

Board of Selectmen  
December 3, 2014  
Minutes

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

Others Present: Ed Gibson, Nina Weiler, Colleen O'Connor, Gale LaBelle, Bob Ronzio

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 Bob Ronzio are recording the meeting.

The Chair led those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jeanne motioned to approve the Board of Selectmen minutes of November 7, 2014, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

The Board reviewed the license renewals. Jeanne motioned to approve the license renewals for the following: Dreamaway Lodge for an annual all alcoholic Restaurant license, a Common Victuallers license and a Music & Entertainment license; Berkshire Berries for an annual all alcoholic Restaurant license, an annual Wine & Malt Package Store license, and a Common Victuallers license; Mountain Grove Association for an annual all alcoholic Club license, a Common Victuallers license, an Entertainment Device license and a Music & Entertainment license; Sherwood Shoppe for an annual all alcoholic Package Store license, an Entertainment Device license and a Common Victuallers license; Becket Country Store for an annual Wine & Malt Package Store license and a Common Victuallers license; Uncle Larry's Tavern for an annual all alcoholic Restaurant license, a Common Victuallers license, an Entertainment Device license and a Music & Entertainment license; Becket General Store for an annual all alcoholic Package Store license and a Common Victuallers license, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

The Board reviewed the WiredWest Delegate Appointment Policy draft. The only thing that was changed was the appointment term dates starting on July 1 and ending on June 30 were included in the policy. Jeanne motioned to approve the WiredWest Delegate Appointment Policy draft with inclusion of the terms from July 1 to June 30, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

The Board discussed Ed's recommendations for the Assessor's Department and filling the Principal Assessor position. Ed has conferred with Town Counsel about the options the town has to fill this position. His recommendation would be to utilize a third party vendor who is experienced with the State CAMA System for assessing and has been in business for a minimum of ten years to support the Assessor's office in place of a Full Time Principal Assessor. The vendor shall supplement the current office staff in establishing values, grouping neighborhoods into proper classifications, provide the Board of Assessors with the information they would need for re-evaluations, tax classification, abatements and agricultural filings. The current office staff, who also serve as two members of the Board of Assessors shall remain in their current capacity until they either choose to retire or leave the town's employment. Once an independent third party vendor has been chosen, the Board of Selectmen shall appoint an individual to serve as a third member of the Board of Assessors. Said individual will serve only in an

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administrative capacity and will not be employed to perform work in the Assessor's office. Said individual shall receive a yearly stipend as established by the Board of Selectmen for their services. As the current individuals retire, they shall be replaced by individuals who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen to serve as an Administrative Board of Assessors who will not be employed to perform office functions in the Assessor's office. Said individuals shall receive a yearly stipend for their services. As the current office staff retires and their positions become vacant, the town will hire individuals to provide that service (office clerical) in the Assessor's Department as employees to the town. Ed feels if we go this route the town would get better valuations and there would be better communication with the current staff. He advised that the administrative board would need to take courses and become certified assessors and that would be why they receive a stipend. Bill asked if the current appropriation for the Board of Assessors would be enough to cover going with the third party vendor. Ed advised that they would need to transfer funds from the salary account and put it in the expense account but would not need to request more money. Bill motioned to accept the Town Administrator's recommendations for the Assessor's Department in filling the Principal Assessor position, Jeanne seconded. Motion passed.

The Board reviewed the monthly report of the Ambulance Department.

Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements: Jeanne advised that she attended the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee meeting on Monday and the committee needs to know as soon as possible whether the Selectmen will be attending the tree planting ceremony on June 21, 2015 at 2 PM. Area legislators will be attending and the committee needs to finalize the program. Jeanne will be attending and asked Bill to check his calendar to see if he can attend. She would also like to know if Angela plans on attending this ceremony. Nina will try to contact her to see what her plans are. Jeanne advised that the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is planning to have a book release on January 7, 2015 and will be serving refreshments. She also advised that they are planning to send letters to all of the businesses in town inviting them to participate in the celebration and/or donate to the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration activities. The committee is requesting that the town pay for the postage for this mailing. Ed advised that this can be done. She also had gotten a list of items the committee would like to see get done before the celebration. The first item would be to repair the stone wall by the pavilion near town hall. Ed advised that a plow had hit the wall and damaged it but he did not want to repair it this fall because he did not want to take a chance in having it get hit again. This will be done in the spring. The second item would be to complete the revolutionary war and civil war obelisk installation at Ballou Park. The third item on the list is to repair the beach drainage. Ed advised that he did not think they would have time to do this because they will need to have an engineering plan drawn up before any work could be done. Bill advised that there was a plan done but he does not think they followed the plan and that is why the beach is not draining properly. The fourth item would be to have the walkway across from the school mowed.

