Select Board Meeting Minutes
7:00pm, January 20, 2021
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

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

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

Others: Bob Gross, MLP Manager; Shelby Macri, Country Journal (remote participation)

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:
   - Sertex completed the strand and fiber in FSA 2 and started working on FSA 1.
   - Status of railroad crossing agreement between Town and CSX – Town Counsel has been communicating with CSX to put the finishing touches on the agreement.
   - DOT Permit status – work has still not been completed on Johnson and Werden Road. There was a determination that the design needed to be changed. The permits are in place and Raymaker (contractor to perform the work) is picking up the material on Friday and the amount of work that can be done is contingent upon how frozen the ground is.
   - Bob gave heads up to Burke (the contractor for Becket Woods, and Burke installs utility poles) that the town wants Burke to work in Becket Woods and on William Holmes Road. Before work will occur on William Holmes Road, there will be a site visit with Westfield Gas & Electric, Bob Gross and an owner of a premise on William Holmes Road to confirm tree removal on her property. In order to change the location of a pole to where the homeowner prefers, trees must be cut and the homeowner has agreed to incur the cost for cutting down the trees.
   - The Broadband Ad Hoc Group had a conversation with Westfield Gas & Electric about micro-duct which sometimes is used as a substitute for the rigid conduit PVC (polyvinyl chloride) piping frequently used in construction for drops. PVC piping comes in 10 foot lengths and has to be glued. The advantage of micro-duct is that it comes in a continuous roll and is easily cut to specific lengths. Micro-duct is very subject to kinking if not properly installed. Washington and Windsor have encountered problems with a few micro-duct installations: the contractors have not been able to thread the fiber to the drop due to kinking. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group is researching this matter and will determine if the town will allow the usage of micro-

duct. They would want homeowners to understand the risks involved with using micro-duct.

- Westfield Gas & Electric advised that the town needs to reach an agreement with MBI regarding connecting the town's hut to the Mass Middle Mile 123. This is under evaluation and is something that will be done soon. Currently the town's 123 interface connection is in the Becket Athenaeum. Westfield Gas & Electric already has included in its plans to run cable from the library to the town's hut.
- Westfield is contracting with Tri-Wire for the drops. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group hopes preliminary consultations may begin soon when realistic (aerials, some underground).
- Bob provided copies and discussed proposed policies (Sign-up Disclaimer, Guideline for Connection to "The Network" for all New Construction.)
- Bob discussed two other proposed policies: 1) payment process (estimated invoice paid in advance of work being done and true-up invoices after connection is done) for premises incurring drop costs exceeding the town's subsidy and 2) Network extension (pertains to aerial, considered part of drop cost) and payment required for cost of extensions to tie into the system.

Bob will provide a packet of Broadband Ad Hoc Group recommended policies to the Select Board members for review and potential vote at their Feb. 3rd meeting. After approved, the Broadband Ad Hoc Group will list the policies on their section of the town website. Bob will also review the drop policy that likely needs modification.

4. **Select Board to entertain Town Beach Discussion with Parks & Recreation Committee and Camp Greylock owners Lukas Horn and Michael Marcus.**
The Select Board tabled this matter (date TBA) because the Camp Greylock owners were not able to attend tonight's meeting.

5. **Approval of the January 6, 2021 Meeting Minutes**
ML moved to approve the 1/6/2021 meeting minutes with correction to Item 4 from ME to ML: CS 2nd: unanimous.

6. **Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**
There was no public input.

7. **Review of submittals for the 2020 Annual Town Report Cover Contest. Possible vote**
The Select Board viewed a slide show of entries for the 2020 Annual Town Report Contest and selected Robert Watroba's photograph (Two Deer by Buckley Dunton Lake) for the front cover photograph. The Select Board chose two photographs as honorable mentions for the back cover: Linda Bacon's (kayaks by Buckley Dunton Lake) and David DeFilippo's (October sunrise on Mallard Drive).

8. **Select Board to review Departmental Reports**
   - **Building Inspector - December 2020**

- **Animal Control Officer – November and December 2020**
- **Police Department: 1) Police Chief's memo dated Jan. 13, 2021;**
  2) Motor Vehicle Citations for 2020;
  3) Offense Listing for 2020; and Berkshire County Sheriff's Office Call Analysis by call Reasons for 2020
- **Others tba**

The Select Board reviewed the above captioned reports.

9. Town Administrator's Report

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

- Broadband – construction underway in FSA 2 – discussed under Agenda Item 3
- DOT Complete Streets Program – Tier 2 Application (allows up to $38,000): BC is working with a firm that will arrive at recommendations for projects (examples of potential Complete Streets projects include lighting, crosswalks, rotaries, traffic patterns, bike lanes, sidewalks.) to list on a prioritization plan. After a town completes Tier 2 status, it may qualify to apply to Tier 3 for up to $400,000 for projects.
- DER Grant – BETA engineering – Benton Hill Road/Werden Road culvert work continues.
- Budgets – Requests are in. At their February meeting, BC will show the Finance Committee the first draft of the FY22 budget
- Working with Building Insp. on next house demo – Wells Rd. Asbestos abatement – 1st house has been demolished. BE suggested that BC consider retaining some of the money owed to the contractor to ensure he returns (in the springtime if it needs to wait until then) to finish cleanup.
- Annual Report
- MMA Conference will occur remotely this year. BC is attending. He is especially interested in the Governor's speech and the business meeting that includes the MIIA Health Insurance update.
- MassWorks Infrastructure Grant – funds bigger project for larger towns, and has STRAPS (Small Town Rural Assistance Program). BC would like to pool a couple of grants to target one road: perhaps McNerney Road.
- MVP Grant – The Town has been designated and approved under the original MVP Grant and is now ready to embark on the Action Grant.
- Green Communities Grant – The Green Communities Grant has changed to fall and spring application submittals. BC will recommend applying for funding to convert street lights to LEDs (anticipated 50% energy bill savings). Per CS's inquiry, BC advised that all of the street lights are billed under one street address.

10. Select Board's Comments and Announcements

ML voiced that he wishes to recognize that today marks a historical and peaceful transition of power as our country's new President Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. and Vice President Kamala Devi Harris assumed office. He stated that the inauguration process has occurred for the past 160 years starting with Abraham Lincoln. CS stated that he echoes ML's sentiment. CS stated that he was glad

the process occurred without violence, with a very well delivered speech, and he looks forward to the new administration and seeing what will be offered.

11. Any other business to come before the Board
No Any Other Business items were discussed.

12. Correspondence:

- **2021.01.10 e-mail from Dan Gates, Associate Director of Legislative Affairs (Office of the Governor), with request for review of attached enacted H5222 An Act relative to the Board of Selectmen**

The Select Board reviewed the above correspondence. BC advised that the Office of the Governor has approved the name change from Board of Selectmen to Select Board. When BC receives the Governor's signed approval document, he will provide a copy to the Town Clerk.

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

14. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting
ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 7:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:

_____ / *February 3, 2021*
William Elovirta, *Chairperson* Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- 2020.01.20 Town Administrator's Report
- 2021.01.06 Select Board Minutes
- Correspondence (See agenda item 12)
- Departmental Reports (See agenda item 8)
- List of photographs submitted for the 2020 Annual Town Report
- Proposed Broadband policies (Sign-up Disclaimer, Guideline for Connection to "The Network" for all New Construction.)