

Pursuant to the foregoing warrant, the Annual Town Meeting was called on May 14, 2011, 7:00 p.m. at Becket Town Hall, 557 Main Street, Becket. There being a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:13 p.m. by the Moderator. There were 159 registered voters present (12.4% of 1,282 voters) and a total of 175 people attended the meeting. Town Officials Present: Bruce Garlow, Moderator; William Cavanaugh, George Fuller, and Mark Karlberg, Selectmen; Ann Spadafora, Stephen LaBelle, Sr., and Dan Parnell, Finance Committee Members; George E. Roberts, Town Clerk; Craig Kleman, Town Administrator; Janet Pumphrey, Esq., Town Counsel.

The Moderator opened the meeting stating the rules to be followed. He asked for a showing of hands of non-voters and welcomed them, indicating 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 noted it as having been duly posted.

The following articles were voted on:

**Article 1:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$6,923 to fund the following deficits from FY 2010:

Town of Washington	\$6,642
Pittsfield Communications System, Inc.	\$ 281

And to fund the appropriation by transferring \$6,923 from Free Cash.

**4/5 Vote Required**

**Article 1** was moved by Bill Cavanaugh 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 the sum of \$152,300 to fund the following deficits from FY2011:

Municipal Utilities	\$15,000
Municipal Buildings	6,000
Fire Station #1, Well	2,800
Demolition Fund	2,500
Reserve Fund	10,000
Veterans’ Benefits	15,000
Health Insurance	50,000
Ambulance Salaries	46,000
Fuel Account	5,000

and to fund this appropriation by transferring \$30,000 from Overlay Surplus and \$122,300 from Free Cash.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 2** was moved by Bill Cavanaugh and seconded by Mark Karlberg. Mr. Elovirta asked for explanation as to why there were deficits while there was \$380,000 in free cash. Dan Parnell of the finance committee noted that a printed explanation of finance items was provided for the meeting. He also noted the that the tax rate this year was up from 8.90 to between 9.50 to 9.60 because assessments have gone down by approximately 5 million dollars or more. Mr. Parnell noted that the Town had a windfall of free cash this year of \$350,000.00 and that the Town was also certified for \$30,000.00 from assessors overlay. This free cash will be used to cover expenses not in last year’s budget that they have no control over such as health insurance and fuel. Mr. Parnell cautioned the meeting that the Town will not have a similar windfall for this coming fiscal year. Mr. Parnell observed that the stabilization fund has been depleted down to \$140,000.00 dollars due to expenses incurred because of the ice storm and some other items, and the Town needs to add monies to the stabilization fund. Richard Furlong noted that every year the State certifies the Town’s free cash, and if the Town doesn’t use the cash in that fiscal year, the monies would have to be re-certified for the following year, with a possibility that the State would not re-certify the monies as free cash, if, for instance, that the Town didn’t collect all it’s taxes. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 2 passed unanimously.**

**Article 3:** To see if the Town will vote to allow the following boards to employ their members, pursuant to Chapter 41, Section 4A of the Massachusetts General Laws and to pay members at the listed hourly rates.

- 1.) Board of Health at the rate of \$13.45 per hour for the performance of their duties as Board of Health members.
- 2.) Cemetery Commission at the rate of \$13.45 per hour for the performance of their duties as Cemetery Commission members in maintaining the cemeteries.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 3** was moved by George Roberts and seconded by Bill Cavanaugh. Steve Rosenthal asked if there was any percentage increase in the hourly rates from the previous year. Bill Cavanaugh responded that last years hourly rate and this year’s hourly rate were the same, \$13.45 per hour; that there was no increase. 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 2012 fiscal year and to fix the salaries and compensation of all elective officials as provided by Section 108 of Chapter 41 of the Massachusetts General Laws as set forth in the following line items:  
**Majority Vote Required**

DEPARTMENT		FY 2011  BUDGET	FY 2012  REQUEST	FIN COMM  RECOMMEN D	% INCREASE  (DECREASE )	SELECTMEN  RECOMMEN D	% INCREASE  (DECREASE )
GENERAL GOVERNMENT							
1	LEGAL EXPENSES						
2	TOWN COUNSEL	5,000.00	13,500.00	13,500.00	170.00%	13,500.00	170.00%
3	LEGAL EXPENSE	25,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	-80.00%	5,000.00	-80.00%
4	TAX TITLE EXPENSES	6,000.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	33.33%	8,000.00	33.33%
5	LEGAL EXPENSES TOTAL	36,000.00	26,500.00	26,500.00	-26.39%	26,500.00	-26.39%
6	ACCOUNTANT/AUDITOR						
7	AUDIT	17,000.00	-	-	-100.00%	-	-100.00%
8	ACCOUNTING & PAYROLL SERVICES	16,500.00	20,420.00	20,420.00	23.76%	20,420.00	23.76%
9	ACCOUNTANT/AUDITOR TOTAL	33,500.00	20,420.00	20,420.00	-39.04%	20,420.00	-39.04%
10	SELECTBOARD						
11	SELECTMEN'S SALARIES	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00%	4,500.00	0.00%
12	SELECTMEN'S EXPENSES	800.00	800.00	800.00	0.00%	800.00	0.00%
13	MODERATOR & SELECTBOARD TOTAL	5,300.00	5,300.00	5,300.00	0.00%	5,300.00	0.00%
14	ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE						
15	TOWN SECRETARY	40,426.00	41,781.00	41,190.00	1.89%	41,781.00	3.35%
16	TOWN ADMIN. SALARY	55,000.00	51,500.00	51,500.00	-6.36%	51,500.00	-6.36%
17	TOWN ADMIN. EXPENSE	1,080.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	38.89%	1,500.00	38.89%
18	ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE TOTAL	96,506.00	94,781.00	94,190.00	-2.40%	94,781.00	-1.79%
19	ASSESSOR'S OFFICE						
20	ASSESSORS SALARIES	108,829.00	112,094.00	115,861.00	6.46%	117,494.00	7.96%
21	ASSESSORS EXPENSE	11,200.00	14,150.00	14,150.00	26.34%	14,150.00	26.34%
22	ASSESSOR'S OFFICE TOTAL	120,029.00	126,244.00	130,011.00	8.32%	131,644.00	9.68%
23	TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE						
24	TAX COLLECTOR SALARY	47,087.00	48,500.00	52,977.00	12.51%	53,684.00	14.01%
25	TAX COLLECTOR EXPENSE	6,185.00	6,185.00	6,185.00	0.00%	6,185.00	0.00%
26	ASSIST. TAX COLLECTOR	16,272.00	29,200.00	34,384.00	111.31%	34,384.00	111.31%
27	TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE TOTAL	69,544.00	83,885.00	93,546.00	34.51%	94,253.00	35.53%
28	TREASURER'S OFFICE						
29	TOWN TREASURER SALARY	34,028.00	35,049.00	37,192.00	9.30%	37,703.00	10.80%

