

Pursuant to the foregoing warrant, the Annual Town Meeting was called on May 11, 2013, 7:00 p.m. at Becket Washington School, 12 Maple Street, Becket, MA 01223 . There being a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Moderator. There were 71 registered voters present (5.25 % of 1,1351 registered voters) and a total of 90 people attended the meeting. Town Officials Present: Bruce Garlow, Moderator; Jeanne Pryor, Bill Elovirta, and Mark Karlberg, Selectmen; Ann Spadafora, Maria Wallington; Finance Committee Members; George E. Roberts, Town Clerk; Joseph Kellogg Interim Town Administrator; Joel Bard, Esq., Town Counsel.

The Moderator opened the meeting stating the rules to be followed. He welcomed all non- voters and instructed them that they could address the meeting but could not vote. The Moderator noted measures he would take to speed up the meeting, including paraphrasing each article (as the articles are available in written form) and not having the Town Clerk read the call of the meeting and officer’s return of service. The Moderator reviewed the warrant and declared it to have been duly posted as evidenced by the attestation of the posting constable.

Ann Spadafora gave a brief opening statement on behalf of the Finance Committee.

The following articles were voted on:

**Article 1:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$3,855.58 to fund the following prior year bills from FY 2012:

LP Adams	\$ 63.73
O’Connell Oil	\$3,671.86
Staples	\$ 119.99

and to fund this appropriation by transferring \$3,855.58 from Free Cash.

4/5 Vote Required

**Article 1** Was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 1 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 2:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$45,137.42 to the Reserve Fund to pay for anticipated deficits in accounts for FY2013.

Majority Vote Required

**Article 2** Was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 2 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 3:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to Chapter 41, Section 108 of the General Laws, to fix the compensation of the Board of Selectmen at \$2,000 each and pursuant to Chapter 41, Section 4A of the General Laws, to allow the following boards to employ their members for pay at the listed hourly rates.

- 1.) Board of Health at the rate of \$13.72 per hour for the performance of their duties as Board of Health members.
- 2.) Cemetery Commission at the rate of \$13.72 per hour for the performance of their duties as Cemetery Commission members in maintaining the cemeteries.

Majority Vote Required

**Article 3** Was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 3 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 4:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate such sums of money as may be needed to defray the expenses of the Town for the 2014 fiscal year as set forth in the following line items:

TOWN OF BECKET FY2014	BUDGET APPROVED FY2013	DEPARTMENT REQUEST FY2014	FIN COMM SELECTMEN RECOMMEND	PERCENT INCREASE (DECREASE)
GENERAL GOVERNMENT				
1. TOWN COUNSEL	\$13,500.	\$13,500.	\$13,500.	0.00%
2. LEGAL EXPENSE	\$5,000.	\$100,000.	\$100,000.	1900.00%
3. AUDIT	\$20,500.	\$0.	\$0.	(100.00%)
4. SELECTMEN'S SALARIES	\$4,500.	\$6,000.	\$6,000.	33.33%
5. SELECTMEN'S EXPENSES	\$800.	\$1,000.	\$1,000.	25.00%
6. ADVERTISING	\$2,500.	\$3,500.	\$3,500.	40.00%
7. TOWN SECRETARY	\$41,781.	\$42,617.	\$42,617.	2.00%
8. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR SALARY	\$51,500.	\$60,000.	\$60,000.	16.50%
9. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR EXPENSES	\$1,700.	\$1,700.	\$1,700.	0.00%
10. FINANCE COMMITTEE	\$400.	\$400.	\$400.	0.00%
11. ASSESSORS SALARIES	\$117,599.	\$119,168.	\$119,168.	1.33%

12. ASSESSORS EXPENSE	\$10,200.	\$30,000.	\$12,500.	22.55%
13. TOWN TREASURER SALARY	\$37,750.	\$38,505.	\$38,505.	2.00%
14. TOWN TREASURER EXPENSES	\$5,600.	\$5,605.	\$5,605.	0.09%
15. TAX COLLECTOR SALARY	\$53,772.	\$54,848.	\$54,848.	2.00%
16. TAX COLLECTOR EXPENSES	\$6,185.	\$5,200.	\$5,200.	(15.93%)
17. ASSIST. TAX COLLECTOR/IT ADVISOR	\$34,900.	\$41,238.	\$41,238.	18.16%
18. TOWN CLERK SALARY	\$25,584.	\$26,096.	\$26,096.	2.00%
19. TOWN CLERK EXPENSES	\$2,520.	\$4,495.	\$2,295.	(8.93%)
20. ELECTION-REGISTRATION	\$11,608.	\$7,743.	\$7,743.	(33.30%)
21. CONSERVATION COMMISSION	\$7,500.	\$7,555.	\$7,555.	0.73%
22. PLANNING BOARD EXPENSE	\$4,000.	\$6,500.	\$6,500.	62.50%
23. BERK. REG. PLANNING COMM.	\$1,193.	\$1,223.	\$1,223.	2.50%
24. BOARD of APPEALS	\$2,500.	\$2,500.	\$2,500.	0.00%
25. RESERVE FUND	\$30,000.	\$40,000.	\$40,000.	33.33%
<b><u>GENERAL GOVERNMENT TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$493,092.</u></b>	<b><u>\$619,393.</u></b>	<b><u>\$599,693.</u></b>	<b><u>21.62%</u></b>

