

Board of Selectmen  
 September 18, 2013  
 Minutes

Members present: Jeanne Pryor, William Elovirta, Angela Hilton

Others Present: Ed Gibson, Colleen O'Connor, Patricia Mullins-Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Bruce Garlow, Rita Furlong, Julia Maynard, Jeanne Morano, Jan Elovirta

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.

7:00 PM Jeanne opened the public hearing to review and receive comments on the findings of the FY 11 CDBG Affordable Senior Housing Feasibility Study and the public hearing to review and receive comments on the implementation of the FY 11 CDBG North Becket Village Infrastructure Improvements, Housing Rehabilitation Program and Affordable Senior Housing Feasibility Study. Patricia Mullins of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission gave a rundown of each aspect of the CDBG grant. She advised that the North Becket Village Infrastructure construction has been completed. She explained what infrastructure work was done. She briefly explained the paving on High Street and on Main Street. She advised that the cost for the sidewalk repairs and the street paving was approximately \$374,429 and the cost of the drainage was approximately \$32,788. She advised that there were seven housing rehab projects and all but one have been completed. The last rehab project will be completed by September 30, 2013 when the grant is officially closed. The last part of the grant that she spoke about was the Affordable Senior Housing Feasibility Study. This study would allow the town to make decisions on whether or not it wants to develop Affordable Senior Housing and how to become involved with funding agencies. She explained that one of the problems with this part of the grant was that the senior housing project might have to be bigger than originally thought and she explained why this was. She advised that to continue with this project the town would need to own or purchase property for this purpose. The committee made site visits to about ten properties that met the criteria for this study and properties were selected for a desktop engineering study and one site was selected that best fit the project. The biggest criteria for Affordable Senior Housing was that it needs to be close to amenities. The town owns the property in Jacobs Well but most of this property is wetlands and it is not close to amenities so it is not suitable. Bill asked if this study took into account the increased number of public safety calls there would be for this type of housing. Pat will look into including this information in the study. Pat advised that two of the properties considered was the Murray property and the Frisbie property close to Town Hall but she advised that these properties may not be available when or if the town decides to develop affordable senior housing. It was asked if the grant information would be posted online. Pat advised that some of the files are really big but she would break them up and post them for people to view. The Selectmen thanked her for coming in.

Bill motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of September 4, 2013, Angela seconded. All in favor.

Jeanne gave the Selectmen the Town Meeting Bylaw Review Committee update. She gave a copy of the Draft Revised Town Meeting Bylaw that the committee has been working on to the Selectmen. She advised that it will remain open for changes and will be posted on the town's website so it can be reviewed

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before it is included on the warrant for an upcoming Special Town Meeting. The draft bylaw includes a new section 5E stating that the Finance Committee shall prepare an Annual Town Meeting report to include an updated capital plan detailing estimated future major purchases and expenditures and the sources of funding. She stated that the first thing the committee asks is if a date for a fall Special Town Meeting has been set. The second thing the committee is asking is with regard to section 5E and the committee feels the Selectmen should work with the Finance Committee in developing a capital plan. She advised that the committee has drafted a "Citizens' Petition for Warrant Article" form that she also gave the Selectmen. She also advised that the committee is in the process of drafting a Town Meeting Handbook designed to be used by voters as a guide to the procedures of our Town Meeting. Part of the handbook will describe the budget process, including a chart that sets forth the time schedule for the development and approval of the town budget. The TMBRC would also like the Selectmen to consider formalizing the budget process schedule. Last year a budget schedule was drafted by the Selectmen for use by the Finance Committee and Department Heads.

Briefly discussed the openings on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Jeff Wilkinson was an alternate but wishes to be a full member of the Board. The Board still needs two alternates. Bill motioned to appoint Jeff Wilkinson to the Zoning Board of Appeals term to start September 19, 2013 and end on June 30, 2016, Angela seconded. All in favor. Jeanne asked if the Board could get an updated list of appointed and elected officials. Nina will ask the town clerk for a list.

The Selectmen reviewed the monthly reports of the Police Department, Citations Issued, Ambulance Department, Building Inspector and Animal Control Officer. Bill asked why there was no fee amounts listed on the Building Inspector report for a few different permits. Ed was not sure but would check with the building inspector on this.

Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements: None.

Town Administrator's Report: Ed would like to thank Ed Rossini for volunteering to head the effort to remove the dock and weights from the lake at the Town Beach. Mr. Rossini has also volunteered to help put the dock/float back in the water in the Spring and to either make a "permanent" mooring for the dock/float or to install a permanent mooring as approved by the Becket Harbor Master. Ed advised that by the time he and Ken Bilodeau got to the beach to assist with the dock removal, Mr. Rossini had already had the dock over to the beach area so they did not have much to do to assist with this.

