Select Board Meeting Minutes
7:00pm, December 16, 2020
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

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

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

Others (remote participation): Kirsten Miller; Dean Lagrotteria; Amy Alpert; Jeffrey T. Reynolds, Regional Assessor of Regional Resource Group, Inc.

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. **Board of Assessors Tax Classification Hearing - The Select Board will hold a Tax Classification hearing to determine the allocation of property tax levy among the four classes of real estate and personal property for Fiscal Year 2021**
   At 7:02pm. BE announced the opening of the Board of Assessors Tax Classification Hearing to determine the allocation of property tax levy among the four classes of real estate and personal property for Fiscal Year 2021. Jeffrey T. Reynolds, Regional Assessor of Regional Resource Group, Inc., presented and fielded questions during this public hearing. Jeff provided a handout which listed calculations relating to setting the Town's tax rates. He specified that in accordance with DOR regulations, municipalities with a large commercial and industrial tax base often shift the tax burden to help maintain lower residential taxes. Jeff explained that given Becket's small commercial and industrial base, it would take a large shift of the tax burden from the residential class to the commercial and industrial class to yield a modest residential tax reduction and therefore, it is his and the Board of Assessors' recommendation that the Select Board adopt a single tax rate to be applied to all classes of property in Becket. BE moved that the Becket Select Board votes in accordance with MGL Chapter 40, Section 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2021 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1.0, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0, pending approval of the town's annual tax recap (estimated rate of $11.56) by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. CS 2nd: unanimous. BE moved to close the hearing: CS 2nd: unanimous. At 7:14pm, BE closed the hearing.

4. **Broadband Update and Select Board to discuss and possibly vote on policies and decisions relating to the Broadband Project**
   BC discussed the MLP Manager's update:

1. Sertex continues to hang strand in FSA02.
2. The application process for the CSX (RR) road crossing at High Street has begun.
3. Revised designs are needed for the Johnson and Werden Road overpasses. Westfield is working with DOT. Should be a straightforward project.
4. Over 500 residents have signed up for service. Sign up is via **whipcityfiber.com/becket/**. An insert will be included with the tax bill and hopefully there will be a significant increase in subscribers
5. New signs to encourage sign up will been installed shortly in various locations.
6. TriWire, the company which will be doing the drops, will hopefully start site consultations of the underground drops shortly. Someone from the Broadband Ad Hoc Group is planning to participate in reviewing the estimates of drops which exceed the expected $2K subsidy.
7. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is analyzing MakeReady for Williams Holmes and Becket Woods. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is questioning the estimated cost of installing poles.
8. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is working on several policies for discussion at the next Select Board's meeting:
    a. Network Extensions
    b. Process for handling drops which exceed the subsidy
    c. Billing/payment of drop cost estimates which exceed the subsidy

5. **Approval of the December 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes**
ML moved to approve the 12/2/2020 meeting minutes: CS 2nd: unanimous.

6. **In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 61B, the Select Board will vote on exercising the Town's Right of First Refusal to purchase 10.59 acres located at 0 Beech Tree Lane (Map 407, Lot 139 and Map 407, Lot 141), before it is sold to another party and removed from the state forestry program. Lot 139 includes Lot 140 which was combined into that parcel.**
The Select Board reviewed:
- Letter dated December 8, 2020 from Scott and Madeleine Miller re: anticipation of removal of 10.59 acres located at 0 Beech Tree Lane from Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 61B due to a possible sale. According to MGL Chapter 61B, the Select Board has the right of first refusal to purchase the property.
- Copy of Assessors Map 407 and Property cards for 0 Beech Tree Lane
- 2020.12.15 Conservation Agent Mary Stucklen's letter explaining her recommendation that due to that Lot 140 and Lot 139 have significant value as wetland areas, they should remain in the Chapter 61B program.
- 2020.12.10 Planning Board letter to recommend that the Select Board not exercise the town's first refusal option and to allow the sale of the parcels

It was the consensus of the Select Board that the above mentioned parcels are not useful to the town. BE moved that the town refuse the option to purchase 10.59 acres located at 0 Beech Tree Lane [Map 407, Lot 139 and Map 407, Lot 141 (Lot 139 includes Lot 140 which was combined into that parcel)]. ML 2nd: unanimous.

