

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
7:00pm, May 19, 2021
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

Attendees

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

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

Others: Bob Gross, *MLP Manager*; Tom Flaherty, *Westfield Gas + Electric*

Remote participation: Nicole Scarbro – *Eversource Representative*, Marc Rofsky, *AJ Pietrantone – Jacob's Pillow*

1. Call to order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

BE led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Discussion and possible vote on the Reorganization of the Select Board

ML nominated CS (term expires 2022) to serve as the Chairperson. During discussion CS and ML indicated that due to their professional workload, the time involved with serving as Chair, and because they appreciate BE's performance, they prefer for BE to continue serving as the Chair if he is willing. CS nominated BE to serve as the Chairperson: ML 2nd: Motion carried with BE recusing himself. BE nominated CS as Vice Chair, ML 2nd: Motion carried with CS recusing himself. CS nominated ML to serve as the Clerk, BE 2nd: Motion carried with ML recusing himself.

4. 7:05 PM: Public Hearing re: EVERSOURCE DBA WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ELECTRIC COMPANY'S petition dated May 5, 2021 to install and maintain underground lines for the transmission of electricity to 240 High Street in accordance with the accompanying plan marked 4897396

At 7:05pm, BE announced the above captioned and read the notice of the public hearing. Nicole Scarbro, Eversource Representative; Highway Superintendent Ed Pickert and MLP Manager Bob Gross discussed the petition with the SB. Based on a site visit with Highway Superintendent Ed Pickert, Nicole conveyed adjustments required due to a culvert: 1) the proposed underground wires will be located on the opposite side of the road, 2) Pole 29/2 will be relocated to the Southern Side of the road to support the cables returning to overhead so that it will not be necessary to dig underneath the culvert. Ed stated that because there is drainage underneath the road, he will require burying the conduit/cable at least two feet below the culvert and he needs a detailed as-built map with measurements: He will also require installation of caution tape on the electrical components. Nicole will

arrange for Eversource to revise the drawing (it will continue to be called 4897396) and she agreed with ME's request to correctly label the poles.

Marc Rofsky, 240 High Street, spoke in support of this project as presented. No one else wished to comment.

BE moved to approve EVERSOURCE DBA WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS ELECTRIC COMPANY'S petition dated May 5, 2021 to install and maintain underground lines for the for the transmission of electricity to 240 High Street on the conditions that Eversource submits a revised plan marked 4897396 that meets the approval of the Highway Superintendent and the Broadband Ad Hoc Group, the conduit must be at least two feet under the culvert, and Eversource will submit an as-built plan to the Highway Superintendent when the work is completed. ML 2nd. Vote: 3-0.

The hearing ended at 7:16pm.

5. Board to discuss and possibly vote on Crystal Pond road closure options.

Pass crystal pond

BC advised that the public safety officials have green lighted the road closure plan as presented on May 5, 2021, and this matter is now in the Planning Board's hands.

6. Broadband Update and Select Board to discuss and possibly vote on policies and decisions relating to the Broadband Project

Tom Flaherty, the new General Manager of Westfield Gas + Electric (WG+E), introduced himself, described his background/history of WG+G. Tom looks forward to working with Becket, one of the Whip City Fiber (one of WG+G's entities) Communities, and is available to the SB.

Bob provided the following update:

To date, there are 23 subscribers using high speed internet (21 aerial, and 2 beta testers for underground). There are 28 aerial hookups scheduled for next week and several underground hookups.

WG+G contacted everyone in FSA2 to schedule appointments for consultations where it is possible.

Due to logistics, portions of the build are occurring out of the original FSA sequence and it may be necessary to reevaluate the sequencing schedule.

Several members of the Broadband Ad Hoc Group scheduled a meeting tomorrow with WG+G to discuss questions on estimates of interior work in several premises.

The Broadband Ad Hoc Group noticed not all of its information matched with information contained in several of WG+G's underground consultation reports. Chuck Garman and Dan Parnell from the Broadband Ad Hoc Group are familiar with undergrounds in FSA2 and will give the green light for building undergrounds on premises for which they have the utmost of confidence, and they will review the other drops before they are built. The

Broadband Ad Hoc Group will discuss any issues relating to other premises during their weekly meetings with WG+G. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will meet with Chris from Whip City Fiber to conduct site visits on some of the drops.