30	TOWN TREASURER EXP.		5,000.00		5,600.00		5,600.00	12.00%	5,600.00	12.00%
31	TREASURER'S OFFICE TOTAL		39,028.00		40,649.00		42,792.00	9.64%	43,303.00	10.95%
32	TOWN CLERK & ELECTIONS									
33	TOWN CLERK SALARY		25,174.00		25,584.00		25,552.00	1.50%	25,584.00	1.63%
34	TOWN CLERK EXPENSE		2,585.00		3,720.00		3,720.00	43.91%	3,720.00	43.91%
35	ELECTION-REGISTRATION		10,949.00		8,672.00		8,672.00	-20.80%	8,672.00	-20.80%
36	TOWN CLERK & ELECTIONS TOTAL		38,708.00		37,976.00		37,944.00	-1.97%	37,976.00	-1.89%
37	TOWN BOARDS & COMMISSIONS									
38	CONSERVATION COMM.		6,500.00		7,925.00		7,500.00	15.38%	7,500.00	15.38%
39	PLANNING BOARD EXPENSE		3,100.00		4,000.00		4,000.00	29.03%	4,000.00	29.03%
40	REGIONAL PLAN COM.		1,116.00		1,116.00		1,116.00	0.00%	1,116.00	0.00%
41	BOARD of APPEALS		3,500.00		2,500.00		2,500.00	-28.57%	2,500.00	-28.57%
42	FINANCE COMMITTEE		100.00		400.00		400.00	300.00%	400.00	300.00%
43	TOWN BOARDS & COMMISSIONS TOTAL		14,316.00		15,941.00		15,516.00	8.38%	15,516.00	8.38%
44	OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE									
45	PUBLIC BUILDINGS		50,000.00		58,000.00		58,000.00	16.00%	58,000.00	16.00%
46	MUNICIPAL UTILITIES		52,000.00		60,000.00		60,000.00	15.38%	60,000.00	15.38%
47	ADVERTISING		2,000.00		3,000.00		3,000.00	50.00%	3,000.00	50.00%
48	POSTAGE		14,750.00		15,000.00		15,000.00	1.69%	15,000.00	1.69%
49	TOWN REPORTS		3,000.00		2,000.00		2,000.00	-33.33%	2,000.00	-33.33%
50	OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE TOTAL		121,750.00		138,000.00		138,000.00	13.35%	138,000.00	13.35%
62										#DIV/0!
51	TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT		574,681.00		589,696.00		604,219.00	5.14%	607,693.00	5.74%
52	HIGHWAY									
53	SUMMER ROADS LABOR									
54	SUMMER ROADS LABOR		188,219.00		174,495.00		171,798.00	-8.72%	174,495.00	-7.29%
55	SUMMER ROADS OVERTIME		8,000.00		12,387.00		12,387.00	54.84%	12,387.00	54.84%
56	VACATION & HOLIDAYS		32,312.00		34,174.00		33,884.00	4.87%	34,174.00	5.76%
57	Transfer Station Labor		20,319.00		22,307.00		22,307.00	9.78%	22,307.00	9.78%
58	SUMMER ROADS LABOR TOTAL		248,850.00		243,363.00		240,376.00	-3.41%	243,363.00	-2.20%
59	MACHINERY, FUEL, MATERIALS									
60	MACHINERY ACCOUNT		40,000.00		40,000.00		40,000.00	0.00%	40,000.00	0.00%
61	RECONST. of GRAVEL ROADS		50,000.00		50,000.00		50,000.00	0.00%	50,000.00	0.00%
62	GENERAL MAINTENANCE, MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT		60,934.00		68,364.00		68,364.00	12.19%	68,364.00	12.19%
63	FUEL ACCOUNT_NON-WINTER		25,288.00		20,870.00		20,870.00	-17.47%	20,870.00	-17.47%
64	Transfer Station Cost		70,318.00		70,317.00		70,317.00	0.00%	70,317.00	0.00%

65	MACHINERY, FUEL, MATERIALS TOTAL		246,540.00		249,551.00		249,551.00	1.22%	249,551.00	1.22%
66										#DIV/0!
66	SUMMER ROADS & MAINTENANCE TOTAL		495,390.00		492,914.00		489,927.00	-1.10%	492,914.00	-0.50%
67	WINTER ROADS LABOR									
68	WINTER ROADS LABOR		102,297.00		91,214.00		89,499.00	-12.51%	91,214.00	-10.83%
69	WINTER ROADS OVERTIME		28,332.00		29,294.00		29,294.00	3.40%	29,294.00	3.40%
70	WINTER ROADS LABOR TOTAL		130,629.00		120,508.00		118,793.00	-9.06%	120,508.00	-7.75%
71	SNOW & ICE REMOVAL & FUEL									
72	WINTER ROADS SNOW & ICE REMOVAL		66,750.00		66,750.00		66,750.00	0.00%	66,750.00	0.00%
73	FUEL ACCOUNT WINTER		37,932.00		41,750.00		41,750.00	10.07%	41,750.00	10.07%
74	WINTER ROADS / FUEL & MATERIAL TOTAL		104,682.00		108,500.00		108,500.00	3.65%	108,500.00	3.65%
90										#DIV/0!
75	WINTER ROADS TOTAL		235,311.00		229,008.00		227,293.00	-3.41%	229,008.00	-2.68%
92										#DIV/0!
76	TOTAL HIGHWAY		730,701.00		721,922.00		717,220.00	-1.84%	721,922.00	-1.20%
77	PUBLIC WORKS									
78	CEMETERIES									
79	CENTER CEMETERY		3,500.00		3,500.00		3,500.00	0.00%	3,500.00	0.00%
80	NORTH CEMETERY		6,000.00		6,000.00		6,000.00	0.00%	6,000.00	0.00%
81	WEST CEMETERY		1,200.00		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.00%	1,200.00	0.00%
82	CEMETERIES TOTAL		10,700.00		10,700.00		10,700.00	0.00%	10,700.00	0.00%
83	TREES									
84	FORESTRY		300.00		300.00		300.00	0.00%	300.00	0.00%
85	MOTH ACCOUNT		100.00		100.00		100.00	0.00%	100.00	0.00%
86	TREE ACCOUNT		5,000.00		5,000.00		5,000.00	0.00%	5,000.00	0.00%
87	TREES TOTAL		5,400.00		5,400.00		5,400.00	0.00%	5,400.00	0.00%
88	STREET LIGHTS									
89	STREET LIGHTS		7,320.00		6,200.00		6,200.00	-15.30%	6,200.00	-15.30%
90	STREET LIGHTS TOTAL		7,320.00		6,200.00		6,200.00	-15.30%	6,200.00	-15.30%
118										#DIV/0!
91	TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS		23,420.00		22,300.00		22,300.00	-4.78%	22,300.00	-4.78%
120										#DIV/0!
92	TOTAL HIGHWAY & PUBLIC WORKS		754,121.00		744,222.00		739,520.00	-1.94%	744,222.00	-1.31%
93	EDUCATION									
94	CBRSD OPERATING ASSESSMENT		2,052,391.00		2,011,055.00		2,011,055.00	-2.01%	2,011,055.00	-2.01%
95	SCHOOL CAPITAL		35,315.00		31,990.00		31,990.00	-9.42%	31,990.00	-9.42%

96	<b>OPERATING &amp; CAPITAL TOTAL</b>		<b>2,087,706.00</b>		<b>2,043,045.00</b>		<b>2,043,045.00</b>	<b>-2.14%</b>	<b>2,043,045.00</b>	-2.14%
97	VOCATIONAL TUITION		187,000.00		187,000.00		187,000.00	0.00%	187,000.00	0.00%
98	VOCATIONAL TRANSPORT.		77,000.00		77,000.00		77,000.00	0.00%	77,000.00	0.00%
99	<b>VOCATIONAL ED. TOTAL</b>		264,000.00		264,000.00		264,000.00	<b>0.00%</b>	264,000.00	0.00%
130										#DIV/0!
100	<b>EDUCATION TOTAL</b>		<b>2,351,706.00</b>		<b>2,307,045.00</b>		<b>2,307,045.00</b>	<b>-1.90%</b>	<b>2,307,045.00</b>	-1.90%
101	<b>PUBLIC SAFETY</b>									
102	<b>POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>									
103	POLICE DEPT. SALARIES		169,000.00		173,700.00		171,535.00	1.50%	173,700.00	2.78%
104	POLICE DEPT. EXPENSE		16,270.00		17,270.00		17,270.00	6.15%	17,270.00	6.15%
105	<b>POLICE TOTAL</b>		<b>185,270.00</b>		<b>190,970.00</b>		<b>188,805.00</b>	<b>1.91%</b>	<b>190,970.00</b>	3.08%
106	<b>PUBLIC SAFETY</b>									
107	CONSTABLE EXPENSE		300.00		300.00		300.00	0.00%	300.00	0.00%
108	EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT		500.00		1,000.00		1,000.00	100.00%	1,000.00	100.00%
109	HARBOR MASTER		990.00		990.00		990.00	0.00%	990.00	0.00%
110	<b>PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL</b>		<b>1,790.00</b>		<b>2,290.00</b>		<b>2,290.00</b>	<b>27.93%</b>	<b>2,290.00</b>	27.93%
111	<b>FIRE DEPARTMENT</b>									
112	FIRE CHIEF STIPEND		3,662.00		3,772.00		3,772.00	3.00%	3,772.00	3.00%
113	FIRE DEPT. EXPENSES		24,000.00		27,000.00		27,000.00	12.50%	27,000.00	12.50%
114	FIRE CALL STIPEND		8,000.00		8,000.00		8,000.00	0.00%	8,000.00	0.00%
115	<b>FIRE TOTAL</b>		<b>35,662.00</b>		<b>38,772.00</b>		<b>38,772.00</b>	<b>8.72%</b>	<b>38,772.00</b>	8.72%
116	<b>EMERGENCY DISPATCH</b>									
117	E911 COMMUNICATION		9,375.00		9,657.00		9,657.00	3.01%	9,657.00	3.01%
118	<b>DISPATCH TOTAL</b>		<b>9,375.00</b>		<b>9,657.00</b>		<b>9,657.00</b>	<b>3.01%</b>	<b>9,657.00</b>	3.01%
119	<b>INSPECTIONAL SERVICES</b>									
120	BUILDING INSP. SALARY		45,884.00		50,874.00		46,572.00	1.50%	47,261.00	3.00%
121	BUILDING & CODE INSP. EXP		2,375.00		2,150.00		2,150.00	-9.47%	2,150.00	-9.47%
122	DEMOLITION FUND		4,000.00		6,000.00		6,000.00	50.00%	6,000.00	50.00%
123	PUBLIC SAFETY INSPECTIONS		11,000.00		11,000.00		11,000.00	0.00%	11,000.00	0.00%
124	<b>INSPECTIONS TOTAL</b>		<b>63,259.00</b>		<b>70,024.00</b>		<b>65,722.00</b>	<b>3.89%</b>	<b>66,411.00</b>	4.98%
125	<b>ANIMAL CONTROL</b>									
126	ANIMAL CONTROL SALARY		7,400.00		7,400.00		7,400.00	0.00%	7,400.00	0.00%
127	ANIMAL CONTROL EXPENSES		2,700.00		2,000.00		2,000.00	-25.93%	2,500.00	-7.41%
128	<b>ANIMAL CONTROL TOTAL</b>		<b>10,100.00</b>		<b>9,400.00</b>		<b>9,400.00</b>	<b>-6.93%</b>	<b>9,900.00</b>	-1.98%
168										#DIV/0!