7. **Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**
There was no public input at tonight's meeting.

8. **ABCC Seasonal Population Estimate as of July 10, 2021**
CS moved to inform the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission that the Select Board estimates 9,000 for the Town of Becket's temporary seasonal population as of 7-10-2021. ML 2nd: unanimous.

9. **Select Board to review Departmental Reports**
   - **Tba**

No departments submitted reports for tonight's meeting.

10. **Town Administrator's Report**
BE provided an update of several items that he has been working on:
- Truck 1 Highway – January delivery
- Broadband Hut – build-out complete. Generator, electricity, equipment
- Green Communities – HVAC/Insulation 12/14-18 at Fire House 1, heat pumps will be installed at Fire Station 1 and 2
- DER Grant – BETA engineering.—Benton Hill Road culvert project
- Budget requests are out. End of year due date.
- Broadband construction start 11/30, private kickoff Tuesday 12/8
- Guardrails and Bollards @Town Hall and Yokum Pond Road – done
- Working with Building Insp. on next house demo – Wells Rd. Asbestos abatement—ripped down
- Annual Report – folks are working on them
- Finance Committee to review capital requests (see below). BC advised that COVID-19 adds a layer of uncertainty with respect to the state aid that will be allotted to municipalities.

Department	Item	Estimated Cost
Parks and Rec	Pavilion - Maple St	$ 20,000.00
Historical Commission	Ballou Park Retaining Wall	$ 100,000.00
Highway	Truck #5	$ 132,000.00 (Upgrade from 3500 to F550)
Ambulance	Squad Vehicle Replacement	$ 47,000.00
Fire	Waiting	
Police	None	
Town Hall	HVAC/Reno Account	$ 15,000.00

11. **Select Board's Comments and Announcements**
ML inquired about the Becket Police Association's Children's Holiday Event and the Broadband Kick-off Ceremony. BC reported that both went well. He indicated that a little under forty children participated in the Police Association's Children's Holiday Drive-through Event, and in relation to the Broadband Kickoff Ceremony, Rep. Pignatelli, Senator Hinds, Last Mile Liaison Bill Ennen and Joe

Parda (Westfield Gas & Electric) were amongst those in attendance. BC will ask Sertex to share their video.

12. Any other business to come before the Board

BC indicated that Town Hall will be closed tomorrow due to inclement weather.

13. Correspondence:

- **Planning Board Notices of Public Hearings scheduled on 1/13/2021 for review of Special Permit Applications: Kenneth & Susan Katz to build a dwelling at 305 Sherwood Drive, a non-conforming lot; David Levenfeld and Deborah Rivel to reconstruct the existing driveway at 229 South Cove Dr. in accordance with accompanying Site Plan; and Brian Vincent on behalf of Trahydra AgTek LLC to operate a recreational marijuana facility for a tier 11 cultivation and processing plant at 509 Quarry Road**
- **2020.11.25 White Engineering Inc. Notification of Chapter 91 Simplified License Filing (dock in Greenwater Pond, Greenwater Drive)**

The Select Board reviewed the above captioned correspondence.

14. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants.

The SB reviewed and signed payable warrants.

15. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting

ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 7:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:

_____ / *January 6, 2021*
William Elovirta, *Chairperson* Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- Tax Classification Handout
- 2020.12.2 Meeting Minutes
- 2020.12.8 Letter from Scott and Madeleine Miller re: anticipation of removal of 10.59 acres located at 0 Beech Tree Lane from Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 61B due to a possible sale. According to MGL Chapter 61B, the Select Board has the right of first refusal to purchase the property.
- Copy of Assessors Map 407 and Property cards for 0 Beech Tree Lane
- 2020.12.15 Conservation Agent Mary Stucklen's letter re 0 Beech Tree Lane.
- 2020.12.10 Planning Board letter re: 0 Beech Tree Lane
- 2020.12.16 SB's Draft letter of response to Scott and Madeleine Miller re: 0 Beech Tree Lane
- 2020.12.16 Town Administrator's Report
- Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission 2021 Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form
- Correspondence - listed under Agenda Item 13
- 2020.12.16 MLP Manager's email re: Broadband Update