

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen's Meeting
August 15, 2018
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall
557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees:

Board of Selectmen: William ("Bill") Elovirta, *Chair*; Michael Lavery, *Vice-Chair*
Nicole Ledoux, *Clerk*

Staff: Robert Markel, *Interim Town Administrator*
Beverly Gilbert, *Recording Secretary*
Kris McDonough, *Chief of Police*

Others: Jeremy Dunn (member of Broadband Ad Hoc Group), Chris Lynch (Matrix Design Group)

1. Call to order

Bill called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. He indicated that the BOS was recording the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Bill led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Approval of Minutes

There were no meeting minutes presented for review.

4. 7:05 p.m. Opening and review of sealed bids for Type 1 HMA Top mix. BOS to consider voting to approve the bids.

At 7:05 p.m., Bill read the Notice of Bids that was advertised in the Berkshire Eagle on August 1st and 8th. Bob Markel advised that 11 bid packets were sent to pre-qualified contractors of which 5 submitted sealed bids.

Bob Markel opened and reviewed the bids:

<u>Name of Company</u>	<u>Total Bid Price</u>
• J. H. Maxymillian, Inc., Pittsfield, MA	\$ 253,393.92
• The Lane Construction Corporation, Westfield, MA	\$ 223,207.00
• Palmer Paving Corp, Palmer, MA	\$ 235,676.20
• DelSignore Blacktop Paving, Inc., Troy, NY	\$ 235,991.96
• Warner Bros., LLC, Sunderland, MA	\$ 247,992.00

All contractors submitted the required documents. Bill moved to accept The Lane Construction Corporation's bid at \$223,207.00 for hot mix in conjunction with the County and Quarry Roads repaving project contingent upon the Highway Superintendent's review and approval of the bid packet. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **BOS to consider voting to accept the Town of Becket Community Choice Power Supply Program Aggregation Plan**

Bob stated that about half of the communities in Berkshire County have an aggregation plan and he sees no disadvantage of entering a community choice power supply program for which residents are automatically enrolled and may opt-out. Although Colonial Power Group, Inc. was the only bidder, the chairperson of the Energy Committee had advised to Bob that it is not unusual for one company to work in a specific region, and Colonial Power Choice has a presence in the Berkshires. Michael moved to approve Colonial Power Group, Inc.'s Community Choice Power Supply's Aggregation Plan for the Town of Becket. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The next step along this process is for the town to notify the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources.

6. **BOS to review and possibly vote to Re-Appoint Dean Williams to the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District effective 08-15-2018 through 6-30-2019**

Michael moved to re-appoint Dean Williams to continue serving as the town's Representative to the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District effective 08-15-2018 through 6-30-2019. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

7. **Broadband Update (discussed after agenda item 4)**

Jeremy Dunn, member of the Broadband Ad Hoc group, provided an update of the Broadband project to the BOS:

- Discussion ensued about the items the Broadband Ad Hoc may discuss with the Selectmen during their August 28th Working Meeting. Bill indicated that he would like the Broadband Ad Hoc Group to provide recommendations and a listing of the pros & cons/financial ramifications of accepting Matrix Design's group's proposal vs. a town-owned broadband system. Michael indicated he would like to see a menu of estimates for items relating to building the network. The BOS indicated that they would like to hear package deal choices/estimates. Jeremy stated that the Broadband Ad Hoc Group had planned to present a menu of estimates for items that the BOS may select/eliminate. Based on the BOS's guidance, the Broadband Ad Hoc Group would continue refining the costs of those areas that the BOS deems essential.
- The Town of Becket had relied on the Massachusetts Broadband Institute's estimate. Had the correct miles been used in the original budget estimate, Becket would have received a larger allocation from the state and voted to raise the funding that it was told was needed to complete the network. The Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development secured additional state funding to mitigate this problem encountered by eligible towns in the Commonwealth. Bill Ennen, Last Mile Liaison, Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development, has advised that the town must pay upfront for make-ready and then apply for the aforementioned EOHD reimbursement (reimbursement is processed in arrears). The town would need to borrow money in order to cover these expenses; the town may borrow from State House Notes.