Jeanne advised that she responded to a resident about his questions regarding bringing high-speed internet to unserved small towns. She read her response and it is included with the documents discussed at this meeting.

Town Administrator's report: Ed advised that he researched the amount of work and trained manpower necessary to administer a Housing Rehabilitation CDBG grant and recommend the town utilize the services of BRPC for the grant application and clerical administration for an upcoming CDBG grant application. BRPC has the trained individuals with the necessary expertise already on staff whereas the

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town would have to hire and/or train individuals for those functions. The town would need to update its Community Development Strategy by mid January in order to be eligible for the next round of CDBG applications. Ours was last updated in October of 2010 and was good for three years.

Ed advised that Friday would be Kathy Hayn's last day of service as our tax collector as she will be retiring. He would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her many years of service to the Town of Becket as collector and town clerk to name a few of the positions she has held. He stated that it has been a pleasure working with Kathy for the short period of time he has been here. He would like to wish her well and hopes she will enjoy many years of retirement and being able to do what she would like when she wants to. He advised that her co-workers had a small retirement gathering for her this afternoon to wish her well.

Ed advised that the Department of Revenue approved the fiscal year 2015 tax rate for the town at \$10.45 on November 25, 2014. This year's tax rate is one cent higher than last year's tax rate of \$10.44 per \$1,000 of valuation.

Ed advised that he is working on the required Green Communities Annual Report for the town's activities in the last fiscal year as it pertains to energy usage in town buildings and vehicles as well as a yearly report on building permits that pertain to the Massachusetts Stretch Code. The report is due this Friday and will be completed in time for submission.

Ed advised that he would be attending the Finance Committee meeting tomorrow evening. He also advised that next week he would be attending a MIIA DOT Drug and Alcohol Supervisor Training on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> during the day in Wayland and he will also be attending the MBI Last Mile Broadband Financial Forum for Finance Committees and Selectmen that evening in Lenox.

Public Input: Gale LaBelle informed the Board that the Board of Health will be posting office hours to better serve the residents of Becket. She also informed the Board about information sessions that Porchlight VNA will be holding at town hall and other issues facing the Board of Health.

Colleen O'Connor expressed her concern about septic issues at the Becket Washington School. Bill would like Ed to check on these issues.

Any other business: Bill gave the Board a copy of the Objections to Proposed draft Massachusetts new EPA Storm Phase 2 Regulations. He advised that it does not currently pertain to the Town of Becket but he thinks it eventually will. He advised that the Mass Highway Association is against these regulations and he would like to know if the Board would like to go on record as opposing these regulations. He advised that this is costing towns in the east a lot of money and these kinds of regulations do not fit every town but he thinks it will eventually affect Becket. He also advised that if the Board is going to oppose this they would need a letter sent by December 19<sup>th</sup>. Jeanne will look this over and give her suggestions to Nina for discussion at the Board's next meeting.

The Board wished Ed a happy birthday and presented a card to him.

Reviewed correspondence.

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Reviewed correspondence.

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8:00 PM Jeanne motioned to adjourn, Bill seconded. Motion passed.

Reviewed payroll/expense warrants.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nina Weiler, Secretary

  
William H. Elovirta, Chairman

Documents discussed at meeting:

- 2015 Liquor License Renewals
- WiredWest Delegate Appointment Policy draft
- Monthly Report of the Ambulance Department
- Objections to Proposed draft Massachusetts new EPA Storm Phase 2 Regulations
- Email response of 12/1/14 to Dick Lipez regarding high speed internet and Board of Selectmen's efforts regarding WiredWest.