129	TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY		305,456.00		321,113.00		314,646.00	3.01%	318,000.00	4.11%
	HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES									
130	HEALTH SERVICES									
131	INSPECTOR of ANIMALS		250.00		250.00		250.00	0.00%	250.00	0.00%
132	SOUTH BERK. SOLID WASTE		6,000.00		6,000.00		6,000.00	0.00%	6,000.00	0.00%
133	BOARD of HEALTH SALARIES		10,000.00		8,000.00		8,000.00	-20.00%	8,000.00	-20.00%
134	BOARD of HEALTH EXPENSES		6,000.00		8,000.00		7,000.00	16.67%	7,000.00	16.67%
135	HEALTH SERVICES TOTAL		22,250.00		22,250.00		21,250.00	-4.49%	21,250.00	-4.49%
136	CLINICAL SERVICES									
137	VISITING NURSE		4,962.00		4,962.00		4,962.00	0.00%	4,962.00	0.00%
138	MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES		550.00		570.00		570.00	3.64%	570.00	3.64%
139	CLINICAL SERVICES TOTAL		5,512.00		5,532.00		5,532.00	0.36%	5,532.00	0.36%
140	VETERAN'S SERVICES									
141	VETERANS AGENT SALARY		1,781.00		1,834.00		1,834.00	2.98%	1,834.00	2.98%
142	VETERANS AGENT EXPENSE		100.00		100.00		100.00	0.00%	100.00	0.00%
143	VETERANS BENEFITS		5,000.00		36,000.00		36,000.00	620.00%	36,000.00	620.00%
144	VETERAN'S SERVICES TOTAL		6,881.00		37,934.00		37,934.00	451.29%	37,934.00	451.29%
145	COUNCIL ON AGING									
146	COUNCIL on AGING		5,000.00		5,000.00		5,000.00	0.00%	5,000.00	0.00%
147	OUT REACH PROGRAM		2,500.00		2,500.00		2,500.00	0.00%	2,500.00	0.00%
148	COUNCIL ON AGING TOTAL		7,500.00		7,500.00		7,500.00	0.00%	7,500.00	0.00%
149										#DIV/0!
149	TOTAL HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES		42,143.00		73,216.00		72,216.00	71.36%	72,216.00	71.36%
150	RECREATION & CULTURAL									
151	RECREATION COMM.		11,500.00		10,000.00		10,000.00	-13.04%	10,000.00	-13.04%
152	PARKS COMM.		6,000.00		8,000.00		8,000.00	33.33%	8,000.00	33.33%
153	HISTORIC COMMISSION		900.00		700.00		700.00	-22.22%	700.00	-22.22%
154	LIBRARY		30,000.00		48,500.00		36,000.00	20.00%	42,000.00	40.00%
155	MEMORIAL DAY		550.00		550.00		550.00	0.00%	550.00	0.00%
156	ARTS CENTER		1,500.00		1,500.00		1,500.00	0.00%	1,500.00	0.00%
157	COMMUNITY RECREATION		750.00		750.00		750.00	0.00%	750.00	0.00%
158	RECREATION & CULTURAL TOTAL		51,200.00		70,000.00		57,500.00	12.30%	63,500.00	24.02%
159	INSURANCE									
160	GENERAL INSURANCE		65,000.00		66,000.00		66,000.00	1.54%	66,000.00	1.54%
161	HEALTH INSURANCE		283,948.00		329,000.00		329,000.00	15.87%	329,000.00	15.87%

162	INSURANCE TOTAL		348,948.00		395,000.00		395,000.00	13.20%	395,000.00	13.20%
163	DEBT SERVICE									
164	INTEREST on SHORT-TERM DEBT		1,500.00		1,500.00		1,500.00	0.00%	1,500.00	0.00%
165	SHORT-TERM DEBT SERVICE TOTAL		1,500.00		1,500.00		1,500.00	0.00%	1,500.00	0.00%
166	RETIREMENT & PAYROLL TAX									
167	PAYROLL TAX ACCOUNT		17,000.00		19,000.00		19,000.00	11.76%	19,000.00	11.76%
168	COUNTY RETIREMENT		157,944.00		162,681.00		162,681.00	3.00%	162,681.00	3.00%
169	RETIREMENT & PAYROLL TAX TOTAL		174,944.00		181,681.00		181,681.00	3.85%	181,681.00	3.85%
170	RESERVE FUND									
171	RESERVE FUND		17,500.00		17,000.00		17,000.00	-2.86%	17,000.00	-2.86%
172	RESERVE FUND TOTAL		17,500.00		17,000.00		17,000.00	-2.86%	17,000.00	-2.86%
173	GRAND TOTAL		4,622,199.00		4,700,473.00		4,690,327.00	1.47%	4,707,857.00	1.85%

Article 4 was moved by Bill Cavanaugh and seconded by George Fuller. 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. Following this, all line items having a “Hold” would then be voted on separately. “Holds” were placed on the following line items:

- 2 – Town Counsel
- 3 – Legal Expenses
- 7 – Audit
- 15 – Town Secretary
- 20 – Assessors Salaries
- 24 – Tax Collector Salary
- 26 – Assistant Tax Collector
- 29 – Town Treasurer
- 33 – Town Clerk Salary
- 54 – Summer Roads Labor
- 55 – Summer Roads Overtime
- 56 – Vacation and Holidays
- 68 – Winter Roads Labor
- 89 – Street Lights
- 103 – Police Dept. Salaries
- 120 – Building Inspector Salaries
- 127 – Animal Control Expenses
- 143 – Veterans Benefits
- 152 – Parks Comm.
- 154 – Library
- 156 – Arts Center
- 161 – Health Insurance

After placing holds on the above line items, a vote was taken to approve all non-held line items. **All line items that were not held passed unanimously.**

Line Item 2 – Town Counsel. Mike Falk question why Town Counsel and Legal Expenses were not reflecting possible greater expenses, such as expected litigation from BRD. Craig Kleman noted that we

changed town counsel last year and the budget reflects the expected costs going forward. Mr. Tisdale noted that he has not been in contact with BRD, and thought that matter had been dismissed. Mr. Parnell explained that the finance committee had just found out that BRD was threatening further litigation, but thought that it would be better not to budget funds before it was determined if BRD would actually sue. A vote was taken and the motion on **Line Item 2 passed unanimously.**

Line Item 3 – Legal Expenses. A vote was taken and the motion on **Line Item 3 passed unanimously.**