HIGHWAY				
26. SUMMER LABOR	\$234,201.	\$185,312.	\$185,312.	(20.87%)
27. WINTER LABOR	\$120,508.	\$122,146.	\$122,146.	1.36%
<b><u>LABOR SUBTOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$354,709.</u></b>	<b><u>\$307,458.</u></b>	<b><u>\$307,458.</u></b>	<b><u>(13.32%)</u></b>
28. MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT	\$68,364.	\$70,500.	\$70,500.	3.12%
29. WINTER MATERIALS/SUPPLIES	\$66,750.	\$67,800.	\$67,800.	1.57%
30. FUEL ACCOUNT	\$84,620.	\$90,000.	\$90,000.	6.36%
31. MACHINERY ACCOUNT	\$40,000.	\$41,500.	\$41,500.	3.75%
32. RECONSTRUCTION OF GRAVEL ROADS	\$50,000.	\$50,000.	\$50,000.	0.00%
<b><u>MATERIALS AND SERVICES SUBTOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$309,734.</u></b>	<b><u>\$319,800.</u></b>	<b><u>\$319,800.</u></b>	<b><u>3.25%</u></b>
33. TRANSFER STATION LABOR	\$22,307.	\$22,754.	\$22,754.	2.00%
34. TRANSFER STATION EXPENSES	\$70,317.	\$70,317.	\$70,317.	0.00%
<b><u>TRANSFER STATION SUBTOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$92,624.</u></b>	<b><u>\$93,071.</u></b>	<b><u>\$93,071.</u></b>	<b><u>0.48%</u></b>
<b><u>HIGHWAY TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$757,067.</u></b>	<b><u>\$720,329.</u></b>	<b><u>\$720,329.</u></b>	<b><u>(4.85%)</u></b>

CEMETERIES				
35.CENTER CEMETERY	\$3,500.	\$3,570.	\$3,570.	2.00%
36. NORTH CEMETERY	\$6,000.	\$6,120.	\$6,120.	2.00%
37. WEST CEMETERY	\$1,200.	\$1,224.	\$1,224.	2.00%
<b><u>CEMETERIES TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,700.</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,914.</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,914.</u></b>	<b><u>2.00%</u></b>

FORESTRY				
38. FORESTRY	\$300.	\$300.	\$300.	0.00%
39. MOTH ACCOUNT	\$100.	\$100.	\$100.	0.00%
40. TREE ACCOUNT	\$5,000.	\$10,000.	\$10,000.	100.00%
<b><u>FORESTRY TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$5,400.</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,400.</u></b>	<b><u>\$10,400.</u></b>	<b><u>92.59%</u></b>

EDUCATION				
41. CBRSD OPERATING ASSESSMENT	\$1,984,071.	\$1,782,413.	\$1,782,413.00	(10.16%)
42. VOCATIONAL TUITION	\$190,000.	\$225,000.	\$225,000.	18.42%
43. VOCATIONAL TRANSPORTATION	\$77,000.	\$90,000.	\$90,000.	16.88%
<b><u>EDUCATION TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,251,071.</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,097,413.</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,097,413.</u></b>	<b><u>(6.83%)</u></b>

PROTECT/ PERSONS & PROPERTY				
44. POLICE DEPT. SALARIES	\$219,600.	\$227,333.	\$227,333.	3.52%
45. POLICE DEPT. EXPENSES	\$17,270.	\$17,270.	\$17,270.	0.00%
46. HARBOR MASTER	\$1,390.	\$1,390.	\$1,390.	0.00%
47. CONSTABLE EXPENSE	\$300.	\$300.	\$300.	0.00%
48. FIRE CHIEF STIPEND	\$3,772.	\$3,848.	\$3,848.	2.00%
49. FIRE DEPT. EXPENSES	\$27,000.	\$30,000.	\$27,000.	0.00%
50. FIRE CALL STIPEND	\$8,000.	\$10,000.	\$10,000.	25.00%
51. DRY HYDRANTS	\$0.	\$7,500.	\$7,500.	N/A
52. BUILDING INSPECTOR. SALARY	\$47,271.	\$48,201.	\$48,201.	1.97%
53. BUILDING/CODE INSPECT. EXPENSES	\$5,875.	\$2,275.	\$2,275.	(61.28%)
54. DEMOLITION FUND	\$6,000.	\$12,200.	\$12,200.	103.33%
55. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$1,000.	\$2,150.	\$1,000.	0.00%
56. EMERGENCY MGT. TRAINING	\$0	\$5,000.	\$5,000.	N/A

