# SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
# 7:00pm, February 8, 2023
# Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

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

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

**Others Remote:** Marilyn Grochowski, Bill Tosch, unknown person

1. **The Chairperson will call the Select Board meeting to order.**
   BE called the meeting to order at 7pm. He indicated that the SB is recording the meeting.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
   BE led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Select Board to vote on Highway Superintendent and Engineering firm's recommendation to award the bid of the "Town of Becket Highway Department, Preservation of Werden Road Bridge over Thomas Brook, Contract No. 2023-1" Project to Western Earthworks.**
   CS moved to accept the Highway Superintendent and Engineering firm's recommendation to award the bid of the "Town of Becket Highway Department, Preservation of Werden Road Bridge over Thomas Brook, Contract No. 2023-1" Project to Western Earthworks at a cost of $191,049.75 (due to an addition error, the bid amount was originally listed as $203,299.75), ML 2nd: Roll call: Bill Elovirta – yes, Chris Swindlehurst – yes, and Michael Lavery – yes.

4. **Broadband Update and Select Board to discuss and possibly vote on policies and decisions relating to the Broadband Project**
   None

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

6. **Select Board to review Mountain Grove Association's request (January 18, 2023 letter) for the Select Board to send a letter to MassDOT in support of Mountain Grove Association's request to MassDOT to install permanent digital readout speed awareness radar monitors on Route 8 at both the north and south ends of Shaw Pond in advance of the curves that approach both sides of the crosswalk.**
   Marilyn Grochowski spoke on behalf of the Board of Directors of Mountain Grove Association to request the SB's support to promote safety at the Route 8 crosswalk from their homes to Shaw Pond. She discussed MassDOTs response (District Highway Director Francisca Heming's letter dated 2/3/2023) to their letter asking for the installation of permanent digital readout speed awareness radar monitors on Rt. 8 at Shaw Pond. They appreciate that MassDOT intends to install an RRFB (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon) at the crosswalk and upgrade the crosswalk markings, and they are concerned that these measures will not solve the safety issues. Marilyn explained that the RRFB is installed at the crosswalk itself and in our situation, motorists cannot see the crosswalk until they are upon it because of the curves in the road in both directions shortly before the crosswalk. Moreover, they fear the RRFB by itself may give those crossing the highway a false

sense of security. Traffic comes through those curves much of the time at a great rate of speed - too fast to stop quickly (and safely) if there is someone in the crosswalk. She pointed out that pedestrians cannot hear electric cars. She asked the Select Board per MassDOT's suggestion, initiate a partnership with the MassDOT to have permanent digital readout speed awareness radar monitors installed on both the north and southbound lanes of Rt. 8 in advance of the curves that approach both sides of our crosswalk.

In response, the SB agreed to the following actions:

- The SB will explore installation of permanent readout speed awareness radar monitors. KW will contact Patrick Tierney, MassDOT, to inquire about permits and speed sign vendors.
- In the springtime, the Becket Highway Dept. will setup the town's speed feedback trailer. Last night the Select Board discussed Mountain Grove Association's concern (meeting documents attached for your reference) about the Route 8 crosswalk by their community: In the spring, please alternate placing the town's speed feedback trailer at the north and south ends of Shaw Pond in advance of the curves that approach both sides of the crosswalk.

- KW will contact the Police Chief to discuss patrolling this area.

7. **Select Board to acknowledge Town Mechanic Matthew Larson's resignation (letter dated 1/30/2023). His last day working for the Town Highway Dept. will be February 10, 2023.**
   The SB acknowledged receipt of Town Mechanic Matthew Larson's resignation and that his last day working for the Town will be on February 10, 2023.

8. **The Select Board will review the Historical Commission's request for the Select Board to send a letter of support to the Community Preservation Committee re: the Historical Commission's Community Preservation Application [$28,163 funding request - Cupola Placement on Town Hall].**
   The Select Board reviewed the Historical Commission's request for the Select Board to send a letter of support to the Community Preservation Committee re: the Historical Commission's Community Preservation Application [$28,163 funding request - Cupola Placement on Town Hall]. The Select Board expressed concerns about installation/engineering costs, long-term maintenance, and potential problems to the Town Hall roof structure. BE asked if there was a motion to provide a letter of support. None of the members entertained a motion. KW will notify the Historical Commission about the SB's decision.