Line Item 7 – Audit. Michael Falk questioned why there would be no audit this year. Town Administrator Kleman explained that the town accountant stated the Town's books were in good shape, and as we are not required to do an audit every year, it was decided to pass on an audit this year. A vote was taken and **Line Item 7 passed.**

Line Item 15 – Town Secretary. Mr. Cavanaugh explained that there was a difference of 1.5% raise and 3.0% raise between the Finance Committee and the Select Board. He explained that because of increases in town employees' contribution to health care contributions, some of them are seeing no effective increase in take home pay, or even seeing a decrease in their take home pay over the last three years. Mr. Cavanaugh feels that the town employees deserve the 3 percent raise, and giving such a raise would have a minimal impact on the tax rate. Mark Karlberg stated that he disagreed with his fellow selectmen, and feels that the 1.5% raise is a decent pay increase. Ms. Babcock questioned if our town employees salaries were competitive with other towns. Dan Parnell stated that the finance committee didn't have a current salary survey, but felt that Becket was in line with other similar communities. He noted that most other towns were giving 0% to 1.5% raises to their employees, and that only towns with union contracts to honor were giving higher raises. He noted that the Boston Area CPI was 1.1% so it was felt that 1.5 percent was a fair raise. Mr. Krawet asked if the CPI included food and energy. Mr. Parnell acknowledged that the Boston Area CPI is calculated with food and energy costs stripped out. Mr. Waite explained that health insurance increases have resulted in his loss of five to fifty dollars per week in take home pay. A question from the floor sought clarification as to why there was discussion of 1.5% and 3% salary increases when the increases on the line items appeared higher. Mr. Parnell explained that the higher amounts reflected inclusion of other monies paid to various employees because of monies from the various road and lake districts. Richard Furlong asked if there was a motion on the floor. Bill Cavanaugh moved that the selectman's recommendation be the amount that is voted on which was seconded from the floor. Gene Pike asked that the vote approve the 3%. George Fuller recommended that the 3% raise be given, and in the future additional vacation time might be given. The motion was seconded from the floor. Mr. Karlberg asked if all town employees could be handled globally. The Moderator responded to Mr. Karlberg that each line item would have to be voted individually. A vote was taken and the **recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 15 passed.**

Line Item 20 – Assessors Salaries. Mr. Cavanaugh moved to approve the selectmen's recommendation on assessors salaries and the motion was seconded from the floor. A question from the floor questioned why the amount to be voted on was greater than that requested. Dan Parnell explained that the amount requested was the increases over in what the assessors were paid last year plus the recommended raises (1.5% or 3%) plus the "gross up" to include monies that tax assessors office receives from the taxing districts. A vote was taken and the recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 20 which failed, **and the finance committee recommendation on Line Item 20 passed.**

Line Item 24 – Tax Collector Salary. Mr. Cavanaugh moved to approve the selectmen's recommendation on Tax Collector salary and the motion was seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken with 63 vote in favor and 87 votes against, and the recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 24 which failed, **and the finance committee recommendation on Line Item 24 passed.**

Line Item 26 – Assistant Tax Collector. Ms O'Connor asked if there are two tax collectors. Mr. Kleman explained that currently there is one full time tax collector and one part time tax collector, but we are planning to go to two full time tax collectors. Ms. Hayn explained that she was looking for a full time assistant tax collector because of work load. Ms. O'Connor asked if a full time part time person could help fill the gaps during rushes. Ms. Hayn referred to a hand out explaining the number and timing of tasks that her office must complete and suggested that a full time employee is needed. Bob Ronzio questioned the salary increase amount recommended. Richard Furlong stated that the new full time person wasn't given a raise because the position hasn't been filled. Ms. Hayn explained that some of the taxing district monies would be allocated to the new hire and her salary would actually go down some what based upon hours worked. A question from the floor was how much health insurance would cost for the assistant tax



collector. Richard Furlong stated that the approximate cost for a family plan would be about \$13,000 for family plan HMO with the town's portion being 75%. A vote was taken and **Line Item 26 passed.**

Line Item 29 – Town Treasurer. George Fuller moved that the selectmen's recommendation be voted, and was seconded from the floor. It was questioned from the floor if it was a full time position. Mr. Kleman stated that the treasurer was a 30 hour per week position. A vote was taken with 60 votes in favor and 67 votes against the recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 29 which failed, **and the finance committee recommendation on Line Item 29 passed.**

Line Item 33 – Town Clerk Salary. George Fuller moved that the selectmen's recommendation be voted, and was seconded from the floor. Mr. Rosenthal questioned if there was a typo, and if there was only a \$33.00 dollar difference between the finance committee and selectmen's recommendations. It was noted from the floor that the difference between the two recommendations was \$32.00. A vote was taken and the **recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 33 passed.**

Line Item 54 – Summer Roads Labor. Bill Cavanaugh moved that the selectmen's recommendation be voted, it was seconded from floor. Barbara Ginsburg asked how many workers would be affected by this item. It was answered that there were seven workers. A vote was taken with 73 votes in favor and 44 votes against and the **recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 54 passed.**

Line Item 55 – Summer Roads Overtime. Ms. O'Connor asked why overtime would be necessary in the summer. George Fuller explained that rain storms that wash out roads, or causes downed trees blocking roads is what summer roads overtime was budgeted for. Ms. Babcock asked why an increase. Mr. Tisdale didn't know why there was an increase. Richard Furlong stated that he thought this was what was requested. It was observed that the total for summer roads labor didn't change significantly. Ms. Swindlehurst asked if the superintendant could move monies from line item to line item. It was explained that the selectman and finance committee could move monies, not the superintendant. A vote was taken and **Line Item 55 passed unanimously.**

Line Item 56 – Vacation and Holidays. Bill Cavanaugh moved that the selectmen's recommendation be voted, it was seconded. Mr. Schlanger questioned the vacation amount. Mr. Parnell noted that as the summer roads and winter roads, overtime and vacation all involve the same workers, it would be unadvisable to vote for a 3% increase on one, and a 1.5% increase on the other, as it would be an administrative nightmare. A vote was taken and **Line Item 56 passed.**

Line Item 68 – Winter Roads Labor. Bill Cavanaugh moved that the selectmen's recommendation be voted, it was seconded. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and **Line Item 68 passed.**

Line Item 89 – Street Lights. A question from the floor was asked where the streetlights are. It was explained that every major intersection had streetlights, as well as the fire stations; Wells Road and North Becket. It was asked from the floor why there was a decrease in that budget amount. Richard Furlong answered that the decrease was the result of using energy efficient light bulbs. A vote was taken and **Line Item 89 passed.**

Line Item 103 – Police Dept. Salaries. Bill Cavanaugh moved to vote on the selectmen's recommendation, and the floor seconded. Bill Elovirta spoke in support of a 3% salary increase for his officers. A vote was taken and **Line Item 103 passed.**

Line Item 120 – Building Inspector Salaries. Bill Cavanaugh moved to vote on the selectmen's recommendation, and the floor seconded. A voice vote was taken and **Line Item 120 failed.** Seven voters requested a hand count, and a hand count vote was taken and the **recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 120 failed, and the finance committee recommendation passed.**

Line Item 127 – Animal Control Expenses. Bill Cavanaugh moved to vote on the selectmen's recommendation, and the floor seconded. Mr. Cavanaugh explained that the selectmen went with the \$2500 recommendation because the finance committee may have misunderstood Bert. Mr. LaBelle explained that the \$2000 was the amount requested. Richard Furlong stated that the town administrator didn't get a request from the dog officer and used an estimate. George Fuller explained that Bert told him that he didn't put in a request because he thought that he would automatically be given the prior years amount. A vote was taken and the **recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 127 passed.**

Line Item 143 – Veterans Benefits. The floor asked what this line item is. Richard Furlong stated that this is a benefit that is mandated by the State Government. We have 3 people on the program who receive about \$1,300 per month as mandated by the State. If the Town doesn’t pay the veterans, the State will deduct the monies from our reimbursement. A vote was taken and **Line Item 143 passed unanimously.**

Line Item 152 – Parks Comm. Ms. O’Connor stated that she felt that the line item should be removed, and combined into one item for parks and recreation. Rita Furlong responded by pointing out that the amount and nature of the done by volunteers led to the decision that two groups would be in order. The Recreation committee does the programs, and the Parks Commission does the maintenance, such as replacing sand on the beach and the volley ball court. A vote was taken and **Line Item 152 passed.**

