# SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
**7:00pm, August 2, 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;

**Others:** None

1. **The Chairperson will call the Select Board meeting to order.**
   BE called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

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

3. **Approval of the 7/19/2023 Meeting Minutes**
   CS moved to approve the 7/19/2023 minutes, JP 2nd: Motion carried unanimously.

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

5. **Barbara Craft-Reiss, Central Berkshire Regional School District Committee Member re: status of the Regional Agreement**
   Due to that Barbara Craft-Reiss was not able to attend, the SB tabled this agenda item.

6. **Select Board to assign a representative to the Central Berkshire Regional School District Regional Agreement Sub-Committee**
   BE moved to assign JP as the town's representative to the Central Berkshire Regional School District Regional Agreement Sub-Committee, CS 2nd. Motion carried with JP recusing himself. KW will e-mail the school district office notification that JP is replacing former Select Board Member Michael Lavery on this sub-committee.

   The SB had received a final draft of the proposed regional agreement. BE will research the laws referenced under Section VI. Incurring of Debt. He expressed concern about assigning debt based on the one-person, one vote (Town Elections) mechanism which the school committee voted to employ to authorize funding construction of the regional high school. BE stated that approval of the debt passed by eighty-eight votes districtwide. BE stated that if Town Meeting approval from 5 out of the 7 district towns' method was used to ratify approval, the Regional High School debt would not have passed. JP pointed out that the draft agreement does not contain language to address if a town's population significantly changes, and how that would impact the number of representatives allotted to each town (Section II. The Regional District School Committee's composition).

7. **Benton Hill Road Closure/Repair Discussion.**
KW reported that a Jersey barrier has been set up on one side and allows one-way traffic with ample room for an emergency vehicle. She has scheduled separate meetings with two engineering firms to review a prior proposal for this project. KW anticipates going out to bid on this project during the winter/spring. Hopefully the project will be completed during the summer of 2024. Sen. Mark and Rep. Pignatelli, at last week's forum in Washington, stated that they will advocate for the Governor to submit a disaster aid bill to the legislature. KW will also ask the engineers to provide a report to pave portion of Leonhardt Road vulnerable to washouts.

8. **Select Board to review and vote on One-Day Alcoholic Beverages Permit Application**
   - **Applicant's Name: Garry M. Roller, Manager LLC**
   - **Business: MRM Hospitality**
   - **Event: Fundraiser for the Becket Arts Center**
   - **Time and location: Sunday, Aug. 27th at Camp Watitoh, 1885 Main Street**

   In accordance with the town's policy on One-day Liquor Licenses, an event being handled by a caterer that has its own license under MGL Chapter 138, section 12 issued by the ABCC does not require a One-Day Liquor License from the Town unless alcohol is being served in ANY public Town owned building whether it is being sold or given away. Because MRM Hospitality has a catering license under MGL Chapter 138, Section 12, and the event is at Camp Watitoh, the SB took no action on this agenda item. On August 19th, the SB will discuss and potentially vote on BG's suggested revisions to the One-Day Liquor Policy including the Determination of License Requirements, and Application sections.

9. **Select Board to review Departmental Reports**
   - **Volunteer Fire Dept. – January 2023 through June 2023**
   - **Others tba**

   The SB discussed the Volunteer Fire Dept. report (January 2023 through June 2023). CS fielded JP's questions regarding interpretation of formatting and this led to a discussion about false alarm fines.

   The SB's meeting packet included the Building Inspector's July 2023 report.

10. **Town Administrator's Report**
KW provided the following update:
   - Werden Road: KW described the progress of this project including using shotcrete as part of the process to remedy an eroded culvert pipe/dam system.
   - McNerney Road: The final grinding occurred today. Monday and Tuesday, there will be injections. Paving begins on Wednesday. Per CS's suggestion, before paving, that KW will discuss the conditions of the catch basins with the Highway Superintendent. He expressed concern and asked for assurance to confirm they are in good operating shape, and not compromised.
   - OPEB Fund was opened effective March 15, 2020. In September, KW will deposit $30,000 (includes $15,000 FY2023, and $15,000 FY2024)
   - Jacob Pillow's PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes): The SB supports review of Jacob's Pillow's PILOT. For history, JP will research documents at the Registry. BE suggested looking at the PILOT programs for all non-profit tax exempt businesses and properties in town.

- KW met with the Otis Town Administrator and Jeff Blanchard of JP Consulting Group who provided a Proposal & Statement of Work for Otis & Becket (study for shared Ambulance Service). The statement of work includes three phases 1) Area of Coverage Maps, 2) Call Date Input and Analysis and 3) Predictive Modeling. Before recommending the proposals or portions of the proposal, KW and the Otis TA will wait until the state approves its budget in anticipation of applying for a Community Compact Regional Grant.
- Discussion about Becket Quarry – KW shared an e-mail she sent to Brian Cruey of the Trustees of Reservations (owner of the Becket Quarry). The Fire Chief and Ambulance Director approached her about recent emergency service calls to the Quarry. Cliff diving/jumping into the water continues to occur and is glamorized on YouTube despite that swimming is prohibited. The SB and KW expressed concern about the potential danger to the town's Emergency responders.

  JP looked up YouTube's harmful or dangerous content policy. Based on this the SB agree the Quarry videos fall under this category and it is a good idea to ask the Trustees of Reservations to report this to YouTube with a request for removal. The SB would like to meet with the Trustees of Reservations, and emergency services departments (Fire, Ambulance, Police) in order to discuss this issue and see what the Trustees can do to address this situation. KW will contact the departments and Trustees of Reservations.

**11. Select Board's Comments and Announcements**
None

**12. Any other business to come before the Board**
None

**13.** Correspondence/announcements:

- **Received 2022.07.20 VHB re: CSX Transportation, Inc.'s 2023 Yearly Operational Plan for Railroad Right-of-Way Vegetation Management is available upon request from sherzog@vhb.com Application will commence on or after July 31 and conclude on or before September 15, 2023.**

**Others tba**

Under agenda item 10, The SB discussed **Jan Elovirta's e-mail dated August 2, 2023 regarding The Becket Quarry and Jacob's Well property**.

**14. Select Board to review and sign payable warrants**
The SB reviewed and signed the payable warrants.

**15. Select Board to adjourn the Meeting**
JP moved to adjourn the meeting, CS 2nd: Motion carried unanimously. At 8:07pm, BE adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*

Signed by:

William H. Elovirta / *August 16, 2023*

William H. Elovirta, *Chair* Date Approved

**Meeting documents:**

- Agenda
- Town Administrator's Report, JP Consulting Group Proposal & Statement of Work
- July 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- Departmental reports listed agenda item 9
- Correspondence listed agenda item 13
- 2023.07.26 email from Town Administrator forwarding the RAAC-Final Draft o Proposed Regional Agreement (documents: next steps in the process, final draft of the proposed regional agreement