9. **Select Board to vote on the following Town Administrative recommended appointments:**
   - **Trevor Clement – change from Assistant Wiring Inspector to Wiring Inspector, effective February 8, 2023 through June 30, 2023**
   - **Dana Spring – Change from Wiring Inspector to Assistant Wiring Inspector, effective February 8, 2023 through June 30, 2023**

   KW reported that due to new work commitments, Dana Spring is no longer able to serve as the primary Wiring Inspector, and Trevor Clement is able to take on additional calls. They are willing to swap positions. CS moved for Trevor Clement and Dana Spring to swap Wiring Inspector positions effective immediately through June 30, 2023.

10. **Approval of the January 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes**
    ML moved to approve the January 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes. CS 2nd: Roll call Roll call: Bill Elovirta – yes, Chris Swindlehurst – yes, and Michael Lavery – yes.

11. **Annual Town Report Cover Photo Contest**
    The SB choose the 2022 Annual Town Report front and back cover photographs. There were eighteen photographs. BG will convey the SB's appreciation to all photographers who took the time to submit their entries.

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

- **Tba**

The Feb. 22nd agenda will include the Building Inspector, January 2023 monthly activity report (received today).

**13. Town Administrator's Report**

KW gave the following update:

- Budget is almost complete, working on Capital Project submissions
- Open Forum on Sat., 2pm to explain the ATM Warrant Article about the Short-Term Rental Excise Tax.
- The Select Board declined KW's inquiry if they would like to consider a public forum before the ATM to discuss the Warrant.
- KW to attend 2/9/2023 eve meeting – Central Berkshire Regional School District Meeting re: Contract negotiations
- Becket Center Park sign was broken during the storm. BE will contact Rapid Signs (originally created the sign) for replacement.
- The Highway Superintendent and KW met with BETA Engineering to discuss potential Complete Street Projects. She pointed out that Complete Streets does not cover engineering.
- Hot box has been ordered.

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

None

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

The SB will discuss BE's draft Select Board's report for the 2022 Annual Town Report on Feb. 22nd.

Before last weekend's cold temperature advisory, the SB had received an inquiry about warming shelters in case a power outage occurred. Many communities with a homeless population have shelters. Fortunately Becket did not have power outages throughout the town. KW will research folding cots to have on hand for town buildings in the event of power outages.

**16. Correspondence/announcements:**

- 2023.01.014 letter from Donna A. Carnevale request for the Town to pay for a Culligan Water Treatment System at her home to mitigate road salt seepage into her well.
- At the Massachusetts Municipal Association Conference, Kathe Warden received a book: Massachusetts a Pictorial Celebration of Its 351 City and Town Halls by Maurice Ringel and KP Law Celebrating its 10th Anniversary.
- 2023.01.23, Zoning Board of Appeals Notice of Public Hearing scheduled on March 7, 2023 to review Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Inc.'s application re: Site Plan Approval for construction of a new theatre to replace Duke Theater, construction of fire protection structures, above ground water tank and pump house at 358 George Carter Road (Map 407, Lot 16).

KW will ask Town Counsel to review Donna Carnevale's above referenced letter.

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

The SB reviewed and signed payable warrants.

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

ML moved to adjourn, CS 2nd: Roll call: Bill Elovirta – yes, Chris Swindlehurst – yes, and Michael Lavery – yes. At 8:07pm, BE adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*

**Signed by**:

_____ / *February 27, 2023*
William H. Elovirta, *Chair* Date Approved

**Documents discussed at this meeting:**

- 2023.02.08 Select Board Agenda
- 2023.01.18 Select Board Meeting Minutes
- Correspondence as listed above - Agenda item 16
- Town Administrator's report
- Departmental Report(s) listed above Agenda item 12
- 2023.01.30 Matthew Larson's letter of resignation
- 2023.01.17, Historical Commission's letter re: request for SB letter of support for CPC Grant Application – Cupola
- 2023.02.08 e-mail Marilyn Grochowski message to Select Board re: Mt. Grove's Crosswalk; 2023.01.18 Mountain Grove's letter to the Select Board re: Crosswalk with attached 2023.01.18 Mountain Grove's letter to Mass. DOT re: Crosswalk; 2023.02.03, MassDOT letter responding to Mountain Grove's letter;
- 2023.01.20 e-mail from Town Administrator forwarding Christopher W. Jones (BETA Engineering) letter re: recommendation concerning Preservation of Werden Road Bridge over Thomas Brook Contract No. 2023-1 (attached reference check/interview sheet)
- 18 photograph submittals – 2022 Annual Town Report Contest