

**Town of Becket
Select Board Meeting Minutes
7:00pm, October 21, 2020
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees

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

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

Others (remote participation): Robert Benton, Nicholas Langone (Eversource)

Others (in person): Chris and Dennis Regan, Bob Gross (MLP Manager)

1. Call to order

BE called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He indicated that the BOS was recording the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

BE led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Potential discussion and vote re: Eversource's petition (6B030526Becket) to install three (3) solely owned poles with wires, cables and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across Dimmock Road. The poles are required to bring electrical service to #1110 Dimmock Road.

BE read Joseph Mitchell/Eversource's e-mail response he sent to BC. Mr. Mitchell had conveyed:

1. The pole set will be Make Ready for fiber optic infrastructures.
2. Eversource is a regulated utility under the Mass. Dept. of Public Utilities and Eversource is not permitted to waive the License Application fees. He indicated that Eversource extends licenses to other parties (phone, cable TV, municipalities, etc.) and this would set a dangerous present. The DPU is clear the electric rate payers are not to be subsidizing the efforts of other entities.
3. For the same reason as described above, Eversource is not able to waive the annual rental fee. The annual rental fee is part of the program to maintain/replace the utility poles that the lessee is relying upon.

BE moved to approve Eversource's petition (6B030526Becket) [to install three (3) solely owned poles with wires, cables and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across Dimmock Road with the understanding that the poles will be able to take fiber for broadband (Make Ready)], and to rescind the stipulation that there will be no license application fees for Make Ready costs CS. 2nd. Vote: unanimous.

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

MLP Manager Bob Gross provided the following update:

- The soft start of construction is scheduled for November 11, 2020.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group learned that the Town has utility lines crossing a railroad on High Street. To avoid incurring annual railroad assessments (that can be thousands of dollars per year), the Broadband Ad Hoc Group is discussing potential design changes with Westfield Gas & Electric.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is evaluating whether Dimmock Road and Camp Lenox should be Becket or Otis customers.
- Underground: Construction of Parsons Way started today.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is arranging an agreement for a resident on Becket West Road relating to installing poles. Poles will be placed on Becket West and William Holmes Roads.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group has ordered lawn and road signs and they will contact the Becket Washington Community Partnership.
- In order to clarify the process, the Broadband Ad Hoc Group members intend to meet a number of owners of premises to discuss their underground drops in the first FSA slated for construction. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will create Town issued ID tags and magnets for their cars so that owners of premises will be comfortable dealing with them.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group has been providing updates to Senator Hinds who has received communication from concerned citizens.
- The Select Board reviewed the Broadband Ad Hoc Group's Update. Bob Gross will change the wording in the first paragraph from town's broadband to town-owned broadband. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will e-mail the update to the <http://www.becketbroadband.org> subscribers and post it on their website. BC will post the update on the Town website <http://www.townofbecket.org> and send the update to subscribers of the town website and its MailChimp account.

5. Approval of the October 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes

ML moved to approve the October 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes. BE 2nd. Vote: 3-0.

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

There was no public input at tonight's meeting.

7. BOS to appoint interim Conservation Agent – Stacy Parsons effective 12/1/2020 to 3/31/2021

BC indicated that Stacy Parsons had served as Becket's Interim Conservation Agent a few years ago and he stated that Conservation Agent Mary Stucklen will be going on maternity leave. CS moved to appoint Stacy Parsons Interim Conservation Agent effective 12/1/2020 to 3/31/2021. ML 2nd. Vote: 3-0.

8. BOS to review Departmental Reports

- TBA

The BOS did not receive any departmental reports. BC indicated that the Animal Control Officer's report will be forthcoming.

9. BOS's Comments and Announcements

Discussion did not occur under this agenda item.

10. Board to discuss and possibly vote on the declaration of surplus equipment – police cruiser.

CS moved to accept BC's recommendation to declare the police cruiser (Old K-9) and various outdated Highway Department equipment as surplus equipment. ML 2nd. unanimous.

11. Town Administrator's Report

BC provided an update of several items that he has been working on:

- Ambulance Garage – Overhead Door is scheduled to complete the door (panel and track were ordered) on Election Day.
- Broadband Hut – build-out complete. Waiting on generator, inside materials
- Green Communities – annual report and project is still moving forward
- TH reopening: The Select Board and BC agreed to proceed cautiously: For the time-being, the Town Hall hours open to the public will remain the same.
- DER grant award – working with engineer.
- Ch. 90 reimbursement paperwork
- Sent out capital requests
- HMPG approved – reimbursements filed
- Prepping for paving at the Town Hall
- Town Hall heating system – BC advised that he anticipates the new heating system will soon be operating and the contractor was drying out water in the pipe. CS will contact the contractor.