Bob approved for Burke to work on Becket West and William Holmes Road. William Holmes's costs exceeded the subsidy: the homeowners provided payments.

Burke is working on an estimate for 240 High Street. High Street is a priority in order to complete FSA2. Eversource wants Burke to work on Becket Woods in the middle of June. After High Street is completed, Bob wants Burke to go to William Holms and then Becket Woods.

Next week, fiber will be run from the hut to the Town Hall and connection will occur the week after.

Due to training, Sertex will not work the first week of June.

Bob discussed lingering Make Ready issues. Bill Ennen and WG+G are pressuring Verizon and Eversource. Bob pointed out that this is not something under our control.

Bill Ennen agreed that the town may wait until the summer when the work is completed for the state's MakeReady True-up invoice.

CSX agreed Sertex may schedule the work on the railroad crossing during an upcoming weekend. Bob explained that waiting for CSX's availability for a Flagman to work on a weekday would delay the project for several months. Bob gave Sertex approval to perform this work.

Bob advised that Eversource's policy will not permit them to trim trees on Greenbrook Road which has special circumstances that make it not officially recognized as a road. Bob anticipates receiving confirmation from Bill Ennen that the state will pay for the tree trimming. Bob anticipates there may several roads in this same category within Sherwood Forest.

7. Approval of the 5/5/21 Meeting Minutes

CS moved to approve the 5/5/21 minutes, ML 2nd: unanimous.

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

AJ Pietrantone – Jacob's Pillow's Deputy Director, provided an update about some of its property safety improvements and the upcoming season at JP. He expressed appreciation to the Town of Becket Police Chief, Fire Chief, Zoning Board of Appeals, Town Administrator, Planning Board, and Building Inspector for their support. Although scaled back, JP is ready to welcome the return of audiences (outdoor performances only), classes, residents/students this summer. JP will offer pre-packaged food service. JP will issue refunds when it cancels performances due to weather.

9. SB to review and vote on approval of the Town Administrator's Appointments effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

Name	Position
Raymond Ferrin	Ambulance Director
Gary Danko	Assistant Building Inspector
Mark Levernoch	Plumbing/Gas Inspector
Brian Middleton	Assistant Plumbing/Gas Inspector
Dana Spring	Wiring Inspector
Jim LaPier	Assistant Wiring Inspector
Doug Mann	Veterans' Agent
William Mulholland	Veterans' Grave Officer
Kristopher G. McDonough	Police Chief & Emergency Management Director
Matthew Virginia	Sgt. - Police Dept.
Daniel McClellan	Probationary Part-Time Reserve Police Officer
Nicole Miller	Part-time Reserve Police Officer
Michael Hunt	Full-time Police Officer
Chad Heath	Part-Time Reserve Police Officer
Charlene Auger	Part-Time Reserve Police Officer
Kurtis Eckman	Full-time Police Officer
Shaun Courtney	Part-Time Reserve Police Officer
Kenneth Pettibone	Part-Time Reserve Police Officer
Nicole Miller	Animal Control Officer
Margaret McClellan	Town Accountant
Mary Stucklen	Conservation Agent
Paul A. Mikaniewicz	Fire Chief
Edward Pickert	Highway Superintendent/Pest Control/Tree Warden

ML moved to approve the TA's above listed recommendations, as amended to include Edward Pickert, for FY2022 appointments. CS seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

10. Select Board to review Departmental Reports

◆ **Building Inspector – April 2021**

◆ **tba**

The SB reviewed the Building Inspector's and Ambulance Director's April 2021 Reports.

