

Board of Selectmen
August 21, 2013
Minutes

Members present: Jeanne Pryor, William Elovirta, Angela Hilton

Others Present: Ed Gibson, Colleen O'Connor, Beth VanNess, Gale LaBelle

7:00 PM Jeanne called the meeting to order.

Jeanne asked if anyone was recording the meeting. No one other than the Board of Selectmen is recording the meeting.

Bill motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of July 17, 2013, Angela seconded. All in favor. Bill motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of August 7, 2013, Angela seconded. All in favor. Jeanne advised that when she first looked at the minutes of June 19, 2013 she had not picked up on an error in these minutes. She advised that on the third paragraph on the second page it states that the Board was all in favor of a vote to send an ambulance department bill to the collection agency but she voted no. Jeanne motioned to amend the minutes of June 19, 2013 on the third paragraph of page two to read "Jeanne voted no. Motion passed" instead of "All in favor", Bill seconded. All in favor

The Board reviewed the list of election workers that the Town Clerk gave them. Bill asked about one of the people on the list and was told this person no longer resided in Becket and would not be available to be an election worker. Jeanne was concerned about two people who were on the list from the Democratic Town Committee of interested election workers that were not on the list provided by the town clerk. She feels that these two people should be appointed and the two new people should not be appointed until we have an answer about why they were not on the list. Jeanne motioned to appoint the following: Ann Krawet, Gale LaBelle, Stephen LaBelle Sr., Aylmer Trivers, Adrienne Metcalf, Jerome Schwartzbach, Patricia Clemons, Charles Francis, Charles Garman, Priscilla McEwen, Beth VanNess, Julia Kay Grace, Josh Lombard, Alvin Blake, Joan Moylan, Meredyth Babcock plus Paulette Feit and Eva Bonney and not appoint Lorraine Dean and William Neronha, Bill seconded. All in favor.

The Board briefly discussed the property donation by Christopher Sarafin. Mr. Sarafin purchased three parcels at a town auction a few years ago and did not want the properties any longer. The town voted to accept his properties at an annual town meeting back in 2012 and Nina advised that his taxes are paid up. Bill motioned to sign the letter to Mr. Sarafin accepting his property donation in the Sherwood Forest subdivision, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Ed explained the Town Hall A/C design amendment proposal. The engineering company that originally drew up the Town Hall A/C design amended it and will assist the town with the walk through and the bidding process for this project. Jeanne motioned to authorize Ed to sign the proposal for professional engineering for the Town Hall A/C not to exceed \$1,000, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Ed explained the vocational transportation for the upcoming year. He advised that there are more students attending vocational school this year. One student will be attending Westfield Voc., one student will be attending Taconic, two students will be attending McCann and the remaining nine students will be attending Smith Vocational. He had to go from a ten passenger van to a fourteen passenger mini-bus for transporting the Smith and Westfield students. He explained the bus routes for the students. He advised that if the Gateway School system cancelled school, the Lecrenski buses would not be running so the voc.

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students going to Smith and Westfield would not have to go to school those days. Ian advised Ed that if CBRSD cancelled school but the Gateway School system had school, it would be up to us whether to transport the students to Smith and Westfield. It would not be considered a missed day for the students if we did not transport on those days. Ed feels that if CBRSD closed school then we should not transport students because the roads could be in worse condition here than where they are travelling. Ed also advised that the Town of Washington will be taking students to Pittsfield and McCann schools so we would not need to use Dufour to transport students to McCann. Bill asked if we had enough money to cover the cost for voc transportation. Ed advised that he would have a better idea once we start and everything is running as it should be.

The Board reviewed the draft Leave Request Form. Department heads would have to submit the Leave Request form to Ed and employees would need to submit the forms to the department heads. Bill motioned to approve the Leave Request Form, Angela seconded. All in favor.

The Board reviewed the Athenaeum Ad Hoc Committee composition. Briefly discussed the term for this committee. Ed explained that the committee would have up to two annual town meetings to complete its work and if they do not need all of this time it would dissolve when they were finished. Ed answered a question from the public of what "ad hoc" means. Bill motioned to approve the Athenaeum Ad Hoc Committee Composition, Angela seconded. All in favor.

The Board reviewed the monthly reports of the Building Inspector, Police Department and Citations Issued. Bill asked a question about the building inspector report. There were two permits issued for the same thing but the fees were different. Ed advised that the fee could be based on square footage but he will check with Bill Girard.

Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements: None.

Town Administrator's Report: Ed advised that the Fiscal Representative from DHCD was here on August 15th to audit our records as well as BRPC's records concerning the CDBG grant. Ed also advised that the CDBG would allow the Town of Becket to utilize any funding left from the original grant for Emergency Housing Rehabilitation projects but the funds would have to be expended by September 30th. Ed feels this would be impractical to accomplish with the required paperwork processing for a claim so he recommends the Board formally "Close Out" the CDBG grant. Bill motioned to close out the CDBG as of September 30, 2013, Angela seconded. All in favor. Gale LaBelle advised that she knows of a person that could use the housing rehab funding but he did not have a Massachusetts driver's license. Ed advised that this would fall under the Emergency Housing Rehabilitation and he would need to check to see if there would be enough time to complete it before September 30th. Ed also advised that they would need to have a public hearing before they could close out the CDBG so the Board should rescind the vote they just took. Bill motioned to rescind the vote to close out the CDBG, Jeanne seconded. All in favor. Bill motioned to request the Town Administrator to start the process of closing out the CDBG grant, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Ed advised that the highway superintendent has asked if the Board would like to move forward on his previous recommendation to donate the old welding machine to Smith Vocational School as surplus property for their classes. This would constitute a donation of surplus property to another Municipal

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Government agency. Bill motioned to allow Chris Bouchard to donate the old welder to Smith Vocational School, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Ed advised that the letter in support of the Toomey's firewood production predicament is in front of the Board for their signatures. He thanked Jeanne for her edits and the help he received from Neil Toomey with this letter.

