

Board of Selectmen  
October 15, 2014  
Minutes

Members present: William Elovirta, Jeanne Pryor  
Angela Hilton - absent

Others Present: Ed Gibson, Nina Weiler, Colleen O'Connor, Beth VanNess, Elizabeth Will,  
Geraldine Walter

7:00 PM Bill called the meeting to order. He advised that the meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and Guidelines for Becket Board of Selectmen Meetings.

Bill asked if anyone was recording the meeting. The Board of Selectmen and Colleen O'Connor are recording the meeting.

The Chair led those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jeanne motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of October 1, 2014, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

Bill motioned to impose a winter parking ban from November 15, 2014 through April 15, 2015 from 11:00 PM to 7:00 AM, Jeanne seconded. Motion passed.

The Board reviewed the draft response to the letter from a Board of Health member. The Board had one small change to the draft. Jeanne motioned to approve sending the letter to the member of the Board of Health, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

Ed gave the Board an update on the Assessors Department. He advised that there are a number of ways to proceed. One way would be to go with a Principle Assessor as it was or go with a part time Principle Assessor and supplement with an outside vendor or hire an outside vendor to do all inspections and evaluations with one contracted person to hold office hours. The Board of Assessors feel there should be a full time person in the office at all times so that the other offices will not need to deal with public inquiries and also that this person know the history of the town because that is important. Ed feels that no matter how we proceed, there needs to be better communication in that office. Bill would like the Town Administrator to come forward with a proposal but to keep the current assessors apprised so they know what is happening. Assessor Geraldine Walter advised that part of their job is to complete research that people want and that takes a lot of their time and having someone who knows the history is very helpful. The Board would like this to be settled as soon as possible so the current assessors can get help in their office.

The Board reviewed the Dimensional Special Permit Application from the Zoning Board of Appeals for property located at 29 Lancelot Lane. The Board would like Nina to notify the ZBA that they do not have any comments on this permit application.

The Board reviewed the monthly reports of the Ambulance Department, Fire Department and Animal Control Officer. Jeanne feels that the Animal Control Officer should be using the state forms when he collects fees. Bill stated that this could be addressed at a future working meeting.

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7:30 PM The Board opened the Tax Classification Hearing. The Assessors gave the Board their recommendations for a single tax rate and for the Open Space Discount, the Residential Exemption and Small Commercial Exemption. The Assessors advised that the first thing the Board would need to do is vote that a factor of 1.0000 be adopted for FY2015 that would keep a single tax rate for property in Becket. If the Board does not vote to have a factor of 1.0000 then the tax burden would shift to commercial properties. The Assessors advised that the town's commercial properties amount to about 4% of the total properties in Becket. They do not feel there are enough commercial properties to make this worthwhile. Ed explained that new growth increased this year and residential property values increased this year which is a good sign. He also explained that there is a glitch in the Soft Right software so he has not been able to get final figures to put on the recap sheet. He thinks that free cash certification will be higher this year than it has been in the past few years. He feels that a good portion of the \$500,000.00 that was just removed from the stabilization fund may be returned through free cash. Bill motioned to keep a single tax rate classification and use a factor of 1.0, Jeanne seconded. Motion passed. Jeanne motioned that no Open Space Discount be granted for FY2015, Bill seconded. Motion passed. Jeanne motioned that no Residential Exemption be granted for FY2015, Bill seconded. Motion passed. Jeanne motioned that no Small Commercial Exemption be granted for FY2015, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

7:50 PM Bill motioned to close the public hearing on the Tax Classification, Jeanne seconded. Motion passed.

Ed explained the current heating system at the town hall and what options they have to improve the current heating system and add a cooling system to the town hall. Hesnor Engineering Associates completed a Town Hall HVAC Load Analysis report of the existing system. Ed explained the different types of systems that could be used at town hall for heating and cooling and the approximate costs. Ed will try to find some photos of the one system that he spoke of so the Board would have an idea of what the outside of the building will look like or they may take a ride to look at a building that has this system.

Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements: Bill advised that he went to the Transfer Station and thought the buildings that Dave Shorey painted looked good. Bill also saw an article in the Berkshire Eagle and was upset because the article referred to the Town of Washington Fire Department. He advised that the Town of Washington does not have its own fire department; the Town of Becket Fire Department covers Washington. There are a few residents from Washington that are on the fire department. He sent something to the Berkshire Eagle but they never put a correction in the newspaper.

Town Administrator's report: Ed advised that the architect has been here for two site visits concerning the front entranceway and ADA compliance and the rear entrance doors. They will develop several alternative solutions and cost for the Board of Selectmen to review and choose from.

Ed advised that Christopher Bouchard would like to purchase road salt this year under statewide contract VEH95. We purchased approximately 1,000 tons last year. The purchase price under this contract is \$74.12 per ton. The Board of Selectmen would need to vote acceptance of purchasing road salt under statewide contract VEH95 and would need to authorize either Mr. Bouchard or Ed to be the legal signatory for that contract. Bill motioned to authorize Christopher Bouchard to purchase road salt under statewide contract VEH95 and to be the authorized signatory for that contract, Jeanne seconded. Motion passed.

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Ed advised that we have been notified by MassDOT that two of our reimbursements for our pothole contract were electronically reimbursed to the wrong account (Becket Ambulance). Once we have confirmed we have the funds in hand from that bank account we will need to cut a check to MassDOT in the amount of the reimbursement for auditing purposes and they will then electronically reimburse the Town to the correct bank account.

Ed advised that Porchlight VNA/Home Care will hold a Blood Pressure Clinic from 10:00 AM 10:30 AM and a presentation on Heart Attacks from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM on Tuesday, October 21<sup>st</sup> here at town hall.

Ed advised that Porchlight VNA/Home Care will be holding an Adult Seasonal Flu Shot Clinic here at Town Hall on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. This clinic is for those age 18 and over or for children age 13 to 17 who are accompanied by a parent. People are asked to wear short sleeved shirts and to bring a Medicare and/or insurance card. For those who have no insurance card or no insurance there will be a \$25 fee.

Ed advised that the Board of Health is planning on having one of their upcoming meetings on Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM.

Ed advised that he received notification this afternoon from the Town Manager in Lenox that they have reports of a company ("Liberty Power") that is purporting to be the Town's approved supplier under municipal aggregation to lower the residents' electric bills. This was not Lenox's approved supplier. It has been reported that there are companies fanning out across the state in light of the electric rate spike which has been predicted. Ed feels that even though Becket has not chosen to pursue municipal aggregation at this point it should be noted and perhaps worthwhile to place a service announcement on the Town's website.

Ed advised that carpeting has been ordered for several of the meeting rooms and offices along with VCT tile for the kitchenette and server room. He is hopeful that the installation will begin by the end of the month. As we will need to work around meeting schedules and have places to store equipment and furniture, he expects the process to take several weeks to complete.

Ed advised that the Wade Inn Road Full Depth Reclamation and paving is almost completed. Lane striping and shouldering will need to be completed.

Ed advised that he has been notified that with the passing of Valor Act II last April that the Division of Veteran's Services is in the process of revising the regulations that deal with VSO's. Becket may be prohibited from utilizing a part time Veteran's Agent with the Town of Lee without a formal district arrangement in place. He will keep the Board of Selectmen posted as this plays out. He would like the Board to let him know if they have a preference as to forming a formal district or pursuing any other options which may be available to the Town.

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Ed advised that he would be attending the Finance Committee meeting on Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM and will also call in for a conference from the State concerning Ebola preparation Thursday as well. He will be attending the Energy Committee meeting on Thursday at 10:00 AM.

Public Input: None.

Any other business: None.

Reviewed correspondence.

8:20 PM Jeanne motioned to adjourn, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

Reviewed payroll/expense warrants.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nina Weiler, Secretary

  
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William H. Elovirta, Chairman

Documents discussed at meeting:

- Tax Classification Hearing Information
- Draft Response to Letter from Member of the Board of Health
- Town Hall HVAC Calculations from Hesnor Engineering Associates
- Dimensional Special Permit from ZBA for Property Located at 29 Lancelot Lane
- Monthly reports of the Ambulance Department, Fire Department and Animal Control Officer.