SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
7:00pm, August 17, 2022
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

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

Staff: Katherine A. Warden (KW), Town Administrator; Beverly Gilbert (BG), *Administrative Assistant;* Robin Mathiesen, Town Clerk

Others: Lei-Anne Ellis, Al Blake (Planning Board Member)

Others remote: Bob Ronzio (Planning Board Chairperson), Michael Goodenough (TetraHydra Ag Tek LLC), Ann Marie (no last name provided)

1. **The Chairperson will call the Select Board meeting to order.**
   BE called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and indicated that the SB is 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**
   There was no Broadband update at tonight's meeting.

4. **Approval of the July 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes, and the amended July 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes**
   CS moved to approve the amended July 6, 2022 meeting minutes, ML 2nd: Motion carried unanimously. CS moved to approve the July 20, 2022 meeting minutes, ML 2nd: Motion carried unanimously.

5. **Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**
   Lei-Anne Ellis, discussed her letter to the SB (dated July 20, 2022 re: TetraHydra Ag Tek LLC Application for a Marijuana Cultivation Tier 11 License). Michael Goodenough (TetraHydra Ag Tek LLC) advised that TetraHydra Ag Tek will honor the terms of the Planning Board's Special Permit (extraction will not occur in Becket) and that the business plan (submitted to the Cannabis Control Commission) contains estimates due to changing parameters (such as sales, growing yields, expenses, etc.). The SB indicated that specific questions about the Special Permit falls under the jurisdiction of the Planning Board. During discussion BE indicated that it is his understanding that the Cannabis Control Commission conducts inspections.

   Planning Board Member Al Blake asked if the SB would place articles on the next Town Meeting Warrant: 1) Local Option Short-term Rental Room Tax and 2) Local Option Meal Tax. CS stated he likes the idea of increasing revenue through these mechanisms to reduce the town's real property tax rate. BE stated local tax options may be used to fund infrastructure and equipment. During discussions, the SB mentioned the town voted against meal and room taxes at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting. ML stated he would not support revisiting these ATM articles. The SB will consider a local Room Tax town meeting article. Al Blake will submit a citizen's petition for a town meeting article for a local meal tax.

6. **Select Board to vote to appoint David Weiler to the Parks & Recreation Committee effective August 17, 2022 through June 30, 2025, and Jeff Wilkinson to the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee effective August 17, 2022 through December 31, 2022**
CS moved to appoint David Weiler to the Parks & Recreation Committee effective August 17, 2022 through June 20, 2025. ML 2nd. Vote 3-0. CS moved to appoint Jeff Wilkinson to the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee effective August 17, 2022 through December 31, 2022. ML 2nd. Vote 3-0.

7. **Select Board to vote on the Town Clerk's recommended Election Worker appointments effective August 17, 2022 through August 14, 2023:**
Julia Grace (Democrat, Flora Whiffen (Unenrolled), Alvin Blake (Unenrolled), Lawrence Goetz (Unenrolled), Steven Reiss (Democrat), Victoria Bleier (Unenrolled), Ruth Rosenthal (Unenrolled), Adrienne Metcalf (Unenrolled), Josh Schwartzbach (Unenrolled), Chuck Garman (Unenrolled), Dan Parnell (Unenrolled), Susan Purser (Democrat), Purr McEwan (Unenrolled), Gale LaBelle (Republican) & Susan Crossley (Democrat)
ML moved to appoint the above captioned Town Clerk's recommendations for Election Workers, effective August 17, 2022 through August 14, 2023. CS 2nd: Motion carried 3-0.
Per Town Clerk Robin Mathiesen's inquiry, KW will research whether the SB may appoint an individual to serve as an Election Worker if that person is a Town Constable. Robin clarified the person would not work in both roles simultaneously. The SB advised in Becket the Town Clerk determines which Election Workers will serve as the Election Warden and the SB appoints Election Workers, not Election Wardens.

8. **Parks & Recreation Committee's inquiry re: Town Beach matters:**
- **Funding & Status of Land Survey**
- **Funding for Tree removal along Mecum Drive**

The SB indicated that a few years ago, they had voted to obtain a quote to fund a survey of the Town Beach Property. KW reported she found a 1988 Survey (Dennis Drumm) of Camp Greylock's property. KW reported Hilltown Land Surveys recommended conducting an in-depth deed/title search before spending funds on a survey. The SB agreed with this approach. Lukas Horn, one of the owners of Camp Greylock, noticed this agenda item and visited KW this afternoon.

The Parks & Recreation Committee had recommended removal of various trees along Mecum Road to add parking spaces. The SB indicated that the Tree Warden is authorized to remove dead/dangerous trees and this is funded via a designated account. Due to that the trees at the Town Beach are healthy, the town would need to follow a separate process and funding mechanism for removal of these trees.

