

**Town of Becket
Select Board Meeting Minutes
7:00pm, November 4, 2020
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees

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

Staff: William Caldwell (BC), *Town Administrator*; Beverly Gilbert (BG), *Administrative Assistant*; Edward Pickert (EP), *Highway Superintendent*

Others (remote participation): Sarah C. Hoecker, Aaron Beatty

Others (in person): Bob Gross, MLP Manager (MLP),

1. Call to order

BE called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He indicated that the Select Board (SB) was recording the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

BE led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. Discussion with Highway Superintendent regarding road maintenance.

EP discussed different approaches for maintaining roads. It was agreed that EP will provide his recommendation for a road maintenance schedule that includes Town roads, maintenance needed, potential maintenance methods and cost estimates affiliated with the methods. BE mentioned that the Finance Committee had suggested for the Town to allocate additional funding for road maintenance. A road maintenance schedule may be presented for Finance Committee discussion. The SB commented that Chapter 90 insufficiently funds municipal road maintenance. BE and CS listed Wells, Benton Hill, Bancroft, Brooker Hill, and McNerney as roads warranting priority.

EP mentioned that the Town, through Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, will soon have a contractor to analyze, prioritize road conditions and repairs/maintenance.

CS initiated discussion about the idea of renting or purchasing/sharing/borrowing a paver with other municipalities. EP indicated that he would explore the idea of a small paver box.

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:

- Sertex will not have a soft start on Nov. 11th but will have the hard start on Nov. 30th. Material will arrive the week of Nov. 16th.
- Westfield Gas & Electric will set up the electronics in the hut next week.

- Based on the high costs for redesign, Westfield Gas & Electric recommends sticking with the current design and for the Town to pay the mandatory yearly fee to the railroad company for crossing the tracks in the North Becket Village.
- MLP will talk to Otis's MLP Manager re: Westfield Gas & Electric recommendations: 1) Town of Becket to keep Camp Lenox as a subscriber and 2) Dimmock Road resident will become an Otis subscriber.
- Underground/Special Areas: MLP reported on Parsons Way (has been completed), William Holmes Road and Becket West Road
- Westfield Gas & Electric will require Becket to sign up for broadband service through its website. Westfield Gas & Electric is discussing attributes for its website (including FAQs, terms and agreements) with the Broadband Ad Hoc Group. Although Town Counsel prefers original agreements for easements, the Broadband Ad Group is leaning toward digital easements because the contractors are not willing to collect Town agreements from the customers.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will draft Broadband related policies and procedures for the SB's review.
- The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is preparing a tax stuffer to encourage sign-ups
- Discussion ensued about providing priority to premises with home-businesses and school children lacking internet service. The SB advised that home-businesses should be registered with the Town Clerk.

5. Approval of the October 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes

ML moved to approve the October 21, 2020 Meeting Minutes. CS 2nd. Vote: 3-0.

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

MLP relayed a suggestion to encourage the public to subscribe to the Town websites. The Town will include how to subscribe in an upcoming tax stuffer.

Per Aaron Beatty's inquiry relating to the status of two Pleasant Street properties which Mr. Beatty indicated are not in compliance with the Town's zoning bylaws, the SB and BC suggested for him to contact the Board of Health. It is their understanding that the Town's Health Agent is working with the Attorney General's Office to address this matter through the Receivership Program.

7. Select Board to acknowledge resignation – Elizabeth A. Will from the Board of Assessors effective 10/27/2020

The SB acknowledged Elizabeth Will's notification that effective 10/27/2020, she is resigning from the Board of Assessors. The SB signed a letter of appreciation to longstanding Board of Assessors member Ms. Will.

8. BOS to discuss and possibly vote on appointment applications:

♦ **Sarah C. Hoecker – Zoning Board of Appeals effective 11/4/2020 through 6/30/2023**

♦ **Jessica Perotti – Board of Assessors effective 11/4/2020 through 6/30/2023**

♦ **Beverly Gilbert – Board of Assessors effective 11/4/2020 through 6/30/2021**

The SB reviewed the above captioned appointment applications. Sarah Hoecker introduced herself to the SB and she described her background. Sarah is a Planning Business

Administrator in Southborough. ML moved to appoint Sarah Hoecker to the Zoning Board of Appeals effective 11/4/2020 through 6/30/2023. CS 2nd: unanimous.

ML moved to appoint Jessica Perotti to the Board of Assessors effective 11/4/2020 through 6/30/2023, and Beverly Gilbert to the Board of Assessors effective 11/4/2020 through 6/30/2021. CS 2nd: unanimous.

9. BOS to review Departmental Reports

- ◆ Highway Superintendent - Activity 10/5/2020 through 10/30/2020
- ◆ TBA

The SB reviewed the above mentioned report.

