SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
7:00pm, January 5, 2022
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

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

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

Others: Ken Fawcett, Darlene Cyr, Neal Vreeland, Michael Lavassear, Andre Ledoux
remote: Jennifer Beatty, Executive Director of the Becket Arts Center; Floyd Pease, Jr.

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. **Broadband Update and Select Board to discuss and possibly vote on policies and decisions relating to the Broadband Project**
   BC advised that FSA 8 is being released.

4. **Approval of the December 15 & December 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes**
   ML moved to approve the December 15, 2021 and December 20, 2021 minutes. CS 2nd. Motion carried 3-0.

5. **Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**
   None.

6. **Discussion and potential vote re: Hunting on Town-owned property (land)**
   BE provided an overview for this agenda item: In November, prior to hunting season, the SB left a sign for an unknown owner to remove a tree-stand located on Esau's Heel Hiking Trail and an unknown owner complied. BE clarified the SB's vote was for the tree-stand only and did not pertain to prohibiting hunting. Subsequently a resident reported hunting on Esau Heel's Trail. In response BC arranged to post no hunting signs there. BC had conveyed that in the Commonwealth, hunting is illegal on town-owned land unless the town otherwise specifies.

   BE commented that he favors allowing hunting on town-owned land: Moreover, hunting is allowed in October Mountain, many forests within the Commonwealth and most portions of the Appalachian Trail.

   Ken Fawcett, Darlene Cyr, Neal Vreeland, Michael Lavassear, and Andre Ledoux spoke in support of hunting on town-owned land. Andre stated he was chagrined to have seen the no hunting signs, especially in light that he has been hunting in Becket for the past forty years.

   BE moved to allow hunting on town-owned land, CS 2nd. During discussion, ML suggested compromising by allowing hunting on Esau's Heel Trail only during the December hunting season, and during the December hunting season, the trail would be closed to hikers.

Motion carried (not amended) with ML opposed. BC will arrange to post, by Easau's Heel Trail, a sign specifying that hunting is allowed.

Ken Fawcett, Darlene Cyr, Neal Vreeland, Michael Lavassear, and Andre Ledoux left the meeting at 7:21pm.

7. **Jenn Beatty to discuss Becket Arts Center's upcoming application with MA Facilities Fund and future funding for the Becket Arts Center**

Jenn Beatty offered to answer questions about BAC's detailed proposal (to upgrade its facility's heating and cooling systems) she had e-mailed to BC and the SB. CS reported he found the BAC's basement appeared to be clean and structurally sound when he conducted a site visit.

Jenn informed the SB that she did not include a bid she obtained for a mini split system because through BAC's analysis process, it was deemed inadequate. Although she sent requests for two other bids, no one replied. Due to COVID, contractors are especially busy and not available to schedule timely bids.

Jenn advised that based on CS's recommendation (during his site visit) to install two insulated metal doors in the basement, she obtained pricing: $5,000 ($2,500 each) which would bring the total amount the BAC seeks from the TOB at $21,500. BE suggested that BAC should divide their requests into $18,500 (FY2023), and $5,000 (FY2024). CS recommended checking if the TOB Building & Grounds Technician can install the doors as a way to save on the cost.

The consensus of the SB is that unless the Finance Committee has a reason for opposition, they would anticipate voting during April for SB recommendation of an ATM article to approve $18,500 funding for BAC's proposal to upgrade its facility's heating and cooling systems. They advised Jenn may specify tentative approval of town funding in BAC's Mass Cultural Facilities Grant application. The SB suggested for Jenn to reach out to other contractors. Jenn left the meeting at 7:29pm

8. **Vote re: Intermunicipal Agreement By and Between the Town of Becket and Town of Otis – Shared Police Chief Services.**

The BC, Police Chief Kris McDonough and SB discussed the draft Intermunicipal Agreement By and Between the Town of Becket and Town of Otis – Shared Police Chief Services. BC advised that the most recent copy provided at tonight's meeting included a sentence under Section 4 liability:

> The Town of Otis shall provide counsel to defend any claims made that are based on Chief McDonough's performing duties in Otis.