57.ANIMAL CONTROL SALARIES	\$7,400.	\$7,548.	\$7,548.	2.00%
58.ANIMAL CONTROL EXPENSES	\$2,500.	\$2,500.	\$2,500.	0.00%
<b><u>PROTECT/PERSONS &amp; PROPERTY TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$347,378.</u></b>	<b><u>\$377,515.</u></b>	<b><u>\$373,365.</u></b>	<b><u>7.48%</u></b>
<b>HEALTH &amp; SANITATION</b>				
59. E911 COMMUNICATION	\$9,946.	\$10,941.	\$10,941.	10.00%
60. INSPECTOR of ANIMALS	\$300.	\$306.	\$306.	2.00%
61. SOUTH BERKSHIRE SOLID WASTE	\$5,960.	\$5,960.	\$5,960.	0.00%
62. BOARD of HEALTH SALARIES	\$8,000.	\$12,000.	\$12,000.	50.00%
63. BOARD of HEALTH EXPENSES	\$7,000.	\$6,000.	\$6,000.	(14.28%)
64. PORCHLIGHT VNA	\$4,962.	\$4,962.	\$4,962.	0.00%
65.MENTAL HEALTH CENTER	\$550.	\$1,894.	\$550.	0.00%
66. VETERANS AGENT SALARY	\$1,900.	\$1,938.	\$1,938.	2.00%
67. VETERANS AGENT EXPENSES	\$100.	\$100.	\$100.	0.00%
68. VETERANS BENEFITS	\$32,000.	\$20,000.	\$20,000.	(37.50%)
<b><u>HEALTH &amp; SANITATION TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$70,718.</u></b>	<b><u>\$64,101.</u></b>	<b><u>\$62,757.</u></b>	<b><u>(11.26%)</u></b>
<b>UNCLASSIFIED EXPENSES</b>				
69. OUTSIDE PAYROLL SERVICES	\$6,500.	\$3,500.	\$3,500.	(46.15%)
70. TOWN ACCOUNTANT SALARY	\$14,423.	\$14,712.	\$14,712.	2.00%
71. GENERAL INSURANCE	\$66,000.	\$90,000.	\$90,000.	36.36%
72. STAFF COVERAGE	\$0.	\$7,500.	\$7,500.	N/A
73. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS LABOR	\$0.	\$43,598.	\$43,598.	N/A
74. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS EXPENSES	\$58,000.	\$60,000.	\$60,000.	3.45%
75. SOFTWARE MAINT. AGREEMENTS	\$12,420.	\$17,089.	\$17,089.	37.59%
76. MUNICIPAL UTILITIES	\$61,800.	\$65,000.	\$65,000.	5.18%
77. STREET LIGHTS	\$6,400.	\$7,500.	\$7,500.	17.19%
78. WIRED WEST MEMBERSHIP	\$1,000.	\$0.	\$0.	(100.00%)
79. TOWN REPORTS	\$3,000.	\$3,200.	\$3,200.	6.66%
80. POSTAGE	\$13,000.	\$13,000.	\$13,000.	0.00%
81. COUNCIL on AGING	\$5,000.	\$5,000.	\$5,000.	0.00%
82. OUTREACH	\$1,500.	\$500.	\$500.	(66.66%)
83. PARKS AND RECREATION	\$18,000.	\$18,000.	\$18,000.	0.00%
84. WEED SURVEYS CENTER POND	\$1,500.	\$1,500.	\$1,500.	0.00%
85. HISTORICAL COMMISSION	\$700.	\$700.	\$700.	0.00%
86. INTEREST on SHORT-TERM DEBT	\$1,500.	\$1,500.	\$1,500.	0.00%
87. COUNTY RETIREMENT	\$190,928.	\$187,633.	\$187,633.	(1.73%)
88. HEALTH INSURANCE	\$421,481.	\$385,000.	\$385,000.	(8.65%)
89. PAYROLL TAX ACCOUNT	\$19,600.	\$21,000.	\$21,000.	7.14%
90. LIBRARY	\$42,000.	\$63,000.	\$43,000.	2.38%
91. MEMORIAL DAY	\$550.	\$750.	\$750.	36.36%
92. ARTS CENTER	\$1,800.	\$1,800.	\$1,800.	0.00%
93. WOMEN'S AUX CHILD. HOLIDAY PARTY	\$500.	\$500.	\$500.	0.00%
94. COMMUNITY RECREATION	\$750.	0.	\$0.	(100.00%)
<b><u>UNCLASSIFIED EXPENSES TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$948,352.</u></b>	<b><u>\$1,011,982.</u></b>	<b><u>\$991,982.</u></b>	<b><u>4.60%</u></b>
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,883,778.</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,912,047.</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,866,853.</u></b>	<b><u>(0.34%)</u></b>