10. BOS's Comments and Announcements

ML expressed appreciation to the Volunteer Fire Dept. for the Halloween event that brought joy to the children. CS estimated that approximately twenty to thirty cars attended.

CS spoke in support of the Town providing a vehicle for the Fire Chief's use and suggested that this be considered next time a police cruiser is retired.

Per CS's suggestion, future agendas will list the Town Administrator's Report prior to the Select Board's Comments and Announcements.

11. Town Administrator's Report

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

- Ambulance Garage: door will be adjusted and fixed on Friday
- Broadband Hut: build-out complete. Generator, electricity, equipment
- Green Communities: annual report and project moving forward
- Town Hall reopening: BC is monitoring the state's COVID-19 incident rates and municipal classifications (grey, green, yellow, red)
 - The SB agreed to BC's recommendation to close the Town Hall to the public Dec. 21st through Jan. 1st due to increased gatherings.
- DER Grant award – working with engineer on price on the Benton Hill project
- Heat is working at the Town Hall.
- Departmental Capital requests are due 11/6
- Town Hall Parking Lot Paving will be finished tomorrow
- MA DOT paving: Rte. 20 near Greenwater
- White Wolf is working on septic/well at Athenaeum/BAC/MH. CS will talk to them about addressing the trees.
- Received non-required PILOT from Jacob's Pillow.
- BC and the SB expressed appreciation to the Town Clerk and the Election Workers for all of their hard work that contributed to smooth Election Day operations.

12. Any other business to come before the Board

BC reported that he sent a letter to Archbishop Williams H.S. Principal to acknowledge that Teddy and Sam Rossini once again performed community service at the Town Beach during 2020.

In response to Daniel Osman's inquiry, the Select Board will send a letter to him stating that in accordance with Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission's Advisory regarding the November 2, 2020 Executive Order #53, it is possible for him to renew Dream Away Inc.'s liquor license during 2021 without submitting proof of liquor liability and workers compensation insurance on the condition that his establishment is closed to the public during the state of emergency.

The SB received a request from Electrical Inspector Dana Spring to raise the electrical inspection fee. Mr. Spring indicated that Becket's current \$50.00 per inspection fee has remained the same for the past seven years. Mr. Spring provided a list of neighboring town fees which are in the range of \$60.00 to \$65.00 per inspection. The Building Inspector sent an e-mail in support of increasing both the electrical and plumbing inspection fees to provide incentive to retain the Town's inspectors. Mr. Girard recommended structuring the electrical and plumbing inspection fees to pay the inspectors \$60.00 per inspection. Currently the Town keeps \$5.00 per inspection and pay the inspectors \$45.00 per inspection. Mr. Girard had indicated that he defers to the SB to determine whether to raise the fee to \$65.00 in order for the Town to receive \$5.00 per inspection. BE moved to raise the electrical and plumbing inspection fees from \$50.00 to \$65.00 with Town retaining \$5.00. CS 2nd: unanimous.

13. Correspondence:

- ♦ **Planning Board Decision notices to approve Applications for Special Permit (filed 10/21/2020): 345 Friar Tuck Dr. – to build a prefabricated house, 308 Old Pond Rd. – to reconstruct the home following demolition, 309 Sherwood Dr. – to build a new one-level log cabin**
- ♦ **Highway Superintendent re: 2020-2021 Winter Road Closures**
The Select Board reviewed the above captioned correspondence.

14. BOS to review and sign payable warrants.

The Select Board reviewed and signed payable warrants.

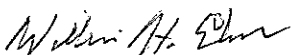
15. BOS to adjourn the Meeting

CS moved to adjourn, ML 2nd: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:



William Elovirta, Chairperson

/ November 18, 2020

Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- ♦ 2020.10.21 Meeting Minutes
- ♦ 2020.11.4 Town Administrator's Report
- ♦ Correspondence - listed under Agenda Item 13

- ◆ Appointment Applications - listed under Agenda Item 8
- ◆ Departmental Report(s) – listed under Agenda Item 9
- ◆ 2020.11.1 Electrical Inspector Dana Spring's letter re: Electrical Inspection fees
- ◆ 2020.11.4 Building Inspector e-mail re: Electrical Inspection fees
- ◆ 2020.10.25 Town Administrator's letter to Archbishop Williams H.S. to report Teddy and Sam Rossini volunteer hours
- ◆ 2020.11.04 Select Board's letter to Dream Away Lodge re: insurance requirements for Liquor License renewal to operate during 2021
- ◆ Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission's Advisory regarding the November 2, 2020 Executive Order #53
- ◆ 2020.11.3 e-mail Town Counsel re: Liquor License
- ◆ 2020.11.3 e-mail Daniel Osman re: liquor liability insurance