12. Any other business to come before the Board

BE moved to approve the 2021 Amended Authorized payrates as listed below. CS 2nd. unanimous.

Matthew Marino, Advanced EMT

Rate of Pay: to \$18.91 per hour (Effective: Sept. 1, 2020)

Reason for increase: Completed EMT Advanced Certification (upgraded from EMT Basic)

Roseanna Lacas, Paramedic

Rate of Pay: to \$19.59 per hour (Effective: Oct. 14, 2020)

Reason for increase: Completed EMT Paramedic Certification (upgraded from EMT Basic)

Morgan McDonough, Paramedic

Rate of Pay: to \$19.59 per hour (Effective: Oct. 19, 2020)

Reason for increase: Completed EMT Paramedic Certification (upgraded from EMT Basic)

Stacy Parsons, Interim Conservation Agent

Rate of Pay: \$25.00 per hour (Effective: Dec. 1, 2020)

Reason: Ms. Parsons will work as a Temporary Employee. The Conservation Agent will be going on maternity leave.

BC provided a copy of the MIIA Health Benefits Trust renewal proposal for calendar year 2021 Medex 2 rates he had accepted. The overall rates decreased by 16.32 percent.

BC asked if the Select Board would want to consider reducing or waiving the 2021 Select Board licensing fees to provide relief to businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19 related restrictions. The Select Board reviewed a listing of 2020 Select Board licensing fees collected. BE moved to reduce the 2021 Select Board licensing fees including liquor, common victualler, six day/Sunday Entertainment and Auto Amusement by fifty percent due to COVID-19. CS 2nd: unanimous.

On Oct. 7th, the Select Board cancelled Trick or Treating 2020 in Becket due to COVID-19. The Volunteer Fire Department and Firemen's Association are sponsoring a drive-through Halloween event for Becket and Washington children. Members of the Volunteer Fire Department will hand out prepackaged candy at Fire Station 1, 108 Washington St., Becket from 6:30pm till 7:30pm on Sat., Oct. 31st. There will be a photo opportunity against a seasonal backdrop. BC indicated that the Fire Chief will arrange for Police Detail with the Police Chief. BG will send a flyer to the principal of the Becket Washington School with a request that she notify the students.

13. Correspondence:

- ◆ **Received 2020.10.9 Notification: Conservation Commission Public Hearing scheduled on Oct. 27th to review Sherwood Greens Road District's application for aquatic management plan (Long Bow Lake, Little Long-Bow Lake, Silver Shield Pond and Golden Fawn Lake)**

The Select Board reviewed the above captioned correspondence.

14. BOS to review and sign payable warrants.

The Select Board reviewed and signed payable warrants.

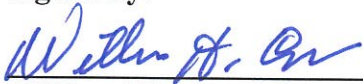
15. BOS to adjourn the Meeting

ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 7:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:



William Elovirta, Chairperson

/ November 4, 2020

Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- ◆ 2020.10.7 Meeting Minutes
- ◆ 2020.10.21 Town Administrator's Report
- ◆ Correspondence (listed under Agenda Item 12)

- ◆ Eversource's petition (6B030526Becket) and order to install three (3) solely owned poles with wires, cables and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across Dimmock Road
- ◆ Town Administrator's e-mail dated 10-18-2020 forwarding Joseph Mitchell's e-mail dated 10-16-2020 with comments on the Board of Selectmen's 10-7-2020 meeting inquiries re: Eversource Pole Petition for Dimmock Road
- ◆ Select Board License fees collected to operate during 2020
- ◆ MIIA Health Benefits Trust renewal proposal 1/1/2021 through 12/31/2021 for Medex 2
- ◆ FY2021 Select Board Amended Authorized payrate form for 3 Ambulance Dept. Employees (Temporary) and for the Interim Conservation Agent
- ◆ Ambulance Director's letter to Town Administrator dated 10/16/2020 re: pay rate changes for three Ambulance Dept. employees
- ◆ Halloween 2020 Flyer
- ◆ Broadband Ad Hoc Update