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 4** was moved seconded from the floor. The Moderator stated that he would not read each line item but rather, if there were to be any questions or discussion of any item, a “Hold” would be asked to be placed on that item. At the end of the process for any line items to be held, all items not having a “Hold” put on them would be voted on. The Moderator stated that in the non-held line items, the figure being voted on would be the Finance Committee/ Selectboard recommended amount. Following this, all line items having a “Hold” would then be voted on separately. “Holds” were placed on the following line items:

- 2. LEGAL EXPENSE
- 12. ASSESSORS EXPENSE
- 17. ASSIST. TAX COLLECTOR/IT ADVISOR
- 26. SUMMER LABOR
- 54. DEMOLITION FUND
- 71. GENERAL INSURANCE
- 73. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS LABOR
- 78. WIRED WEST MEMBERSHIP
- 94. COMMUNITY RECREATION

After placing holds on the above referenced line items, a vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee/Selectboard recommended amounts that were not held above, **Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 2. LEGAL EXPENSE: Town Counsel Joel Bard explained that the significant increase in legal expense was the result of the need to defend the lawsuit brought against the Town of Becket by BRD in connection with a dispute over tree removal expenses resulting from the catastrophic ice storm of 2009. Mr. Bard went on in response to questions from Colleen O'Connor, Joan Drucker, Jeff Wilkinson and Jeff Bacon that "Insurance" wouldn't cover the expenses of the lawsuit because the nature of the lawsuit was a claim for breach of contract and insurance typically doesn't cover this kind of claim. He also noted that the amount in controversy was approximately \$800,000.00, and that the litigation was particularly document review intensive, and thus expensive. He also explained that Kopelman and Paige had been successful in having a Becket's action joined with a similar action brought by plaintiff BRD against Blandford which should provide some legal fee savings to both Becket and Blandford. Joe Kellogg gave some background of FEMA payments made in connection with the ice storm cleanup. **Line Item 2** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee/Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 2 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 12. ASSESSORS EXPENSE: Joe Kellogg responded to a question from Sheila Cyr, explaining that every 3 years the Department of Revenue requires the Assessor's Office to re-assess real estate values, and that this periodic activity resulted in costs for consultants and such to facilitate the re-assessment. **Line Item 12** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee/Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 12 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 17. ASSIST. TAX COLLECTOR/IT ADVISOR: Joe Kellogg responded to a question from Jeff Wilkinson explaining that the reason for the increase for this employee was that the Assistant Tax Collector had taken on increased responsibilities. Part of the increased responsibility was transition planning in anticipation of the Tax Collector retiring, and thus the Assistant Tax Collector was assuming greater responsibilities with respect to his duties in collecting taxes. It was also noted that the Assistant Tax Collector is knowledgeable about computer networking had been performing, on an ad-hoc basis, providing advice and expertise with respect to the Town's computer network, and part of the increase was a formal acknowledgment of the contribution being made in this area. **Line Item 17** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 17 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 26. SUMMER LABOR: Joe Kellogg explained that that decrease in Summer Labor represented moving the labor cost of one road crew employee from road maintenance to Municipal Building Labor, explaining that one employee would be taking over the maintenance of town buildings and doing the town mowing, but would also be available in the winter for plowing. **Line Item 26** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 26 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 54. DEMOLITION FUND: Responding to a question from Sheila Cyr, Joe Kellogg explained that the demolition fund was used to raze derelict buildings that had been abandoned and were unsafe. He explained that the Town would do everything it could to have the owner of the building remedy the situation, but if the owner had walked away from the property the Town, as a last resort, would step in, and demolish the building. **Line Item 54** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 54 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 71. GENERAL INSURANCE: Christopher Swindlehurst questioned why there was a 36.36 percent increase in this line item. Joe Kellogg explained that largely the increase resulted from increases in the value of Town Buildings and increases in the cost of Worker's Compensation claims. **Line Item 71** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 71 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 73. MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS LABOR: Joe Kellogg briefly referred to his explanation for the decrease in Line Item 26. Summer Labor and explained that the increase in Municipal Buildings Labor represented moving the labor cost of one road crew employee from Summer Labor to Municipal Building Labor, explaining that one employee would be taking over the maintenance of town buildings and doing the town mowing, but would also be available in the winter for plowing. **Line Item 73** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 73 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 78. WIRED WEST MEMBERSHIP: Josh Lombard inquired as to this fee being zero. Robert Ronzio explained that last years fee was in the nature of a one time start up fee to provide Wired West with seed money to begin operations, and that it would be 2 to 3 years before we could expect to get fiber optic internet for the Town. **Line Item 78** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 78 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 94. COMMUNITY RECREATION: Joe Kellogg explained that this was a line item that just kept getting carried forward, and that there had been no request to continue it this year. Richard Furlong explained that in years past, the Dalton CRA offered lower tuition for Becket kids if this was paid to them. There was no further discussion. **Line Item 94** was moved and seconded. A vote was taken. The motion on the Finance Committee / Selectboard Budget Recommend amount for **Line Item 94 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 5:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$284,956 to fund the bond payments due in fiscal year 2014 for the following previously approved debt items:

Nessacus Regional Middle School	\$ 15,038
Fire Pumper and Dump Truck	\$161,755
Wahconah Regional High School	\$ 4,385
Kittredge School	\$ 1,048

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 5** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 5 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and transfer to the Stabilization Fund the sum of \$100,000.

