridge Inspection Report B-03-053-(BU3) Bonnie Rigg Hill Road / W BR Walker Brook inspection dated 8-26-2019**
- **12-04-2019 Dept. of Housing & Community Development re: Small Town Housing Choice capital grant awarded up to \$94,544**

The BOS reviewed the above listed communications.

15. BOS to review and sign payable warrants.

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

16. BOS to adjourn the Meeting

CS moved to adjourn. ML seconded. Motion carried unanimously. At 9:04 p.m., BE adjourned the meeting.

Date Approved: 1-22-2020

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Secretary


William Elovirta, Chairperson

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- Authorized payrate form Terese Lundberg
- BAC Lease
- BAC proposal 12-30-19
- BOS Meeting draft minutes 121819
- Building Inspector Dec. 2019 report
- CBRSD letter 1-3-2020 re School Com meeting 1-9, budget
- DHCD 12-4-10 Small Town Housing Choice capital grant \$92,544
- Letter from student - request to attend Smith Vocational H.S.
- MassDOT Bridge Inspection letter 12-10-19 re B-03-053 (BU3) Bonny Rigg Hill Rd.- W BR Walker Br 8-26-19
- MMA Annual Meeting Credential vote form
- Broadband documents listed above