Line Item 154 – Library. The library presented a statement describing the operations of the library, noting that there was a vigorous grant writing program. She noted that generally libraries get 80% of their funding from the community, while the Becket Athenaeum gets only 1/3 of its operating budget from town appropriations while being in the top of its class for services provided. It was also pointed out that the library had repairs to perform on the roof, and furnace together with repairs necessitated because of ice dam damage. Mr. Falk made a motion to accept the selectman’s recommendation and a second was received from the floor. It was explained that by voting for \$42,000 we would be locked into a higher future budget starting position to maintain the library certification. Bill Cavanaugh discussed disagreements between the library and finance committee with regard to the selectmen’s recommendation, and spoke in support of the selectmen’s recommendation. Dan Parnell expressed the finance committee might not be able to afford escalating funding of the library with new school budget coming in next year. Ms. McEwen pointed out that two years ago the library received \$36,000 from the town, while last year they only needed \$30,000 from the town because of grants received by the library. This year they lowered their initial request from \$48,500 to \$42,000. Ms. McEwen states that the library has been underfunded, and while things are hard, the library provides great service to the town. Rob Gordon asked about other sources of funding to the library. Ms. McEwen explained that the towns appropriations amount to about 40% of the library’s funding. There is an endowment, but this covers maintenance and expenses that would be separate items if the library was a town department. The budget for this year is \$92,000. It was explained that the Becket Athenaeum owns and maintains the library building. Others spoke from the floor in general support of the \$42,000.00 appropriation for the library. Madeline Swindlehurst asked that a bicycle rack be put at the library so as to avoid car – bicycle encounters. A vote was taken and the **recommendation of the board of selectmen on Line Item 154 passed unanimously.**

Line Item 156 – Arts Center. A question from the floor as to why is the Town giving the Arts Center \$1,500 if the town owns the building. The Arts Center representative noted that all programs are free to town residents except for classes in which the Arts Center has to pay instructors. A vote was taken and **Line Item 156 passed unanimously.**

Line Item 161 – Health Insurance. The highest cost of health insurance is approximately \$14,500 for a family plan, of which the town absorbs 75%. Mr. Furlong observed that there have been significant increases in insurance costs and that last year the town under budgeted for them. He observed that it is better to budget for increases than to not have enough money in the budget. A vote was taken and **Line Item 161 passed unanimously.**

**Article 5:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$342,903 to fund the bond payments due in fiscal year 2011 for the previously approved debt excluded items:

Becket Washington School	\$109,869
Nessacus Regional Middle School	\$ 11,314
Yokum Pond Bridge Replacement	\$126,425
Ambulance & Truck Bodies	\$ 95,295

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 5** was moved from the floor and seconded from the floor. 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 the sum of \$100,000 and to appropriate \$140,000 from Free Cash to fund the Stabilization Fund for a total of \$240,000 for fiscal year 2012.

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 6** was moved and seconded from the floor. 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 Massachusetts General Laws.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 7** was moved by Bill Cavanaugh and seconded from the floor. 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 raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,000 to resurface and repair the tennis court in North Becket Village.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 8** was moved and seconded from the floor. Rita Furlong stated that the court was in poor repair and presented a safety hazard for users. There was discussion about the bid process for repairs to the tennis court. Some spoke in favor of maintaining the court, others spoke generally against it. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 8 passed.**

**Article 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$39,000 for fiscal year 2012 for the purpose of providing the following:

	Requested	Finance Committee & Selectmen Recommendations
Yearly Software Maintenance Agreements	\$5,000	\$5,000
Computer Hardware & General Software Replacement	\$5,000	\$5,000
Grant Management	\$5,000	\$5,000
Ongoing Repairs of Municipal Buildings	\$22,000	\$22,000
Center Pond Lake District	\$1,500	\$1,500
Women’s Auxiliary Children’s Party	\$500	\$500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$39,000</b>	<b>\$39,000</b>

**Article 9** was moved and seconded from the floor. It was asked generally what grant management was. It was explained that there are several grants in progress and that Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) was retained to help with grant management. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 9 was passed unanimously.**

**Article 10:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$40,000 for a new pickup and plow and sander for the highway department and to fund this appropriation by transferring \$40,000 from Free Cash.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 10** was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 10 passed unanimously.**

**Article 11:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$35,500 for a new police cruiser and authorize the Selectmen to sell or trade the old cruiser.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 11** was moved and seconded from the floor. George Fuller moved to vote by secret ballot, it was seconded from the floor. A vote was taken on conducting a secret ballot and the vote failed. Madeline Swindlehurst questioned whether we needed a new cruiser as the current one was bought in 2007. Bill Elovirta explained that it has 90,000 miles on it. The cruiser logs 25,000-30,000 miles per year. It takes a year to get a new one, and the cruisers spend a lot of hours idling. Mr. Furlong noted that the old SUV cruiser wouldn’t have a good trade in value and it was assigned to use by the building inspector and tax assessors. Bob Ronzio questioned whether it would make more sense, given gas prices, to trade in the old SUV. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 11 passed.**

**Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$90,000 to go toward the repair of Wade Inn Road.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 12** was moved and seconded from the floor. A question arose from the floor as to whether this was the entire amount to repair the road. Mr. Tisdale explained that a significant amount of money would come from Chapter 90. A full depth reclamation with cement and water added and tar and gravel surface would be added on top. Andre Salla complained of the speed of traffic and the number of large trucks and is worried that improving the road surface will increase the speed of the traffic travelling on the road. Bill Elovirta noted that speed limits

were set by the State. George Roberts asked if there was some way to restrict the size of trucks using the road. Mr. Tisdale stated that because Chapter 90 funds are used to repair the roads, traffic cannot be restricted. Ms. Gillette of County Road observed that Wade Inn Road has been bad for years and hopes that County Road might be repaired soon too. Ann Krawet asked if there could be an exception to the lack of restriction on Wade Inn. The moderator noted that other towns have tried special legislation with little success and other have tried to stick a sign up and hope it works. Ann Krawet opined that it might be worth trying to restrict access to the road. Mr. Tisdale responded to a question from the floor noting that it would take 3 years to complete the road if the town used all its Chapter 90 monies to do so. Mr. Tisdale stated that it would take 4 years to fund the project as currently proposed. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 12 passed.**

**Article 13:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from the fiscal year 2012 receipts of the Ambulance Enterprise Fund the sum of \$60,000 for the operation and expenses of the Ambulance Department for fiscal year 2012.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 13** was moved and seconded from the floor. Mr. Furlong explained funding of the ambulance. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 13 passed unanimously.**

**Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$220,000 for the Ambulance Enterprise Fund.  
**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 14** was moved by Bill Cavanaugh and seconded from the floor. Madeline Swindlehurst sought clarification on funding. Ed Mange asked if this was the entire ambulance budget, and the Moderator explained that this Article and Article 13 comprised the budget of the Ambulance Department. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 14 passed unanimously.**

**Article 15:** To see if the Town will appropriate the sum of \$26,000 to upgrade all police, fire and Town Hall radios as per federal requirements and to fund this by transferring \$26,000 from Free Cash.  
**Majority Vote Required.**

**Article 15** was moved by Bill Cavanaugh and seconded from the floor. A question from the floor and it was established that this article does not include radios for the highway department. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 15 passed.**

**Article 16:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$15,000 to pay for grant management for Fire Station #2 and Green Community Grant and to fund this appropriation by transferring \$15,000 from Free Cash.  
**Majority Vote Required.**

**Article 16** was moved and seconded from the floor. Ann Krawet asked who the grant management people were. Craig Kleman stated that Berkshire Regional Planning Commission was the grant manger. An inquire arose from the floor as to the amount of the grant and Craig Kleman stated that the grant was in the amount of \$150,000, with the Town having put in \$60,000 in previous town meeting for the work being done which started about two weeks ago. Mr. Furlong noted that a second grant had not been finalized, but we had permission to use part of it, and depending on energy audits of the Town Hall and the Highway Garage. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 16 passed.**