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 6** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 6 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 7:** To see if the Town will vote to accept any monies appropriated by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for Chapter 90 use. These funds to be used for maintenance and reconstruction of Town roads and to fund the appropriations by transferring said amounts from available funds with any unspent funds to carry over from year to year until spent by the Town. These sums will be reimbursed to the Town by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in accordance with Chapter 90 of the General Laws.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 7** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 7 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 8:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$300,000 for the salaries (\$283,700) and expenses (\$16,300) of the Ambulance Enterprise Fund, and to fund said appropriation:

To raise and appropriate \$192,949 and to appropriate from Fiscal Year 2014 Ambulance Receipts \$70,000 and from the Ambulance Enterprise Free Cash \$37,051. .

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 8** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 8 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 9:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the Ambulance Enterprise Stabilization Fund and to fund this appropriation with \$20,000 from Ambulance Enterprise Free Cash.

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 9** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 9 Passed Unanimously**

**Article 10:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from Ambulance Enterprise Fund Free Cash the sum of \$2,200 to purchase and equip a new AED for the Ambulance.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 10** Was moved and seconded. Madeline Swindlehurst stated that the acronym AED was not clear and moved that this Article be amended to replace AED with Automatic External Defibrillator. The motion to amend was seconded and a vote was taken, passing unanimously. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 10, as amended Passed Unanimously**

**Article 11:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$145,000 to purchase and equip a new single axle Cab and Chassis to be retrofitted with an existing Dump Body to replace Truck #4 at the Highway Department, and to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow the sum of \$145,000 for said appropriation under applicable sections of Chapter 44 of the General Laws, and authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or otherwise dispose of the old Cab and Chassis.

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 11** Was moved and seconded. Wanted to know why there was no debt exclusion. Joe explained that we were more than \$200,000.00 below our levy limit, and thus the Town could raise and appropriate the funds without a debt exclusion. Madeline Swindlehurst then moved to amend Article 11 to read in relevant part “and authorize and require that the Board of Selectmen sell, trade or otherwise get rid of the old cab and chassis.” Joel Bard, Town Counsel, that the proposed language requiring the Board of Selectmen to act was not legal. The Town Moderator did not accept the motion. There was no further discussion. A vote by show of hands was taken and the Town Moderator declared a 2/3 majority in favor, and the motion on

### **Article 11 Passed by 2/3 Majority.**

**Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$90,000 to purchase and equip a new Multi-function Tractor for the Highway Department, and to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow the sum of \$90,000 for said appropriation under applicable sections of Chapter 44 of the General Laws.

### **2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 12** Was moved and seconded. There were questions from the floor inquiring why the new tractor was necessary, why we didn't put this out to bid, and whether or not we could "share" a tractor with nearby towns? Joe Kellogg explained that because all the towns would need the tractor for the same tasks at approximately the same time, it would be impractical to "share" a vehicle with nearby towns. He also explained that the gentleman that used to mow our roads, could no longer do the job. Chris Buchard explained that the contractors that were available to do mowing work on roads charged \$110 per hour, and at this rate purchasing a tractor and using Town employees to do the work made financial sense. He also explained that the tractor could be used for pulling a York Rake and could use other implements that currently would be pulled by the grader or other more expensive equipment thus saving engine hours on the more expensive equipment. A vote by show of hands was taken and the Town Moderator declared a 2/3 majority in favor, and the motion on

**Article 12 Passed by 2/3 Majority.**

**Article 13:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$39,000 to purchase and equip a new Pick-up Truck for the Highway Department.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 13** Was moved and seconded. Madeline Swindlehurst made a motion to require the selectmen to transfer the 2007 pickup truck to the facilities manager. The Moderator declared this motion out of order as it attempted to require the Selectmen to do something that was management prerogative, discretionary on their part, and did not allow the motion. Colleen O'Connor asked if the person to be driving the pickup should be driving at all. Joe Kellogg stated that the Town would not allow someone to drive a Town vehicle that wasn't qualified and properly licensed to do so. A vote was taken and the motion on

**Article 13 Passed.**

**Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 44, Section 53I of the General Laws to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 for the expenses of the Becket 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 14** The Moderator, Bruce Garlow explained that he was a member of the Becket 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, and as such, had a conflict moderating Article 14 and also felt that he had a conflict with Article 15, and that Mark Karlberg, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen would moderate the meeting with respect to Article 14 and Article 15. Mark Karlberg read Article 14. Article 14 was moved and seconded. Rob Gordon, Chair of the Historical Commission spoke in favor of the motion. A vote was taken and the motion on

