SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
7:00pm, February 2, 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;* Police Chief Kristopher McDonough

Others via remote participation: MLP Manager Bob Gross, Shaw Israel Izikson (Editor of the Country Journal), Lei Anne Ellis, Laurie Friedman

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**
   MLP Manager Bob Gross provided the following update:
   - Today Fiber Service Area 4 was turned over to Whip City Fiber for the two-week testing. Connections will follow.
   - 589 premises are activated. 1,169 people have expressed interest. We are almost at a 50 percent take-rate and anticipate that we will exceed a 60 percent take rate.
   - Issues with Becket Woods (BW):
     1) Problem in the first two phases of construction. A mockup as to how the work should be done was shown to Burke. This information was not conveyed to Burke's foreman, but Westfield Gas + Electric signed-off on the work. There is an issue as to who will pay for the remediation. Bob conveyed to BW that this is an issue between them and Westfield Gas + Electric, and Burke. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group counseled them not to alienate Burke because Burke can decide not to do phase 3. Bob described and fielded questions about the problems which relate to composite vaults. Fiber is placed into the vaults and there are core drills for a micro-ducts. Burke placed the micro-ducts under the vault and they noticed one micro-duct placed at Fred Snow/Woodmere was crimped. Even if the micro-ducts are not currently crimped, due to anticipated ground settling, this must be corrected to protect the fiber. This cannot be addressed during wintertime when they cannot access the boxes.
     2) It was Whip City Fiber's understanding that they would do a cursory project management for BW at no cost. However, more extensive "hand-holding" is needed and Whip City Fiber has advised that they will charge for such. Bob advised to BW that the town will not pay for project management as that is BW's responsibility. He explained that in other underground areas, they all paid for their own project management. The project management cost for the other areas was not a distinct cost but incorporated into the contractual arrangements with Whip City Fiber's contractor, Raymaakers.

   Bob left the meeting at 7:13pm.

4. **Approval of the January 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes**
ML moved to approve the January 19, 2022 minutes. CS 2nd. Motion carried unanimously.

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

6. **Select Board to review Departmental Reports**
   - **Ambulance Dept. – November/December 2021**
   - **Others TBA**

   The SB reviewed the Animal Control Officer's January 2022 report, the Building Inspector's January 2022 report, and the Ambulance Department's November/December 2021 report.

7. **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 – anticipates receiving the price for design and surveying work for McNerney Rd. He will apply for Complete Streets for widening and creating a mix-used path. BC believes the widening will occur on the righthand side at the top of the hill. The survey will provide details about the proposed width (BC believes it is approx. 5-8 feet wide) and locations.
   - USDA Grant – Covid health funds
     Submitted
   - USDA Grant – Cruiser
     More information in the spring
   - AFG Grant
     Application submitted
   - ARPA funds - $504k
     Treasury Final Rule – opened up some categories i.e. storm water to include culverts. BC will investigate using funding for culverts. BC suggested that the SB will revote using ½ of the funds on Broadband during 2022, and afterwards when more is known about the town's needs, the SB will re-vote on the other tranche. ARPA money does not have to be spent until 2026.
   - Tomorrow's Finance Committee Meeting: Still awaiting School's proposed figures, Anticipates discussion on capital and staffing budgets.
   - 2442 Main Street – DHCD approved to sell: possibly back on tax rolls by May or June
   - Shared Services agreement
     Police Chief - Otis
     Exploring other towns – Ambulance
   - Building Inspector will retire
   - Potential change on ownership of the 2727 Jacob's Ladder Road Retail Marijuana license

8. **Select Board's Comments and Announcements**
ML advised the Open Space & Recreation Committee elected its Chairperson and Clerk and voiced the committee's request for the SB to add a seventh member to its Committee to eliminate tie-votes and ideally they wish to expand participation by including a representative of a TOB committee not currently represented: Toward this end, the Open Space & Recreation Committee requests permission from the SB to inquire if a member of either the Parks & Recreation Committee or the Conservation Commission would be willing

to serve. If no one from the Parks & Recreation Committee or Conservation Commission is available, they want to post this opening for other Becket residents. ML moved to add a seventh member to the Open Space & Recreation Committee with a term ending June 30, 2022, and the Open Space & Recreation Committee may first search for its seventh member from the Parks & Recreation Committee or Conservation Commission before other residents may apply for this position. CS 2nd: Motion carried with ML recusing himself.

9. Annual Town Report Contest

The Select Board viewed a slideshow containing seventeen photographs submitted for the 2021 Annual Town Report Cover Contest. Although it was difficult to decide, the Select Board tentatively choose (pending the ability of the printer):

- Front Cover Photo: Center Pond #3 - Lee Seidenberg
- Honorable mention for back cover: Slide 4 - Glorious Western View - Ann Spadafora
- Honorable mention for back cover: Slide 8 Mecum Road - Jennifer Spirito

The Select Board members expressed that they are grateful to all of the contestants for sharing their beautiful photos.

10. Any other business to come before the Board

None.

11. Correspondence:

- 2022.01.11 Local Election District Review Com. approves Town of Becket's submission to keep the Town as a single precinct.

The SB reviewed the above captioned letter.

12. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants

The SB reviewed and signed payable warrants.

13. Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (2) To conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (Town of Becket and Police Chief Kristopher McDonough); The Chair shall publicly announce whether the open session will reconvene at the conclusion of the executive session.

BE read the above captioned and announced that the SB will reconvene at the conclusion of the Executive Session. ML moved to enter into Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21 (a) (2) To conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (Town of Becket and Police Chief Kristopher McDonough). Roll call vote: William Elovirta – yes, Chris Swindlehurst – yes and Michael Lavery – yes. At 7:38pm, the SB entered Executive Session. At 7:50pm, the SB returned from Executive Session.

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

CS moved to approve the Intermunicipal Agreement By and Between the Town of Becket and Town of Otis – Shared Police Chief Services, contingent on Town of Otis approval, and on February 16, 2022, the members of the Becket Select Board anticipate they will officially approve the agreement with the dates determined and added to the agreement, ML 2nd: Motion carried unanimously.

15. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting

ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd. Motion carried unanimously. At 7:52pm, BE adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*

Signed by:

_____ / *February 16, 2022*
William H. Elovirta, *Chair* Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- 2022.02.02 Select Board Agenda
- Agenda Item 4. 2022.01.19 Select Board Minutes
- Agenda Item 6. Listed under the discussion
- Agenda Item 8. Town Administrator's report dated 02/02/2022
- Agenda Item 9. Annual Town Report Photo Contest Slide Show
- Agenda Item 9. List of Photos/description
- Agenda Item 11. Listed under the discussion
- Agenda Item 14. Intermunicipal Agreement By and Between the Town of Becket and Town of Otis – Shared Police Chief Services