Actions to be taken: KW will discuss funding for the Title Search/Survey/Tree removal with the Town Accountant. KW will meet with a Parks & Recreation Committee member to find out which trees they would like removed. After that occurs, KW will schedule a meeting with Mr. Horn at the Town Beach. KW will research firms that conduct in-depth title searches.

9. **Select Board to vote on accepting Track One Recovery Grant from the USDA for $69,600.00**
CS moved to accept the Track One Recovery Grant from the USDA for $69,600.00 for the purchase of a Fly Car with the preference for a hybrid model, and a defribulator. ML 2nd. Vote: 3-0.

10. **Select Board to vote to disband the Town Administrator Screening Committee**
ML moved to disband the Town Administrator Screening Committee now that the new Town Administrator is on board, CS 2nd. Motion carried 3-0.

11. **Update Policy COVID Pay for Staff**
CS moved that effective August 17, 2022, wages for employees who test positive for COVID will no longer be treated in a separate category: employees who miss work due to COVID may use their leave in accordance with the policy outlined in the employee handbook. ML 2nd: Motion carried unanimously.

12. **Select Board to review Departmental Reports**
- **Building Inspector – July 2022**
- **Animal Control Officer – May, June & July 2022**
- **Highway Superintendent – July 4 through July 29, 2022**
- **Others - tba**

In addition to the above captioned, the SB reviewed the Ambulance Department Report. The SB noticed many mutual calls to Lee and Otis. KW will contact the Otis Town Administrator to discuss if there is interest in considering shared Ambulance Service.

13. **Town Administrator's Report**
KW discussed the following update:
- Met with all but 4 Departments & will be meeting with those next week. Then plan on meeting with all committees and boards over the next two months.
- CBRSD 7 town advisory – who represents the town? The SB agreed ML will represent that Town.
- McNerney Rd – update from board. KW will contact former Town Administrator Bill Caldwell to ascertain the status of this project.
- Wade Inn Rd – waiting to be notified about when counters will be placed
- Cross Rd – Stop sign has been installed. KW will drive on Wade Inn Road to check other stop signs.
- Fire Truck – received contract back
- USDA Grant for Ambulance Flycar and Defribulator awarded – discussed under agenda item 9.
- Drought update (info from MEMA Zoom meeting) – Encouraging residents to start practicing water conservation – could be issues if wells start to dry up. KW will post a message on the website.
- Vocational Transportation – The Town sent letters regarding Lecrenski's bus service to students enrolled at Smith Vocational & Agricultural H.S. KW is collaborating with the Town of Washington to arrange for transportation for one Becket student enrolled at Taconic and another Becket student enrolled at McCann. BE advised that the SB designated Smith Vocational & Agricultural H.S. as the preferred vocational high school for Becket students (Board of Selectmen meeting dated March 16, 2016). The policy includes that the town will fund a non-preferred vocational high school if it offers training programs not available at the preferred vocational high school. KW will investigate whether the Taconic High School

student's program is specific to Taconic. If not, perhaps the student may transfer to Smith Vocational and Agricultural H.S. if it is offered there.

Per Al Blake's inquiry, KW will contact the Highway Superintendent re: the status of the repair of the culvert on Werden Road. She will also check on the status of the Benton Hill Road culvert grant.

14. Select Board's Comments and Announcements

BE commended KW for keeping the SB updated about town matters through e-mails.

Due to a Mass. Highway Association meeting, BE is not available to attend a SB meeting on September 21st. On September 7th, the SB will determine if it wishes to reschedule or hold the September 21st meeting in his absence.

ML will attend a MassTrails Conference on November 12th. The members agreed the conference may be paid through SB's expense account.

15. Any other business to come before the Board

Bob Ronzio stated that the Planning Board will send a letter announcing their vote to request for the SB to reappoint Gale Labelle to serve as the Planning Board's Associate Member.

Bob Ronzio requested for administration to recruit for an Administrative Assistant to the Planning Board (14 hours per week). KW will discuss funding with the Town Accountant for this position and will meet with Bob Ronzio.

16. Correspondence/announcements:

- **2022.07.20, Lei-Anne Ellis re: TetraHydra Ag Tek LLC Application for a Marijuana Cultivation Tier 11 License**

Discussion ensued under Agenda Item 5. Public Comment

17. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants

The SB reviewed and signed the payable warrants.

18. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting

ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd: Motion carried 3-0. At 8:27pm, BE adjourned the meeting.

Signed by:

William H. Elovirta / *September 7, 2022*

William H. Elovirta, *Chair* Date Approved

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- 2022.08.17 Select Board Agenda
- 2022.07.06 Select Board Amended Minutes, and 2022.07.20 Select Board Minutes
- Town Administrator's Report
- Reports as listed above - Agenda Item 13
- 2022.08.10 Parks & Recreation Letter
- Correspondence as listed above - Agenda item 17
- Appointment Applications – David Weiler and Jeff Wilkinson
- 2022.08.10 Town Clerk's e-mail recommendations of Poll Workers