**Article 14 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 to purchase a new public address system for use at Town meetings and events.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 15.** Mark Karlberg read Article 15. Article 15 was moved and seconded. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 15 Passed.**

**Article 16:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 to purchase and equip a new Four Wheel Drive Police Cruiser for the Police Department and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or otherwise dispose of an older Police Cruiser.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 16.** Bruce Garlow resumed moderating. Article 16 was moved and seconded. Madeline Swindlehurst felt that the language in this article was vague. She noted that in Article 11 of the minutes of the 2011 purchased a new police cruiser and authorizing the Board of Selectmen to trade or sell the old police cruiser. She noted that the Selectmen have not traded or sold the old cruiser and that it is still on the police inventory and should not be. She proposed amending the article to change from "an older police cruiser " to "the 2008 Ford Expedition" The amendment was moved and seconded. Joe Kellogg explained that the Selectboard needed the flexibility as to which vehicle would be traded or sold because the 2007 Crown Victoria and the 2008 Ford Explorer were both on their last legs and it was not clear which would die first. He stated that when they get the new cruiser they would like to be able to dispose of whichever of the two older vehicles was worst. The Police Chief noted that the Crown Victory had 141,000 miles and the Expedition had 125,000 miles. A vote on the proposed amendment was taken by a show of hands, the motion to amend failed. A vote was taken and the motion on

## **Article 16 Passed.**

**Article 17:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 for legal, advertising, and related costs to process tax delinquent accounts.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 17** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 17 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 18:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for capital repairs and improvements at the Becket Athenaeum in order for Library Services to be provided to Town residents.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 18** Was moved and seconded. Madeline Swindlehurst asked why the funds were not coming out of Community Preservation Funds. Joe Kellogg noted that there was \$15,000.00 coming out of CPA and \$21,000.00 in this Article. He went on to note that we were emptying the Historical Reserve category in CPA funds and that left a need of 21,000.00. Bob Ronzio asked if this is a town facility and if it was ok to spend money on private enterprise. Joe Kellogg noted that it is proper and appropriate to spend money on a facility that benefits the public. Joel Bard noted that the general principle is that public funds can be spent for any public purpose. He noted that other communities have private or private/public hybrid libraries to which towns spend public funds on. Rob Gordon also noted that he believed the Town of Washington contributes funds to the Becket Athenaeum. Maria Wallington noted that the funds would be used to repair leaky doors and windows that cause high utility bills. The other funds would be used for painting. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 18 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 19:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,000 for the costs of preparing applications for community and housing development grants for the Town.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 19** Was moved and seconded. Bob Ronzio noted grant writing was not part of the Town Administrator's job description and questioned why the Town Administrator didn't assume this responsibility. Joe Kellogg explained that this money was targeted to go after housing and community development grants which were very specific, technical and demanding grants to apply for. BRC could write grants more cost effectively and efficiently than the Town Administrator, and that the cost of applying for these type of grants were often reimbursed if the grant is approved. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 19 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 20:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate and transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$8,200 for snow guards to be installed on the Highway Garage Roof to protect against injuries and damage from sliding snow.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 20** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 20 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 21:** To see if the Town will vote to transfer the care, custody, and control of the parcel of land described below from the Treasurer for the purpose of sale at public auction to the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of conveyance, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service a parcel of land to be used for conservation and passive recreation purposes, such sale to be on such terms, conditions and restrictions as the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate, said parcel described as an irregularly shaped 110-acre parcel approximately 400 feet from the terminus of Maple Street and further described in documents recorded in the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 4643, Page 193 and Book 1199, Page 14, shown as Assessor's Map 206, Lot 89, and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary to sell such property, or take any other action relative thereto.

### **2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 21** Was moved and seconded. Sheila Cyr asked about the use implications of this transfer. Joe Kellogg explained that the land transferred to the U.S. Fish and Game Dept. would be restricted to passive recreation purposes which are limited to fishing walking and hiking. There was general discussion both in favor and against this Article. Bob Ronzio wanted to know if the Fish and Wildlife Service would post the boundaries of the property. A realty specialist from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stated that when they acquired a piece of property the Service posted signs at each corner and along each boundary at intervals identifying the property as Fish and

Wildlife land. A vote was taken by show of hands and the Town Moderator declared a 2/3 majority in favor, and the motion on  
**Article 21 Passed by 2/3 Majority.**

**Article 22:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the use of the following revolving funds for departmental operations which shall not exceed the noted sums for each fund, which shall be under the control of the Town Treasurer, which shall be accounted for separately, and to which shall be credited only the receipts received in connection with the departmental operations supported by the revolving fund; further to authorize the Town Treasurer to expend from such funds in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 53E ½ of the General Laws, provided however that said expenditures for the revolving funds shall not exceed the receipts for said fund:

Plumbing Inspector:	\$10,000
Gas Inspector:	\$10,000
Wiring Inspector:	\$15,000

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 22** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on  
**Article 22 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 23:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate or reserve from the Community Preservation annual revenues in the amounts recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for committee administrative expenses, community preservation projects and other expenses in fiscal year 2014, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation:

Appropriations:

From FY 2014 estimated revenues to Committee Administrative Expenses	\$500
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Reserves:

From FY 2014 estimated revenues to Historical Resources Reserve	\$ 4,800
From FY 2014 estimated revenues to Community Housing Reserve	\$ 4,800
From FY 2014 estimated revenues to Open Space Reserve	\$ 4,800
From FY 2014 estimated revenues to Undesignated Reserve	\$33,100

**Sponsored by the Community Preservation Committee**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 23** Was moved and seconded. Madeline Swindlehurst stated supported the CPA but asked that the CPA Committee prepare and submit a written accounting in each year’s Annual Town Report setting forth: total accumulated account balances from receipts of the CPA real estate surtaxes; the annual contributions from Massachusetts Real Estate Transfer Taxes; the appropriations and allocations that have accumulated, been disbursed and the Fiscal Year-end balances for Committee administrative expense; Historical Resource Reserves; Open Space Reserves, and Undesignated Reserves. Ms. Swindlehurst also suggested that the CPA Committee could make its meeting notices more accessible to the public by posting to the Town web page and the Public Meeting Agenda email subscriber list. Joe Kellogg and Rita Furlong gave brief explanations on the complexities of the accounting issues surrounding this account and the posting and reporting procedures currently employed. A vote was taken and the motion on  
**Article 23 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 24:** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$7,000 from the Historical Resources Reserve and \$8,000 from the Undesignated Reserve of the Community Preservation Fund for exterior restoration and painting of the Becket Athenaeum; said funds to be expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Board of Directors of the Becket Athenaeum.  
**Sponsored by the Community Preservation Committee**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 24** Was moved and seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on  
**Article 24 Passed Unanimously.**

**Article 25:** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$6,000 from the Open Space Reserve of the Community Preservation Fund to purchase and install an obelisk to commemorate the Revolutionary War and the Civil War volunteers from Becket to be placed at Ballou Park; said funds to be expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Board of Directors of the Becket Historical Commission.  
**Sponsored by the Community Preservation Committee**

**Majority Vote Required**



**Article 25** Was moved and seconded. There was brief discussion regarding the source of financing this project, the number of monuments already in Ballou Par, and the nature and size of the monument. A vote was taken and the motion on

**Article 25 Passed.**

**Article 26:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell, on such terms, conditions and restrictions as they deem appropriate, a certain parcel of land for conservation and passive recreation purposes, said parcel located on Quarry Road, shown as Assessor's Map 417, Lot 61, described in a Treasurer's Deed to the Town of Becket, dated October 17, 1960, recorded with the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 713, Page 190, and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into all agreements and execute any and all instruments as may be necessary to sell such property, and to accept a restriction on said property.

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 26** Was moved and seconded. Bob Ronzio raised concerns regarding the manner in which this parcel was originally conveyed to the Becket Land Trust, noting that the parcel was never offered to abutters and calling into question whether the parcel was indeed land locked, and whether the initial transfer was legal. There was further discussion on the two limitations stated in the Article, and questions as to whether those limitations would allow Agriculture as well as the stated Conservation and Passive Recreation. Joe Kellogg explained that the Town did not have the authority to transfer the property as it attempted to do, and that it should have been put out to auction. He stated that the Town believes that the parcel is land locked. Town Counsel explained that the deed recording the prior attempted transfer was not legally sufficient because it lacked the Certification of the Town Clerk, which, apparently was never prepared or recorded. A motion was made to amend the language of Article 26 to add “; agriculture” immediately after the word conservation so it would read in relevant part as: “... for conservation, agriculture and passive recreation purposes....” The motion was seconded, and a vote was taken. The amendment passed unanimously. A vote was taken by show of hands and the Town Moderator declared a 2/3 majority in favor, and the motion on

**Article 26 as amended Passed by 2/3 Majority.**

**Article 27:** To see if the Town will vote to change the composition of the Board of Selectmen from a three member Board to a five member Board, or take any other action relative thereto.

**Article Petitioned by Voters**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 27** A motion was read by the Town Clerk as follows:

I move that the Town vote to change the composition of the Board of Selectmen from a three-member board to a five-member board; and further, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to submit special legislation on behalf of the Town, in accordance with the Home Rule Amendment to the Massachusetts Constitution: 1) amending Chapter 662 of the acts of 1990, as most recently amended by chapter 184 of the acts of 2000, so that section 3 of said act shall state, “There shall be a board of selectmen, consisting of five members, elected as provided in section 2.”; and 2) addressing the transition of the Board of Selectmen from three members to five; provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Board of Selectmen approves amendments to the bill before enactment by the General Court; and provided further than the Board of Selectmen is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition.