Ed advised that the CBRSD has scheduled the Title V inspection for the Becket/Washington School for Monday, August 26th at 8:00 a.m.

Ed advised that there is a potential for two vacancies on town boards or committees both appointed and elected because of relocation. Kathy Vsetecka will be moving around October 1st which will create a vacancy on the Conservation Commission for an officer/agent. He has offered to help the Conservation Commission to hire a new officer/agent. He also advised that Bud Moylan would be moving outside of Becket which will create a vacancy for an elected Cemetery Commissioner. Bud has offered his paid services to continue mowing Center Cemetery if this will help in the transition of appointing his replacement next year. Bill asked if there would be an opening for an election worker since they just appointed Joan Moylan as one. Jeanne will check to see if she can continue to be an election worker after she moves.

Ed advised that the auditors were here on August 15th for their preliminary work and will return the week of August 26th through the 30th to perform our FY 2012 audit.

Public Input: Gale LaBelle thanked Bill and Maddy Elovirta for all their work on the town parks. She also asked the Selectmen to come to the Title V inspection at the Becket Washington School on Monday. Bill and Jeanne advised that they would be there. Gale advised that she has someone from the State coming and the Town Administrator would also be there. She also filled in the Board as to the work the Board of Health is doing to get the filing system up-to-date and other things they are doing that has not been done in the past.

Beth VanNess advised that the Planning Board has voted to have her and Bob Ronzio as representatives on the BRPC to replace Gale and Stephen LaBelle. Ed advised that the Planning Board votes to appoint the delegate to the BRPC but the Board of Selectmen appoint the alternate. He also advised that if Gale and Steve have not officially resigned then they should so the others can be appointed. Gale advised that she has officially resigned but Steve has not yet. Jeanne motioned to appoint Beth VanNess to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission as alternate effective upon the resignation of Stephen LaBelle Sr., Bill seconded. All in favor.

Any other business: Bill advised that the MMA is accepting Annual Town Reports for its Annual Town Report Contest. Nina advised that she has sent the ATR to the MMA already.

Ed asked the Board if anyone would be attending the MMA Legislative Breakfast on September 27th besides Jeanne. Bill advised that he would be attending this breakfast. Nina will register him for this meeting.

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Bill advised that our bylaws state that all 911 house numbers should be at least four inches tall but the company that makes the signs through the fire department will not make the signs with four inch numbers. He researched the internet to see if any other companies make these signs with four inch numbers but could not find any. Ed also advised that he went into several hardware stores and only found three inch numbers. Bill suggested that we change our bylaws to three inch numbers.

Bill advised that he attended a Planning Board meeting and they discussed a Public Nuisance Bylaw. He feels the town should have some kind of bylaw for public nuisances such as noise. Ed advised that it is very hard to have a noise bylaw because the town would need some kind of device to measure the decibels. Bill advised that the Planning Board feels this is something they could look at. Bill feels the Board of Health and the Board of Selectmen should discuss this with the Planning Board to see if they all feel there should be a bylaw or ordinance.

Briefly discussed code enforcement in town. Jeanne was pleased that Bill Girard took action on an email she sent regarding an off-premise sign. Bill feels the code enforcer should act on it even if he does not get a complaint but Jeanne advised that the bylaws state that he needs to get something in writing in order to enforce the bylaws.

Jeanne asked the other Selectmen if they wanted to display the "Travel the Watershed" art exhibit at town hall. They received a letter from the Wild and Scenic Westfield River Committee asking if they wanted to display this art exhibit at town hall. The exhibit includes six wooden suitcases adorned by five local artists and one artist from Boston. Jeanne motioned to host one of the suitcases from the Westfield River Wild & Scenic, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Jeanne advised that she drafted a letter of thanks to Madeleine Swindlehurst for giving the town a report titled "Causes and Remedy of Elevated Sodium Concentrations in the Aquifers of Becket, Massachusetts" which was dated June 1987. She will sign the letter and copies will be sent to other boards and departments who may be interested in this study. Nina will keep this in her office for anyone who may wish to look at it.

Briefly discussed the suggestion of Madeleine Swindlehurst about putting a barrier on the lower parking area of town hall to prevent someone from driving their vehicle over the bank.

Briefly discussed the issue with the Zoning Board of Appeals about members needing to recuse themselves. Jeanne asked if the "Rule of Necessity" would work in this case. Jeanne advised that the Town Clerk told her that Jeff Wilkinson's term expired and he was never reappointed and that he was originally an alternate. Jeanne motioned to ask the Town Clerk to find an appointment slip for Jeff Wilkinson so they can figure out the status of his appointment, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Briefly discussed the Becket Quarry and the interview with the reporter from the Berkshire Eagle.

Reviewed correspondence.

8:38 PM Jeanne motioned to enter into Executive Session under MGL C. 30A, Section 21(a) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective

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bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. The Board will not reconvene in open session after the executive session, Bill seconded. Roll call vote: Angela-aye, Bill-aye, Jeanne-aye.

9:10 PM Angela motioned to adjourn, Bill seconded. All in favor.

Reviewed payroll/expense warrants.

Respectfully submitted,
Nina Weiler, Secretary

Jeanne W. Pryor, Chairman

Documents discussed at meeting:

- Letter of Donation for property donated by Christopher Sarafin
- Town Hall A/C design amendment proposal
- Draft Leave Request Form
- Athenaeum Ad Hoc Committee Composition
- Monthly report of the Building Inspector and Police Department and Citations Issued