

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
6:30pm, May 31, 2023
Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket

Attendees

Select Board (SB): William Elovirta (BE), *Chair*; Chris Swindlehurst (CS), *Vice-Chair*; Jeff Piemont (JP), *Clerk*

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

Others: Bob Gross, MLP Manager; Jeremy Dunn; Olivia Pattison, Neon Newt Remote: Al Blake

1. The Chairperson will call the Select Board meeting to order.

BE called the meeting to order at 6:30. BE advised that the SB is recording the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

BE led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Reorganization of the Select Board

BE welcomed Jeff Piemont to the SB. After discussion, CS moved to nominate BE as the Chairperson, JP 2nd: Motion carried with BE recusing himself. BE moved to nominate CS as the Vice Chairperson, JP 2nd: Motion carried with CS recusing himself. BE moved to nominate JP as the Clerk, CS 2nd: Motion carried with JP recusing himself.

4. 6:30 p.m. Public Hearing on the application of Neon Newt LLC for an Annual Section 12 Restaurant Wines & Malt Beverages with Cordials/Liqueurs license for operation at 30 Washington Street, Becket, MA 01223 (Assessors Map 206, Lot 39).

BE read the above captioned agenda item, and the Public Hearing Notice. At 6:35pm, BE opened the public hearing. Olivia Pattison, owner of Neon Newt, LLC, discussed her application with the SB. BG indicated that no one submitted comments regarding this application, and the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission had conveyed that the town's quota allows for the Town of Becket to issue a Wine & Malt Beverages with Cordials/Liqueurs License and it is classified under Wine & Beer (not All Alcoholic Beverages). Ms. Pattison stated that several customers suggested including cocktails (for example, mimosas) on her brunch menu. By law, she will be required to purchase alcoholic beverages through a distributor. Ms. Pattison discussed her proposed days/hours and that she hopes to offer fine dining on Monday evenings. She indicated that finding staff can be challenging. KW suggested contacting Smith Vocational H.S., McCann Technical H.S. and Berkshire Community Colleges, all which have culinary programs. Bob Gross suggested opening on Tuesdays, since many of the restaurants in Lenox are closed on that day. At 6:41pm, BE closed the comment portion of the public hearing. CS moved to approve the application of Neon Newt LLC for an Annual Section 12 Restaurant Wines & Malt Beverages with Cordials/Liqueurs license for operation at 30 Washington Street, Becket, MA 01223 (Assessors Map 206, Lot 39). JP 2nd: Motion carried 3-0. The SB signed the Licensing Authority Certification to convey the SB's decision which will accompany the

application BG will forward to the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission. The public hearing ended at 6:42pm.

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

Al Blake discussed Esau Heel Trail. CS stated that the town is not responsible for maintaining this trail. KW conveyed that the town does not have staffing nor equipment (wood chipper) to devote to the trail. Actions:

- KW will ask the Town Custodian, to help transport, tomorrow, a picnic table the Parks & Recreation Committee is providing to the trail.
- KW agreed to ask the Highway Superintendent to assess the plausibility of removing or moving to another area several boulders

Al Blake requested for the town to conduct a survey on Esau Heel Trail and surrounding parcels with the idea that the trail could be placed in a land protection program. The consensus of the SB and KW is due to the cost of the survey, if the town has interest in exploring use of the land for town building(s), then a survey would be done at that time.

6. Broadband Update, and SB vote to accept the Revised Determination of the Drop Subsidy Amount Policy, proposed by the Broadband Ad Hoc Group.

Broadband Ad Hoc Group Member Jeremy Dunn and MLP Manager Bob Gross discussed the above captioned. CS moved to accept the revised determination of the drop Subsidy Amount proposed by the Broadband Ad Hoc Group (The drop subsidy will reduce to \$750 after June 30th, with an exception for the unbuilt section of Fiber Service Area 10, which will continue as \$2,000 subsidy until construction of FSA 10 is complete), and the SB delegate authority to the MLP Manager to set the exact wording of the policy, JP 2nd: Motion carried unanimously.

Bob Gross advised the Broadband Ad Hoc Group will send the revised policy via email to everyone who has already signed up but not yet obtained their drop, and others for whom we have an email. The new policy will be published on becketbroadband.org, and communicated to WCF customer service so they can clearly tell new/prospective customers.

Bob Gross indicated that if a property owner in Becket Woods does not grant an easement to facilitate service, the costs for drops to three premises (including the property owner who has not granted the easement) will increase substantially.