Discussion ensued:

Must the town seek approval through town meeting before borrowing from State House Notes to fund the broadband ready-make? Would the state provide a letter to verify that the town does not require Town Meeting approval to secure State House notes? Jeremy stated that Bill Ennen, indicated that it is the responsibility of Jay Ash Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, to provide rulings of what

the state will pay for with EOHEC grant, and that the only way the secretary may provide the ruling is for the town to submit a request for money spent.

Bob Markel reported that per Dan Parnell's suggestion, he had sent Sean Cronin, Senior Deputy Commission of Local Services (Division of Local Services) a written request to clarify the mechanics of the debt process. Based on Sean Cronin's recommendation, Bob Markel will schedule a phone meeting with Sean Cronin, Bill Ennen, Bob Gross (MLP Manager), and possibly a member of the Board of Selectmen/and a member of the Finance Committee. Chris Lynch indicated that he believes other towns have been able to secure State House Note debt without the need for town meeting by pledging other state funds (Chapter 90 funds). Jeremy cautioned there is no guarantee about what the state will cover since oftentimes the state programs are subject to interpretation. Jeremy framed the dilemma: if the town has to borrow approximately 3 million dollars to cover the overages from what had originally been estimated for the town to build a Fiber to the Premise) high speed broadband internet network, can we borrow on the strength of the letter from the state or is it necessary to do so through town meeting?

- In order to address requests from individuals and neighborhood/home-owner associations for the Broadband project status, the Broadband Ad Hoc group will seek a volunteer to assist with public relations. They are looking for an individual who has an aptitude for marketing and communicating about complex technical subject matters in a way that is relatable to laymen. Bill indicated that he hopes the timeframe/status will be included in updates.
- Jeremy advised that all make-ready applications have been submitted to Verizon and Eversource. The town incurred costs to Westfield Gas & Electric which prepared the applications. The good news is that vehicles from Verizon and Eversource are visible and this demonstrates that the project is progressing to the public. One of the two utility companies accepts Westfield Gas & Electric's survey information. The other utility company requires compiling its own measurements

8. Board of Selectmen to consider voting to approve the Town Administrator as a signatory for Broadband related documents

Michael moved to approve Robert Gross (MLP Manager), Robert Markel (Interim Town Administrator) and Margaret McClellan (Town Account) as signatories for Broadband related documents, Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

9. Town Administrator Recruitment Update

The Town Administrator Search Committee scheduled a meeting on September 4th. Community Paradigm Associates, LLC has placed ads on August 3, 2018, and there is a one month deadline to apply. Review of applications will begin post Labor Day.

10. Route 20 Spring Update

Bob Markel will follow-up with Housatonic Basin to provide the engineering study.

11. Discussion of potential Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

The BOS will discuss this agenda item at the next meeting.

12. Transfer Station Policy

The BOS will discuss this matter at the next meeting.

13. Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements

Michael reported that he had contacted Design Specialist Tom Rose of Virtual Towns & Schools (the town's vendor for the town website) to set up MailChip as a mechanism to disseminate town-related information/announcements/newsletters to town website subscribers (social media-like announcements such as the Becket-Washington Brouhaha etc.). Subscribers of the website will be automatically be signed up for MailChip and those wishing to do so may opt out. Michael advised that when the new Town Administrator is in place, MailChip may be employed as a viable way to enhance communication.

14. **Town Administrator's Report**

Bob Markel reported on the following matters:

- Our Tax Title Custodian is almost ready. A list of properties has been submitted to the auction house, and we are waiting to hear from them with a date.
- 20 year vehicle replacement schedule has been completed. Bob advised that this schedule may begin a discussion with department heads responsible for vehicles. Ideally there should be a predictable/level amount of borrowing each year. Bob also suggested that it is useful to review annual vs. lifetime maintenance and there should be more accurate costs to replace vehicles in future years.
- Demolition Account Status: 21 Maple Street has been demolished at a cost of \$46,000 (includes the asbestos survey, removal of asbestos, demolition of building itself, and the septic removal. The septic removal was paid through FY18 funds). The town spent \$15,345 to demolish two properties, one located at Black Arrow Way & the other located at Brooker Hill Road. We have \$3,908 remaining in the FY19 demolition account. The Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector had told Bob that no other town-owned properties are scheduled for demolition.
- Code of Conduct: Town Counsel is reviewing. Bob has asked for an opinion on whether the Town can require employees to sign the Code.
- Bob mentioned the following meeting: MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) Representative Selection, Lee Town Hall, scheduled on September 11 at 5:30 p.m. Bill advised that the town is not eligible for this funding program because Becket has no federally designated roads.
- Revival of Mass Energy Insight: Data entry of the town's use of energy will be resumed. Authorization has been requested for Beverly Gilbert, Cathy Defoe and Robert Markel. Al Blake was authorized in July.
- Training on sexual harassment/hostile work environment by KP-Law. Atty. Deborah Ecker will conduct this town employee training on August 16 at 10:00 a.m. in the Berkshire Room.
- Energy Issues:
 - Consultant: DOER Municipal Energy Technical Assistance Grant (applied for a consultant to advise on Town Hall HVAC) was submitted. No response yet.
 - Kyle Houser, contractor for Eversource, will conduct a free Town Hall energy audit on August 17th.
- Valley Communications visited Town Hall to review the telephone system. Twenty-one new telephones, already funded, will be installed in early October.
- Jacob's Pillow property has now been re-assessed. Bob Markel will meet with the Director on August 29 to discuss an increase in their PILOT payment to the Town and to ask if they would consider donating land for a solar array.
- Bob and the BOS discussed applying for the next round of the Community Compact Program. Applications will be accepted starting tomorrow on a first come first serve

basis up to \$20,000. The BOS directed Bob to apply for the grant and to zero in on one of the following areas: Shared Services (Conservation Agent), or pending Kris McDonough's recommendation, Creation of an Emergency Management Disaster Response Plan,

- Final results of the auction of surplus property: The Town received \$25,045 (The dump truck was the largest portion of the sales).
- Request to sign easement for 344 Wells Road. To comply with ATM approval, the board of Selectmen signed the easement for 344 Wells Road.
- Discussion ensued regarding a request that a sound system be acquired for use in the Town Hall. Several individuals in attendance at last night's Berkshire County District Attorney's candidate forum, had difficulty hearing. Michael indicated that the Buildings and Grounds Technician and former Moderator do not agree that a sound system is needed for the Community Room. Michael was the timer of last night's event and did not hear any complaints regarding audibility during the event. Bill will ask Dave Shorey if the town has a system that is used during Town Meeting held at the school.

15. Public Input

There was no public input.

16. Any other business to come before the Board

Gale Labelle, Chairperson of the Board of Health, had met with the Town Administrator today to inquire about the Becket Municipal Water System reporting process. Gale had stated that the BOH should receive copies on communications/documents relating to Becket's Municipal Water Supply. Subsequently, she asked DEP to e-mail BOH all copies of communications relating to Becket Municipal Water Systems. It was agreed that the town's Municipal Water System Operator, Housatonic Basin, may e-mail copies of the water testing reports to the BOH. Currently the Buildings and Grounds Technician Dave Shorey is Housatonic Basin's 24/7 contact should action be warranted to comply with any DEP Enforcement Orders relating to Becket Municipal Water System.

17. Correspondence: MassDOT letter dated 07-25-2018 – State approved Chapter 90 Project Request No. 50726, 2019-001 County/Quarry Road Resurfacing (Advertised Bid \$238,753.32)

The BOS acknowledged receipt of the above mentioned communication.

18. BOS to review and sign payable warrants

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

19. BOS to adjourn the meeting

Michael moved to adjourn. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously. At 8:40 p.m. Bill adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Secretary


William Elovirta, Chairperson

Amended on September 21, 2018

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- Colonial Power Group, Inc. Community Choice Power Supply Program Aggregation Plan
- Appointment Application, Dean Williams – Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District Representative
- Correspondence – as noted above
- Auctions International Statement
- Contractor Authorized Signature Listing
- Easement for 344 Wells Road
- Town Administrator Report
- Community Compact Best Practice Areas
- Notice of Bids for Type 1 HMA Top Mix
- Bid packages:
 - J. H. Maxymillian, Inc., Pittsfield, MA
 - The Lane Construction Corporation, Westfield, MA
 - Palmer Paving Corp, Palmer, MA
 - DelSignore Blacktop Paving, Inc., Troy, NY
 - Warner Bros., LLC, Sunderland, MA