The motion as read above was moved and seconded. Beth VanNess spoke in favor of this motion noting that additional members would add diversity to the board, and that more members would enable the . Barbara Roberts spoke against this motion noting that 5-member selectboard is not appropriate for the population of Becket. She also noted that a larger board might be less efficient. Angela Hilton asked why the Selectmen do not support this Article. Mark Karlberg feels that a three man board is sufficient, noting that in his 3 years there was only one meeting was called because two members were sick. He also feels the board functions quite well, and that there is often not interest in people serving on the selectboard. Coleen O'Connor feels that the current selectboard is rife with nepotism and cronyism. She feels a lot needs to be done with the selectboard and that a 5-member board is good, and there should be further expansion of the board that holds the key to decision making in the Town. Madeline Swindlehurst noted that this same petition was voted down last year, and that she was in favor of it then and is in favor of it now on the theory that the board would better represent the diversity of opinion in the various communities within the Town. Rita Furlong noted that she can recall this issue has come up at least 5 times and has been voted down each time. She also observed that there were only approximately 50 people present for the meeting out of a populations of over 1700. She also notes that there are committees in Town with only one member, who would appreciate others to join and participate. Chris Swindlehurst spoke against the five member board, observing that he was against “mission creep” noting that government tends to get bigger over time. Bob Ronzio spoke against the Selectboard getting paid, and spoke in favor of a 5-member board. Karen Karlberg noted problems with larger boards, using the Planning Board as an example. Rob Gordon spoke to the issue of the lack of mass discontent with the size of the selectboard noting the small number of people in attendance at the meeting. Julia Kay-Grace spoke in favor of the 5-member board noting that a larger board would be better, and calling into question the motivation of those who object to the larger board. Madeline Swindlehurst noted that with a larger board would be more stable but might stagnate. Beth VanNess noted that this matter did pass several years ago, but was defeated at Town Election. A vote was taken by hand count with 24 in favor and 35 opposed, and the motion on

**Article 27 Failed.**

**Article 28:** To see if the Town will vote to express approval of debt for the purposes and in the amounts as shown below, which debt has been authorized by the School Committee of the Central Berkshire Regional School District on April 11, 2013, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 71, Section 16(d) of the General Laws.

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Becket Assessment</u>
1. Becket Washington School Playground Equipment	\$ 20,000.	\$12,000.
2. WRHS Replacement of Concrete Sidewalks	\$110,000.	\$ 4,222.
3. WRHS Refurbishing of Auditorium Seats	\$100,000.	\$ 3,838.
4. Central Office HVAC	\$ 50,000.	\$ 3,398.
5. Purchase of Two Vehicles	\$ 54,783.	\$ 3,723.
6. District Wide Building Security Improvement	\$ 72,000.	\$ 6,576.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 28** was moved and seconded. Joe Kellogg gave an explanation of the process underlying this Article. The CBRSD Superintendent explained what was involved in item 6, District Wide Building Security Improvement. Becket Washington School would receive new exterior cameras and additional radios. Berkshire Trail school would receive new exterior cameras, and get the installation of new PA system. Craneville School would receive new exterior cameras, half glass doors and bollards. Kittredge School would receive new exterior cameras, emergency phone in the computer lab, additional radios and bollards; Nessicus Middle School would receive additional exterior cameras, bollards at the front doors, and additional radios; Wahconah would receive bollards and new front doors. These items were suggested by Local Security and Public Safety Officials and the Massachusetts State Police. Replacement of doors with half glass doors are to prevent someone from being able to shoot down a hallway; bollards are to prevent vehicles from ramming their way into a school. The Moderator announced that each line item would be voted on separately.

Line Item 1. - Becket Washington School Playground Equipment: A vote was taken on Line Item 1.  
**Line Item 1 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 2. - WRHS Replacement of Concrete Sidewalks: A vote was taken on Line Item 2.  
**Line Item 2 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 3. - WRHS Refurbishing of Auditorium Seats: A vote was taken on Line Item 3.  
**Line Item 3 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 4. - Central Office HVAC: A vote was taken on Line Item 3.  
**Line Item 4 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 5. - Purchase of Two Vehicles: A vote was taken on Line Item 3.  
**Line Item 5 Passed Unanimously.**

Line Item 6. - District Wide Building Security Improvement: A vote was taken on Line Item 3.  
**Line Item 6 Passed Unanimously.**

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn to the Annual Town Election which will be held one week from today on May 18, 2013, starting at 10:00 a.m. A vote was taken and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 10:04 p.m. The checkers were Election Workers Eva Bonney and Patricia Clemons, Meredyth Babcock and Ann Krawet.

Respectfully submitted,

George E. Roberts  
Town Clerk