7. Select Board to vote to swap WiredWest appointments:

- **Jeff Piemont from Delegate to Alternate Delegate through June 30, 2024**
- **Robert Gross from Alternate Delegate to Delegate through June 30, 2024**

CS moved to change Jeff Piemont's WiredWest appointment from Delegate to Alternate Delegate through June 2024, and Robert Gross from Alternate Delegate to Delegate through June 30, 2024. BE 2nd: Motion carried with JP abstaining. JP indicated that the WiredWest meetings conflict with the SB meetings, and he anticipates stepping down after contract negotiations between WiredWest and Westfield occur (Cathy Defoe had conveyed a willingness to serve in that capacity).

8. Discussion re: Incentivizing residents to clean up trash on Becket Roads.

Jeremy Dunn discussed his concern about trash discarded on Becket Roads. He regularly picks up litter and because the cost of discarding it adds up (each bag is \$2.00 at the Becket Transfer Station), he suggested for the town to provide an incentive to encourage residents to join along with these efforts. The SB agreed to test out waiving the bag sticker fee for roadside trash. KW will purchase purple 33 gallon bags that may be signed out in Town Hall.

9. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- **May 17, 2023**

CS moved to approve the May 17, 2023 minutes. BE 2nd: Motion carried with JP abstaining since he was not a SB member on May 17th.

10. Select Board to vote to approve for Ann Krawet and James Levy to swap Planning Board related positions: Ann Krawet to resign from Alternate Planning Board Representative to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and she will serve as Planning Board's Representative to the Community Preservation Committee. James Levy to resign from the Community Preservation Committee and he will serve as the Alternate Planning Board Representative to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission.

BE stated that he tabled the above captioned item until after the Town Election.

CS moved to swap Planning Board positions: Ann Krawet will become the Planning Board's Representative to the Community Preservation Committee, and James Levy will become the Alternate Representative to the Berkshire Regional Planning Committee, BE 2nd: Motion carried unanimously.

11. Departmental Reports

- Police Department Offense Listing 1/1/2023 through 5/22/2023, Location/Street Breakdown of fines/offenses 1/1/2023 through 5/22/2023

The SB reviewed the above listed report.

12. Town Administrator's Report

KW reported on the following items:

- She read Raymond Ferrin's resignation letter (Ambulance Director/Emergency Management Director). His resignation is effective July 10, 2023. A brief discussion ensued on structuring this position.
- Crystal Pond Association asked if they may install speed reducing bumps on Mallard Way (their private way). The SB asked KW to convey that the SB has no objection, the SB recommends for them to confer with their counsel, and they will need to contact the Fire, Police and Ambulance Departments.
- KW will attend the Berkshire County Managers meeting tomorrow.
- The Auditors have started working on the FY2022 audit and will spend time in Town Hall beginning next week.
- KW and BG met with Berkshire Grown. Becket will participate in their Farmer's market pilot program (Sept. through Nov) at the Pavilion adjacent to the Town Hall.

- KW met with Berkshire Health Systems about Community Outreach to arrange to offer medical services in Becket: Blood Pressure Clinics, Physicals for School Children (Sports), wellness clinics, vaccines.

13. Select Board's Comments and Announcements

JP is considering attending the MMA Select Board training.

CS expressed Fire Dept.'s interest in practicing using the Jaws of Life on the 2013 Ford Explorer (Fly Car) about to be scraped Flycar but abandoned the idea after hearing the town will receive \$300 for it.

CS asked if the Bonny Rigg Hill Campground is non-profit. KW will let him know.

CS had reviewed Polson's estimate for the generator, and offered to provide input on specs. KW advised due to the cost, the town is required to receive at least 3 quotes.

BE remarked that Bob Scolforo did a beautiful job mowing town properties and the N. Becket Cemetery.

CS requested for KW to ask RJ to return to address the Town Hall heat pumps.

14. Any other business to come before the Board

None

15. Correspondence:

- 2023.05.08 KP Law re: Certificate of Owner's Legal Counsel – Werden Road Bridge
- 2023.05.13 Sherwood Greens Road Improvement and Maintenance District: QR Code and link to Annual Report, Annual District June 3, 2023 Warrant, For of Proxy Vote

The SB reviewed the above communications.

16. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants

The SB signed the payable warrants.

17. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting

JP moved to adjourn the meeting, CS 2nd: Motion carried unanimously. At 8pm, BE adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*

Signed by:



William H. Elovirta, *Chair*

/ June 7, 2023

Date Approved