11. Town Administrator's Report

Below is an update of several items that BC has been working on:

- Complete Streets – Tier 2 - prioritization plan – BC will discuss the draft at the next SB's meeting.
- Pavement management: final report is expected soon
- ADA Grant: working on report
- Lease with Camp Greylock – draft received. Adding provision
- American Recovery Plan Act
 - 502k to Becket in direct and county funds (get in in two installments)
 - Will see what is required
- Werden Rd Culvert Grant – received extension 12/22
 - Approved to advertise
- Benton Hill – Preliminary plans draft complete to DER
- Attended Mass Highway Annual Meeting
- Andrus – received a quote. Sent solicitations to 3 other businesses for generator
- 44 Pleasant Street – owner looking to donate to town or will be given a raze order. BC informed Historical Commission that the town will raze this building.
- Board to ratify agreement with Police Chief – CS moved to ratify the Town Administrator's Memorandum of Understanding dated March 29, 2021 with Kris McDonough, Chief of Police re: the Chief's Cruiser. CS 2nd: unanimous.
- Village will be prepped for Memorial Day
- Welcome to Becket signs are being hung
- Conservation Commission will vote at its next meeting to provide money they received from Eversource to replace three trees at the Town Beach, and for the 21 Maple Street buffer.
- Truck 2 approved at the 2020 Town Meeting – build is nearly complete

12. Select Board's Comments and Announcements

CS initiated discussion re: the status of Mosquito Control Program Opt-Out.

CS followed up on the Road Assessment Study. BC stated that he anticipates receiving a report.

CS follow up on the Speed Feedback signs. BC indicated that funding speed feedback signs would need to wait until next fiscal year.

Per CS's request, BC will research improved remote access technology/systems for meetings. CS would like to encourage participation at board/committee meetings.

ML reported that 2727 Jacob's Ladder Road is on the market and Realtors are highlighting that the property was approved for a special permit as a cannabis dispensary.

ML proposed that Becket create annual marijuana licenses/fees marijuana (he referenced N. Attleboro). Per BE's suggestion, BC will survey other members of the BC Managers Association.

ML provided an update on the proposed Esau's Trail. ML had conducted a site visit with the Highway Superintendent to determine the next steps for creation of the parking lot.

BE reported that the Parks & Recreation Committee will contract Frank Avalle to create a concrete pad for the 21 Maple Street property.

Per BE's inquiry, BC will ask the Highway Superintendent to provide the schedule for 2021 road paving/reclamation.

BE will place discussion of the Juneteenth holiday on the next agenda.

In light of the Governor's announcement earlier this week regarding the state's reopening plan, the SB and BC discussed Town Hall opening and agreed to the following:

- Town Hall and other Town buildings will open to the public effective June 1, 2021: this includes allowing boards and committees to return for in-person meetings.
- On May 29th the mask mandate for those fully vaccinated (2 shots for Moderna/Pfizer +2 weeks or J&J 1 shot +2 weeks) is no longer in effect.
- Outside groups such as local districts, may resume their meetings in Town Hall beginning 7/6/21.
- Yoga (if there is interest) may resume beginning 7/6/21

13. Any other business to come before the Board

The SB signed a thank you letter to Charlie and Joy Flint for their donation of the 1927 portrait of Helen Day to the Town of Becket (accepted by the Historical Commission).

14. Correspondence: 

- ◆ **Received 2021.05.03 Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. re: CSX Transportation, Inc.'s 2021 Yearly Operational Plan for Railroad Right-of-Way Vegetation Management and maps are available upon request from stephen.herzog@woodplc.com**
- ◆ **2021.04.30 Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commission notifications - Conservation Commission Members George Roberts and Douglas Bessone completed the MACC Fundamentals for Massachusetts Conservation Commissioners training program.**

The SB signed congratulatory letters to George Roberts and Douglas Bessone for completing the MACC Fundamentals for Massachusetts Conservation Training Program.

15. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants.

The Select Board reviewed and signed payable warrants.

16. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting







ML 8:40pm moved to adjourn: CS 2nd: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 8:40pm

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:

 / June 2, 2021
William H. Elovirta, *Chairperson* Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

-  Agenda Item 4: Eversource Petition, Plan 4897396, & Order to install and maintain underground lines for the transmission of electricity for customer at 240 High Street.
-  Agenda Item 7: 2021.04.21 Select Board Minutes
-  Agenda Item 10. Building Inspector's e-mail with attached April 2021 Report, Ambulance Director's April 2021 Report
-  Agenda Item 11: 2021.05.19 Town Administrator's Report; draft Complete Streets – Tier 2 prioritization plan
-  Agenda Item 13: SB Thank you letter to Charlie & Joy Flint
-  Agenda Item 14. Above captioned Correspondence; SB Congratulatory letters to George Roberts and Douglas Bessone