**Article 17:** To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$321,600 to purchase and equip a Class A Fire Pumper and to fund this appropriation by borrowing up to \$321,600 as a debt exclusion. Contingent upon favorable action on a Proposition 2 ½ debt exclusion vote on the annual town election ballot on May 21, 2011.  
**2/3 Vote Required.**

**Article 17** Mark Karlberg moved to have the Town appropriate \$321,600 to purchase and equip a Class A Fire Pumper; and to meet said appropriation, authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow said sum pursuant to G.L. c. 44, § 7 or any other enabling authority, and issue bonds or notes there for; provided, however, that the appropriation made hereunder shall be expressly contingent upon approval by the voters at the May 21, 2011 Annual Town Election to exempt the amounts required to pay the principal and interest on said borrowing from the limits of Proposition 2 ½. The motion was seconded from the floor. Mrs. Swindlehurst asked about the language of the motion and asked if it was an amendment. The Moderator explained that it was not an amendment, but rather language drafted by town counsel to be sufficient for the bond issuers. A question from the floor Ms. Hayn asked if the amount in this article is figured into the proposed tax rate that was provided earlier. Dan Parnell of the Finance Committee explained that it did not result in an increase in the tax rate because payment for the Yokum Pond bridge will be done this year, and the subject appropriation wouldn't occur until next year, so the two would wash each other out. It was stated from the floor that the truck being replaced is 41 years old. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 17 passed unanimously.**

**Article 18:** To see whether the Town will vote to ask the state legislature to enact so-called “home rule” legislation allowing Police Chief William Elovirta to continue in the position as Chief until June 30, 2012, provided he is physically and mentally capable of doing so, as documented by a physical at his own expense if the Selectmen so require, or take any other action in relation thereto.

**Article petitioned by voters.**

**Majority Vote Required.**

**Article 18** was moved and seconded from the floor. Gail LaBelle moved to have a secret ballot and have 2 police officers examine the ballots, the motion was seconded from the floor. Rob Gordon felt that secret ballot was appropriate. Troy Casey expressed concern that the town attorney had recommended that the town enforce the law, and asked if anyone had a valid reason for not enforcing the law. Mr. Garlow responded that at the moment the meeting was just considering fixing the manner of how the vote would be taken. A concern was raised from the floor as to whether it is appropriate for William Elovirta to be present while the matter was being discussed. The moderator stated that he would not ask anyone to leave the room unless they were being disruptive. An additional concern was raised from the floor that the law required retirement by age 65. The moderator reiterated that the matter before the floor was whether or not to take a secret ballot. A vote was taken on the motion to have a secret ballot and the motion was declared to have failed, seven voters stated that they doubted the Moderator’s call; the Moderator then took a counted vote with 65 votes for a secret ballot and 72 votes against a secret ballot. The procedural motion for a secret paper ballot failed. William Elovirta made a statement concerning the history of this situation. He claims that he did retire at 65, and that retirement board and the town administrator said that he could come back thereafter. Mr. Elovirta explained that the regional retirement board told him that he could return to work on a part time capacity he resigned his positions and had been out of work for one pay period as long as he didn’t work more than 960 hours per year. He pointed out that he did resign and was then reappointed to both police chief and elected constable. He pointed out that several people in the county are in the same situation, and noted that the State Police do not have a mandatory retirement age. Tyringham did pass legislation to allow their police chief to work to age 75. He stated that he only wanted to work to age 70. Ms. O’Connor asked in what way does this benefit the Town of Becket, noting that he is 69, and we are talking about only one year. Rob Gordon stated that it serves the Town in having a person who has worked many years from the town in many capacities. He noted that over the last year many attorneys have expressed conflicting opinions regarding this situation. He wants to have a vote and let the Attorney General review it afterwards. Bill Cavanaugh stated that the papers misquoted him. He stated that he didn’t believe anyone should have to leave their job because of age. He had made the decision to put it before the voters for them to decide whether Mr. Elovirta continues or not, and this vote will determine the next step. Mr. Cavanaugh said that no one would give him an opinion – the Attorney General wouldn’t give him an answer. Mr. Cavanaugh states that he was told that putting the matter before the voters was acceptable. One person from the floor stated that he had spoken with Representative Paul Mark and that he would recommend that we do what the law says which is not let Mr. Elovirta work past the age of 65. Jerry Gallagher asked if we had to buy special insurance. Mr. Cavanaugh says the Town got a letter from the insurance company indicating that the insurance company had no problem with Mr. Elovirta working up to the age of 70. Bob Ronzio noted that select board says that they don’t recommend passage of this Article, but Mr. Cavanaugh seemed to be recommending it. Mr. Cavanaugh said that the select board doesn’t recommend this Article – it was 2 to 1 against Mr. Elovirta on the select board. Margaret Ginsburg questioned why this is coming up at 69 years of age when the retirement age was 65. Mr. Mitchell spoke in support of Mr. Elovirta noting Mr. Elovirta was a good Chief who cares about the Town of Becket and that has not always been the case. The Moderator stated this matter is legally before the meeting and the Town has a right to vote. Mrs. Rodhouse questioned the applicability of the law in question to Mr. Elovirta and spoke in favor of Mr. Elovirta. Mr. Rosenthal called the question, and the Moderator found on voice vote that 2/3 of the voters wanted to move to a vote on Article 18. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 18 passed.**

**Article 19:** To see if the Town will vote to accept as gifts the following parcels of land, for general municipal purposes, including for the purposes of conveyance and authorize the Treasurer to sell these parcels at auction or through sealed bid sales, at her discretion:

- A: (Map 215, Lot 46) from Robert Barresi, 14 Chimney Swift Drive, Sandy Hook, CT 06482, described as follows: (0.56 acre), located on Blacksmiths Path. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 1029, Page 1039.
- B: (Map 215, Lot 103) from Herbert & Barbara Gordon, 2772 Red Gate Drive, Doylestown, PA 18902, described as follows: (0.58 acre), located on Woodmens Path. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 973, Page 1057.
- C: (Map 216, Lot 501) from Michael Flynn & Stella Chan-Flynn, 3 Louis Drive, Wellesley Hills, MA 02481, described as follows: (0.24 acre), located on Alan A Dale Drive. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 3953, Page 42.
- D: (Map 204, Lot 224) from Jeanette Cannon, 520 E. 90<sup>th</sup> Street, Apt. 5M, New York, NY 10128, described as follows: (0.12 acre), located on Highland Road. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds.
- E: (Map 217, Lot 179) from Gordon Soules, PO Box 29, West Stockbridge, MA 01266-0029, described as follows: (0.25 acre), located on Alan A Dale Drive. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 894, Page 116.
- F: (Map 216, Lot 206) from Leonard Macura, 55 Holbrook Street, Milford, CT 06460-5133, described as follows: (0.27 acre), located on Sir George Drive. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 1285, Page 521.
- G: (Map 216, Lot 639) from Joseph Amaral, Jr., 14539 Pine Valley Road, Orlando, FL 32826-5281, described as follows: (0.55 acre), located on Little John Drive. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 2852, Page 64.

- H. (Map 216, Lot 504) from Sheila M. Cyr, 5349 Lochmead Terrace, Zephyrhills, FL 33541 described as follows: (1.00 acre), located on Friar Tuck Drive. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 4124, Page 5.
- I. (Map 219, Lot 129) from Thomas & Pauline Petrosky, 220 Davis Avenue, Greenwich, CT 06830-6346, described as follows: (0.28 acre), located on Pine Dale Circle. Recorded at the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 947, Page 958.
- J. (Map 413, Lot 57) from P.A. Herold Family Limited Partnership, 19 Crawford Street, Randolph, MA 02368, described as follows: (2.32 acres), located on Big Bass Lane. Recorded in the Berkshire Middle District Registry of Deeds in Book 3572, Page 337.
- Majority Vote Required**

**Article 19** The Moderator noted that item H was withdrawn, Article 19 – omitting H - was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 19 passed unanimously.**

**Article 20:** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take all necessary and appropriate action to establish and to maintain, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 164 of the General Laws and in accordance with the rules, regulations and orders of the Department of Public Utilities and the Department of Telecommunications & Cable, a municipal lighting plant for all purposes allowable under the laws of the Commonwealth, including without limitation the operation of a telecommunications system and any related services, or take any other action relative thereto.