Ed advised that Foresight Land Services has completed the grant application under the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the culvert replacement on Bonny Rigg Hill Road and it was submitted to the agency before the grant deadline. We will now wait to hear if the grant has been approved.

Ed advised that the CBRSD School Committee met on September 12<sup>th</sup> concerning the potential change of the seven member town's assessments due to the FY 14 budget which was adopted by the Legislature. Unfortunately the School Committee voted to accept Option #2 which would lower the assessments of the towns of Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru and Washington and increase the assessments for the towns of Becket and Windsor. This vote if approved by the towns of Becket and Windsor would increase Becket's assessment by \$223, 402 for this current fiscal year. Ed advised that it was stated at the meeting that Town Meetings in both Becket and Windsor would have to approve this change of assessment to have

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it go into effect. It was also stated it was the belief of the Superintendent of Schools that by the particular section of the law that if there were no action by either of these two communities i.e. no Town Meeting vote, that particular action would constitute a non acceptance and the assessment change would not be implemented. Ed is checking with Town Counsel to make sure this is an accurate reflection of the law and that if Becket or Windsor were not to take action then legally the change of assessment would not be able to be implemented. Jeanne feels that Ed made an excellent presentation at this meeting.

Ed advised that the letter from the Board of Selectmen to the House Legislative Committee on Bonding in support of the \$40 million bond bill to fund the last mile of high speed internet access in support of MBI was sent and would have been entered into testimony at the House Committee Meeting.

Ed advised that BRPC will be putting together a regional Community Innovation Challenge Grant application again this year for Building permitting software but will also be including the Health Department online permitting module with this grant as well. Ed is recommending that the town with approval of the Board of Health, Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen's approval allow BRPC to include the Town of Becket in the grant request for the Health Department online permitting module. This grant would work very similarly as to when the Building Department online permitting software was obtained about a year ago. The software, set up costs, training and a computer would be funded through the grant. The Town would be responsible for the yearly support contract after one year for the operation of the software. The cost for the yearly support should be similar to the cost of the Building Permitting Software Module which would be approximately \$4,500.00 per year. Ed spoke with Gale LaBelle and she feels because the Board is consisted of all new members it may be a bit too much at first. He feels everything would be captured on the computer and in the long run it would be better for the Board.

Ed advised that there would be an internal staff meeting tomorrow Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. with MBI/Axia here in Town Hall. This meeting will bring Department Heads and pertinent staff members up to speed on what high speed internet access will mean and the benefits provided for the municipal facilities once it is available after the first of the year. They will also go over the timeline of completing the project and when the service will be available in the first stage to municipal buildings and services. He may also be attending the New England Public Works Expo in Fitchburg either the 25<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> of September if his schedule allows it.

Ed advised that he received quotes on the front and back doors of Town Hall. The cost for just the panic bars for the doors is \$2,200 per door. He will see what the cost for new doors and hardware would be to see if it would be worth replacing the entire door. If we end up going for new doors, Ed would make sure they were compatible with an automatic door opener.

Ed advised that the new fulltime EMT position for the Ambulance Department has been filled. Vincent Garafoli started working on Monday.

Public Input: Briefly discussed the CBRSD town assessments.

Colleen O'Connor spoke about the school's septic system and how it is impossible to maintain it due to the septic system being on a land locked piece of property. She also wants to have answers to what the town owns and what she owns so she can leave Becket. The Selectmen advised that the attorneys are looking

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into this but it is a long process and they are dealing with very old records. Bill asked Ed if he could call the town attorney and ask him to try and get this property issue settled as soon as he can. Angela asked Colleen what she wanted from the Board of Selectmen. She advised that she wanted the town to purchase her property so she could leave Becket. Jeanne advised that the Board cannot purchase her house unless town meeting votes for them to do this and there is no guarantee that this will happen. Discussed what options the town has in remedying this situation.

Any other business: Bill advised that he would not be able to attend the Selectmen's meeting of October 16<sup>th</sup> because he will be out of town. Briefly discussed possibly changing the meetings in October.

Reviewed correspondence.

Jeanne asked what was happening with the Planning Board issue with the person who wanted to put up a barn or shed on a piece of property but there was no primary building on the property so he was denied a special permit. Ed advised that this is in the court system.

9:00 PM Angela motioned to adjourn, Bill seconded. All in favor.

Reviewed payroll/expense warrants.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nina Weiler, Secretary

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Jeanne W. Pryor, Chairman

Documents discussed at meeting:

- Draft Revised Town Meeting Bylaw July 20, 2013
- Citizens' Petition for Warrant Article
- Monthly reports of the Building Inspector, Police Department, Citations Issued, Ambulance Department and Animal Control Officer