

**Select Board Meeting Minutes**  
**7:00pm, February 03, 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 **Remote participation:** Shelby Macri, Country Journal; Katherine Dickinson and 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 discussed and signed the Facility Encroachment Agreement (railroad crossing at High Street) between CSX Transportation, Inc. and the Town of Becket.

After discussion with MLP Manager Bob Gross, BE moved to approve, with the below changes (noted in bold), the Broadband documents: 1) Changes to Adopted Policies, 2) Sign-up Disclaimer, 3) Guidelines for Connection to “The Network” for all New Construction and 4) Process for Monitoring and Collecting Drop Costs in Excess of the \$2,000 Town Subsidy During the construction period, CS 2<sup>nd</sup>: unanimous.

Changes to Title:

**Policy Guidelines** for Connection to “The Network” for all New Construction

Changes to last sentence in Process for Monitoring and Collecting Drop Costs in Excess of the \$2,000 Town Subsidy During the construction period:

A true up to **the** estimate will be finalized and the subscriber will be notified if **an any** additional payment or refund is due and will be included in the next monthly bill.

MLP Manager Bob Gross will present additional policies for the SB to consider at a future meeting: 1) Service Suspension and 2) Policy Regarding Network Extensions

**4. Approval of the January 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

ML moved to approve the 1/20/2021 meeting minutes: BE 2nd: unanimous.

5. **Public Input (limited to 3 minutes per person, 20 minutes total for this agenda item).**

There was no public input.

6. **Select Board to acknowledge Neil Toomey tendered his resignation from the Community Preservation Committee effective January 29, 2021**

The Select Board acknowledged receipt of Neil Toomey's e-mail stating that he resigns from the Community Preservation Committee effective Jan. 29, 2021. The Select Board members indicated that they are sorry to see Neil Toomey, a longstanding member and leader, step down from the CPC. The SB signed a letter of appreciation to Mr. Toomey.

7. **Select Board to review Departmental Reports**

♦ **Highway Superintendent (Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> through Jan. 29<sup>th</sup>)**

♦ **Others tba**

In addition to the Highway Superintendent's report, the SB reviewed the Ambulance Department's January Report.

8. **Town Administrator's Report**

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

- Broadband – construction underway in FSA 2
- Complete Streets – Tier 2 Application sent, \$38,000 for prioritization plan
- DER Grant – BETA engineering (Benton Hill Road work is continuing)
- Budgets – Requests are in, beginning processing. FinCom tomorrow
- Annual Reports
- MMA Conference – 3½% increase in local aid, MIIA avg. 2.9% increase (need actual)
- MVP Grant – An activity for the action grant, an engineer will put together hydrology report where water is and where it flows
- Green Communities Grant – BC will apply for Streetlight conversion to LEDs. He will apply in the fall. The current grant has not officially been closed out
- Community One Stop – grant portal
- Police Station renovation is nearing completion
- COVID Testing @ Town Hall – 2/9 - through the CHP mobile unit
- Student from Smith Co-op program has been working out very well at the Highway Department. This is paid through UMass Transportation and the Laborer's trust fund.
- Elections grant – new ballot boxes received
- Truck #1 replacement – anticipated for February 8<sup>th</sup>
- MMA Policy Committee on Public works, transportation and utilities
- Caucus, election and ATM – BC stated that the SB should consider if we want to cancel the caucus, and postpone the dates of the ATM and ATE in case we once again need to conduct the ATM outdoors due to the pandemic.
- BC will post job opportunities for one or two Police Department Reserve officers. He predicts that there may be a shortage of Reserve Officers due to that the current police

reform bill is eliminating the Reserve Academy and will only have the Full-time Police Academy.

**9. Select Board's Comments and Announcements**

CS relayed that the Energy Committee hopes the Town will apply for a larger number of items (such as additional insulation at Fire Station 1, solar project) through the Green Communities Grant program.

ML will talk about the town's Not In Our County pledge at an Otis Board of Selectmen's meeting during discussion relating to diversity/stopping hate.

**10. Any other business to come before the Board**

Per Beverly's request for clarification, the SB advised that the In Memoriam section of the Annual Town Report is designed to include Town of Becket officials, employees, and volunteers only (Not Lake and Road District officials).

BE indicated that it is almost time to conduct the Town Administrator's performance appraisal. BE will coordinate the timeframes with BG who will send notifications/appraisal forms to the SB, Department Heads and Town Administrator (self-appraisal).

BE specified that in accordance with the Town Administrator's employment agreement, the Select Board members must convey to BC by July 28<sup>th</sup> (to provide six-month's notice), if they do not intend to continue his employment with the town. BE suggested that the SB negotiate the new contract during the autumn if they wish for BC to remain.

**11. Correspondence:**

- ♦ 2021.01.24 copy of letter from David and Katherine Dickinson to Planning Board re: concern about the proposed Cannabis Cultivation operation at 509 Quarry Road.
- ♦ 2021.01.29 Zoning Board of Appeals Notice of March 2, 2021 Public Hearing to review a Special Permit Application submitted by John Notar and Tracy Kuebler to install a camping trailer as temporary housing during construction at Jacobs Ladder Road [Map 217, Lot 1.]

The Select Board reviewed the above correspondence.

**12. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants.**


The SB reviewed and signed payable warrants.

**13. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting**

ML moved to adjourn, BE 2nd: unanimous. BE adjourned the meeting at 7:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beverly Gilbert, Administrative Assistant

Signed by:

  
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William Elovirta, Chairperson / February 17, 2021  
Date Approved

**Documents discussed at this meeting:**

- ✚ 2021.02.03 Town Administrator's Report
- ✚ 2021.01.20 Select Board Minutes
- ✚ Correspondence (See agenda item 12)
- ✚ Departmental Reports (See agenda item 8)
- ✚ Proposed Broadband policies (Sign-up Disclaimer, Guidelines for Connection to "The Network" for all New Construction, Changes to Adopted Policies.) Contract Facility Encroachment Agreement
- ✚ 2021.01.29 email from Neil Toomey to resign from the Community Preservation Committee
- ✚ Letter of Appreciation to Neil Toomey