**2/3 Vote Required on Secret Paper Ballot**

**Article 20** Was moved and seconded from the floor. Mr. Shatz spoke in favor of this Article and provided an explanation that this is the mechanism by which we as a community can get high speed internet access. Mr. Ronzio spoke to explain how fiber optic can come to Becket. Mark Karlberg asked if Wired West would be an exclusive provider. Mr. Ronzio stated that Wired West will only do the hardware. It will be an open architecture – not like a cable company – in this case you could get any provider and it will be competitive. Mr. Cavanaugh recommended that the meeting vote for this item but continue to do due diligence for the second vote. Mr. Gordon questioned why opening a municipal lighting plant was necessary. Mr. Ronzio explained why the State put this under the Municipal Lighting Plant noting that it is the mechanism by which a community can be organized under the General Laws to do something like high speed broad band. Mrs. Swindlehurst wondered if the language could be changed. Mr. Garlow explained that the language is required. A secret paper ballot vote was taken with 64 yes and 8 no votes, and the motion on **Article 20 was passed.**

**Article 21:** To see if the Town will vote to accept the following sections of Massachusetts General Laws relating to mutual aid: M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 4J Statewide Public Safety Mutual Aid; M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 4K Statewide Public Works Municipal Mutual Aid; and M.G.L. Chapter 48, Section 59A Fire Mutual Aid.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 21** was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 21 passed unanimously.**

**Article 22:** 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 2012, with each item to be considered a separate appropriation:

Appropriations:

From FY 2012 estimated revenues to Committee Administrative Expenses	\$500
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Reserves:

From FY 2012 estimated revenues to Historical Resources Reserve	\$4,250
From FY 2012 estimated revenues to Community Housing Reserve	\$4,250
From FY 2012 estimated revenues to Open Space Reserve	\$4,250
From FY 2012 estimated revenues to Budgeted Reserve	\$29,750

**Sponsored by the Community Preservation Committee**

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 22** Bill Cavanaugh moved and it was seconded from the floor. Neil Toomey addressed the meeting in support of Article 22. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 22 was passed unanimously.**

**Article 23:** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$4,000 from the Historic Resources Reserve and \$6,000 from the undesignated Budgeted Reserves of the Community Preservation Fund for historic preservation purposes to help fund the repair of the chimney and roof of the Becket Arts Center; said funds to be expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Becket Arts Center Board of Directors.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 23** was moved and seconded from the floor. Mr. Richard asked to make a motion to reduce the amount. Mr. Furlong asked if Mr. Richard represented the Arts Center. Mr. Richard said that he did not represent the Arts Center. Mr. Furlong stated that it was his opinion that Article 23 had to be voted up or down. The Moderator agreed with Mr. Furlong and found that motion was not proper. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 23 passed unanimously**.

**Article 24:** To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$20,000 from the undesignated Budgeted Reserves of the Community Preservation Fund for historic preservation purposes to fund the completion of Phase II of the Mullen House Education Center Restoration Project; said funds to be expended under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee and the Mullen House Educational Center Board of Directors.

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 24** was moved and seconded from the floor. A question arose from the floor as to how much was spent on this building to date. Members of the CPA and Mullen House explained that the town has spent approximately \$20,000 to \$25, 000 to date, and explained that the completed first phase of the Mullen House Restoration was approximately \$100,000 but this was all grant money, and the Town did not pay anything. A vote was taken and the motion on **Article 24 passed unanimously**.

**Article 25:** To see if the Town will enact a temporary tax amnesty program during fiscal year 2011, in accordance with Chapter 188, §68 of the Acts of 2010, or take any other action relative thereto.

**Voted:** That the town enact the following tax amnesty program, in accordance with Chapter 188, § 68 of the Acts of 2010, in order to encourage the payment of certain delinquent tax obligations.

Section 1. Amnesty Period: The amnesty program shall begin on effective date of annual town meeting vote and end on June 30, 2011.

Section 2. Program Scope: A taxpayer shall receive a waiver of 100% of accrued interest, collection costs and penalties owed on any of the following types of tax liabilities upon full payment of the outstanding liability by the end of the amnesty period: real estate tax, road district tax and lake district tax.

### **Article petitioned by voters.**

### **Majority Vote Required**

**Article 25** was moved by Steven Rosenthal and seconded from the floor. Mr. Rosenthal stated that people who are behind on their taxes can get out from under their penalties and interest and get current on their taxes. There will only be 45 days for taxpayers to take action on this. Tax Collector Kathy Hayn told the meeting she was uncomfortable with the Article as proposed and suggested several amendments to the Article. Ann Spadafora questioned if this Article could be amended, and the Moderator, in consultation with Town counsel found that it could be amended. Mr. Ronzio asked if a non-registered voter could offer an amendment. The moderator found that a non-resident could not offer an amendment, and Ms. Hayn acknowledged that she was no longer a resident. A request was made for a non-binding vote to see if the town was interested in exploring the amendments initially proposed by Ms. Hayn. A non-binding voice vote was made and Ms. Hayn's proposal did not pass the non-binding voice vote. A question arose from the floor as to how this article arose. The Moderator explained that this article came to being by citizen's petition and that there would be only approximately 6 weeks to take advantage of the article if it passed. Ms. Babcock proposed an amendment that was determined to be beyond the scope of the meeting by the Moderator. Ms. Elovirta asked how many properties would be affected by passage of this Article. Ms. Hayn said that the number would depend on the scope of the article that may be passed. Mr. Furlong voiced the belief that the genesis of this article was an attempt by the Sherwood Forest Neighbors Association to un-encumber some of its properties that has been in tax title for a long time, and questioned what kind of precedent the Town would be establishing. Mr. Lerner agreed that the Sherwood Forest Neighbors Association was a proponent of this article. He noted that Sherwood Forest Neighbors Association has many responsibilities but few tools to accomplish them, specifically he noted that the SNFA had no mechanism by which to collect tax revenue. He noted that the Town approved the Sherwood Forest Lake District which has enabled Sherwood Forest to start addressing dam repairs required by the Commonwealth. Mr. Lerner the SNFA wanted to pay taxes on properties it owned but simply didn't have the money to do so. He also acknowledged that if the costs, penalties and interest other than the actual taxes were waived, SNFA would be able to pay the town \$11,000 in back taxes on several pieces of property, but would not be able to do so if the costs, penalties and interest were not waived. Mr. Ronzio noted that several properties in Sherwood Forest that would be affected by the tax amnesty abut dams in Sherwood Forest, and if they are sold, there would be problems servicing the dams. Mr. Ronzio also noted that other members of the Town of Becket other than SFNA could benefit from the program. Mr. Cavanaugh spoke in favor of the article as being in the best interest of the Town. Mr. Furlong made a motion to change the language of Section 2. from:

Section 2. Program Scope: A taxpayer shall receive a waiver of 100% of accrued interest, collection costs and penalties

owed on any of the following types of tax liabilities upon full payment of the outstanding liability by the end of the amnesty period: real estate tax, road district tax and lake district tax.

To: Section 2. Program Scope: A taxpayer shall receive a waiver of 100% of accrued interest and penalties owed on any of the following types of tax liabilities upon full payment of the outstanding liability by the end of the amnesty period: real estate tax and road district tax currently in tax title.

The motion was seconded from the floor. The Moderator called the question on the amendment and the amendment passed. The Moderator called the question on Article 25 as amended above, a vote was taken and the motion on **Article 25 passed unanimously.**

**Article 26:** 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.

**Voted:** That the Town of Becket select board contingent upon the passing of a ballot question at the Annual Town Election for the same purpose within thirty (30) immediately initiate any and all actions required by statute to effect this change, in accordance with G.L. c. 41, §1, and 21 and G.L. c. 40, § 32.

*This article is contingent on the passing of a ballot question at the Annual Town Election. Legislative action is also required to effect this change.*

**Article petitioned by voters.**

### **Majority Vote Required**

Article 26 was moved by Mr. Roberts and seconded from the floor. Ms. Babcock raised concern about the 3 person board finding itself in a situation where there was a conflict and the rule of necessity required a selectman with the conflict to vote notwithstanding the conflict. Ms. Swindlehurst agreed with Ms. Babcock and also felt that Sherwood Forest and like communities within town don't get good representation on the board and feels that a 5 member board would facilitate better representation of these communities. Another person observed that given the lack of apparent interest in people running for the board, a five member board might not make sense. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that in 15 years on the Select Board he has not encountered a situation where a problem arose that prevented the Town's business from being done. A vote was taken and **Article 26 failed.**

**Article 27: ZONING ARTICLE:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Becket Zoning By-Laws by adding a new § 6.7 entitled **Large Wind Energy System**, as summarized below and as on file in the office of the Town Clerk and on the Town website at [www.townofbecket.org](http://www.townofbecket.org).