BE asked BC to inquire about "strong police chiefs" language (3rd paragraph) with Town Counsel.

Discussion included: work schedule, response, badges, info. about Otis (tax valuation, population, structure of the Police Dept.), and the budget portion of the agreement.

BE asked Kris if he was okay with the proposed changes to his position. Kris stated that he is open to the challenge if the Select Board and Town Administrator decide to share its Chief of Police Services with Otis

The SB stated that they do not want Becket to use its Police Officers to cover Otis.

CS inquired about the impact on the TOB's retirement cost. BC specified that Becket will invoice Otis for its share of payroll and benefits. During retirement, the TOB will pay a larger portion of Kris' retirement related fees. He pointed out that this will not put the TOB in a position to accept a large financial burden because the bulk of retirement expenses are paid while the employee is working.

The SB authorized BC to continue honing the agreement with Otis. Kris left the meeting at 7:45pm.

9. Tax Bill Stuffer re: 3rd Quarter Preliminary Billing Explanation

The SB agreed the town may send a Tax Bill Stuffer to explain the 3rd Quarter Preliminary Billing.

10. ABCC Seasonal Population Estimate as of July 10, 2022

BE 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 7/10/2022. CS 2nd: unanimous.

11. Select Board to review Departmental Reports

- **TBA**

None

12. Town Administrator's Report

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

- MVP – Master Plan w/Climate resilience focus next year
  - Spring
- Massworks – needs to obtain pricing for design and survey work
  - McNerney Rd
- USDA Grant – Covid health funds
  - Can be used for squad vehicle and ambulance monitor
  - Receiving quotes
  - 75/25 split
- USDA Grant – Cruiser
  - More information in the spring
- AFG Grant
  - Application submitted for the engine
- ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds
  - $504k vote to use for broadband. ARPA may be used for investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, and COVID related expenses. BC reported on Broadband Ad Hoc Group's discussion relating to how ARPA may benefit the TOB. CS moved to spend ARPA funds towards Broadband, ML 2nd: unanimous.
- Paramedic service
  - Have one applicant (another withdrew). The Ambulance Director will attend a Finance Committee meeting to discuss additional paramedic coverage.
- Budget and Capital
  - Staffing (Ambulance Dept., Police Reform impacts on PD: away from part-time Officers)
- BE brought up that clean-up of Leonhardt Road is needed (shoulders, debris from old culverts). BC will confer with the Highway Superintendent to review the agreement to determine whether the contractor (or TOB) is responsibility for the aforementioned.
- Town Meeting is scheduled for January 18th

13. Select Board's Comments and Announcements
None

14. Any other business to come before the Board
The SB commented on Bob Crosier's absence. Mr. Crosier had sent a communication to the SB regarding his neighbor's dogs (Maid Marian Lane) and he had indicated he planned to attend tonight's meeting. BE and BC reported that individually on separate occasions, they happened to drive by the dogs' residence and did not observe anything that would constitute a nuisance.

15. Correspondence:
- TBA

None

16. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants
The SB reviewed and signed payable warrants.

17. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting
ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd: unanimous. At 7:58pm, BE adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*

Signed by:

_____ / *January 19, 2022*
William H. Elovirta, *Chair* Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:
- 2022.01.05 Select Board Agenda
- Agenda Item 4. 2021.12.15 Select Board Minutes, 2021.12.20 Select Board Minutes
- Agenda Item 7. 2021.12.30 e-mail from Jenn Beatty, Executive Director of the Becket Arts Center re: Request for Funding for Seminary Hall with attached estimates and info pertaining to the heating system (Pioneer Plumbing and Heating)
- Agenda Item 8. Draft Intermunicipal Agreement by and Between Town of Becket and Town of Otis - Shared Police Chief Services
- Agenda Item 9. Tax Bill Stuffer to explain 3rd quarter preliminary tax bills.
- Agenda Item 10. Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission 2022 Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form
- Agenda Item 12. Town Administrator's report dated 01/05/2021
- Agenda Item 14. 2021.12.22 Robert Crosier's letter re: dogs residing on Maid Marian Lane