- This bylaw is designed to allow landowners in Becket to generate electricity on a scale that is larger than just on-site use, and to connect the wind turbine to the electrical grid.
- This bylaw will allow the installation of Large Scale Wind Energy System that is (200 feet or) greater than 200' but not more than 420' in height.
- Installation would be allowed by special permit granted by the SPGA.
- A large wind energy system will not be allowed to cause more than thirty (30) shadow/flicker hours per year on any off site inhabited building or undeveloped lot without written permission of those affected.
- A large wind energy system shall be at least **one-half (½) mile** from off-site inhabited buildings or undeveloped lots in existence on the date the application is filed with the SPGA.
- A large wind energy system shall be setback a distance equal **one and one-half (1.5) times the height** of the large wind energy system from on-site inhabited buildings public rights of way and recreational trails "fall zones".
- The owner/operator is required to provide a financial surety to the Town to cover the cost of damage to public/private ways and property during its lifespan as well as for the system's removal when abandoned or discontinued.

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

**Article 27** was moved and seconded from the floor. Gale LaBelle noted that the proposed by-law as posted on the Town of Becket Web Site does not incorporated the one-half (½) mile setback separation set forth above instead, referring to a setback separation of one-quarter mile setback separation. Gale LaBelle made a motion to substitute the word one-half for one-quarter on Page 5, in section 1.6 Design Standards, paragraph i. Setbacks, sub-paragraph i), changing the language of this section from:

A large wind energy system shall be set back at least one-quarter mile, measured from the base of the nearest wind turbine, from any off-site inhabited buildings or undeveloped lots....

To: A large wind energy system shall be set back at least one-half mile, measured from the base of the nearest wind turbine, from any off-site inhabited buildings or undeveloped lots....

Mr. Smith felt that sub-paragraph i) might be so restrictive that the Attorney General's Office might block approval of the proposed by-law. Mr. Smith noted that with the present language the permit would automatically be denied if the builder did not get written permission from all owners within a 500 acre area. He noted that there were many avenues by which an abutter could submit objections to a wind turbine project. He also believes that



the Attorney General's Office might reject the Town's wind by-law. He proposed that paragraph i) be replaced with:

All land owners within a quarter mile radius measured from the base of the nearest wind turbine shall be notified of the permit request and the dates of the public hearings. They will be advised of their right to attend the public hearing or submit written statements of their objections to or support of the proposed turbine project. These statements will be taken under advisement by the SPGA when considering the impact of the turbine on the abutters and neighbors.

Mr. Roberts noted that the Attorney General's office often will delete only those portions of a by-law that it finds to be illegal or otherwise objectionable, and feels that a half mile is not an unreasonable separation from the wind turbine and adjoining property owners. Further the way the article is written it gives the proponent of a wind mill the ability to lessen the distance between a wind mill and an abutter if the abutter agrees. Ms. Krawet presented data from several studies in support of the half-mile distance from abutters. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission provided a graph with all the provisions necessary. BRPC's recommendation was a half-mile separation from the base of the wind turbine for any inhabited structure based upon the National Academy of Science 2007 study. Which reads: The purpose of the one-half mile set back is to reduce the likelihood that neighbors living in proximity to the large wind energy facility will be adversely affected by noise produced by large wind energy facilities. Ms. Krawet noted that the one-half mile set back suggested is the recommended minimum set back distance from large wind energy facilities. She also noted that the one-half mile separation should ensure that inhabited structures are outside the area of greatest shadow flicker impact. Ms. Krawet also noted that the World Health Organization suggests a minimum of one-half mile separation. The Acoustic Ecology Institute suggests that noise can be a significant issue in some situations when wind turbines are situated within one-half mile of homes, and occasionally when they are as far as a mile from homes. Low frequency noise can be damaging to nervous systems. The Minnesota Department of Health and Environmental Health Division Study of 2009 notes complaints arise from people living close to wind turbines or people who live in areas subject to aerodynamic modulation and possibly enhanced sound propagation which can occur in hilly or mountainous terrain. Ms. Krawet reiterated the majority of problems arising from large wind turbines occurs within the zone of one-half mile from the base of the turbine. Mr. Ronzio proposed a compromise of 3/8ths of a mile and discussed that various areas that would be open to wind turbine development given various separation distances. Ms. Babcock was not aware of the last planning board meeting, and is in favor of a quarter mile separation. She is in favor of keeping the one-quarter mile separation. A motion was made and seconded to cut off debate and passed. A vote taken on the motion to amend paragraph i) to change one-quarter to one-half as set forth above and the amendment passed.

Mr. Smith moved to amend sub-paragraph i) to read:

All land owners within a half-mile radius measured from the base of the nearest wind turbine shall be notified of the permit request and the dates of the public hearings. They will be advised of their right to attend the public hearing or submit written statements of their objections to or support of the proposed turbine project. These statements will be taken under advisement by the SPGA when considering the impact of the turbine on the abutters and neighbors.

A statement from the floor expressed the opinion that the effect of Mr. Smith's proposed amendment would be removing the minimum separation distance and replacing it with separation of 1.5 times the height of the wind turbine from abutting residences. Mr. Roberts noted that Mr. Smith's amendment put the onus of opposing a wind turbine on the abutting property owner. Mr. Ronzio re-stated the 3/8ths mile compromise option. Mr. Seville hadn't heard one good reason why a 480 foot wind turbine should be in the town. Ms. Swindlehurst suggested that written acceptance of everyone within one-half mile is too excessive, but everyone in one-half mile should be notified. The Moderator called the question on Mr. Smith's amendment. A vote was held and the amendment failed.

Ms. Gallagher also expressed concern on the impact large wind turbines might have on night sky. Mr. Ronzio noted that light warning requirements are controlled by the FAA and beyond the Town's control. Ms. Krawet reiterated that the 1/2 mile separation is the minimum safe separation. Ms. Swindlehurst moved a set back amendment SPGA can reduce separation, but how is permission "maintained" and believes that permission should run with the land and proposes adding "evidence that such permission has been granted and maintained all individuals and entities shall be by recorded entry into the deed of the affected properties in all the respective registries of deeds and failure to provide such evidence to the SPGA shall render the special permit invalid". The motion was seconded from the floor. Ms. Spadafora observed that such a recording might affect the ability of a property owner to sell their property. Mr. Roberts observed that the recording requirement might provide comfort for the developer. Mr. Krawet feels that this would place a further burden on the developer. A vote was taken on

Ms. Swindlehurst’s amendment and the motion failed.

A motion was made and seconded to call a vote, a vote was taken and the motion passed. A vote was held and the motion on **Article 27 passed by 2/3 vote.**

**Article 28: ZONING ARTICLE:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Becket Zoning By-Laws §6.5 **SMALL WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS**, subsection 6.5.3 **Definitions Small Wind Energy System:** by adding the following words “*and is less than two hundred feet (200’) in height*” after the word “*power*” in the first sentence. This change shown below in context is on file in the office of the Town Clerk and on the Town website at [www.townofbecket.org](http://www.townofbecket.org).

Amendment to 6.5.3 Small Wind Energy Systems – Definitions

***Small Wind Energy System:*** All equipment and structures utilized in connection with the conversion of wind to electricity that is intended primarily to, but not limited to, reduce on-site consumption of utility power and is less than two-hundred feet (200’) in height. This includes, but is not limited to, a wind turbine, a tower and associated control or conversion electronics.

- This change clarifies the distinction between a large and small wind energy system.
- The change is only needed if the previous article passes.

**2/3 Vote Required**

**Article 28** was moved and seconded from the floor. There was no discussion. A vote was held and the motion on **Article 28 passed by 2/3 vote.**

It was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn to the Annual Town Election which will be held one week from today on May 21, 2010, starting at 10:00 a.m. A vote was taken and the motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 a.m. The checkers were Election Workers Eva Bonney and Arlene Adler.

Respectfully submitted,

George E. Roberts  
Town Clerk



