

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen's Meeting
January 18, 2017
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall
557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees:

Board of Selectmen: William Elovirta, *Chairperson*; Jeanne Pryor, *Vice Chairperson* (Remote Participation), and Nicole Ledoux, *Clerk*

Staff: Ed Gibson, *Town Administrator*; Beverly Gilbert, *Recording Secretary*
Kristopher McDonough, *Police Chief*

Others: Jeremy Dunn (WiredWest Delegate), Steven Reiss, Barbara Craft-Reiss, Michael Lavery, Rita Furlong (Historical Commission Member), Sandi Jarvis (Historical Commission Chairperson)

Call to Order

Bill called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. He stated that the meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Meeting Law and Guidelines for the Becket Board of Selectmen Meetings.

Bill asked if anyone was recording the meeting. Beverly for the Board of Selectmen indicated that she was recording the meeting.

Bill announced that Jeanne Pryor will participate remotely due to geographic location, and all votes will require a roll-call.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairperson led those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board to review minutes of previous meeting(s)

Jeanne moved to approve the minutes for the 12/15/2016 working meeting, and the 12/21/2016 & 1/4/2017 regular session meetings. Nicole seconded. Roll call: Bill Elovirta – aye, Jeanne Pryor – aye and Nicole Ledoux – aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Historical Commission re: Demolition Notification Policy, and acquisition of portraits

Demolition Notification Policy:

Sandi Jarvis, Chairperson of the Historical Commission (HC), addressed the BOS to follow up on the HC's request for the BOS to support a Demolition Notification Policy to facilitate their task of documenting the historical assets of Becket.

Sandi indicated that the HC would like to have an opportunity to photograph buildings 75 years and older (many of which are not classified and protected through Historical District designation) as part of documenting the town's inventory and the history of the town's changes. Sandi specified that the HC is not seeking to change the demolition by-law.

Nicole asked if it was mandatory for the HC to wait until the Building Inspector issues a demolition permit before the HC will photograph a building and she asked if the HC could take photographs of the town's buildings periodically. Sandi indicated that Rita takes many pictures and will photograph a property if she observes that it is posted for demolition, and Gail Kusek, HC member, reviewed the Assessors' list of properties to generate an inventory of properties 75 years and older. From Gail's list, the HC is working on updating and documenting the properties. Sandi explained that documenting the properties may take some time, and as a volunteer board, in case the property slated for demolition was not yet photographed, they would like to have a chance to do so before it is gone.

Rita stated that the HC was saddened to have learned that several properties they regarded as historically significant were demolished without the HC having an opportunity to take photographs. Rita met with the Building Inspector who clarified that it was his understanding that it is his responsibility to inform the HC about requests for demolition which only involve the town's historic district.

Ed presented a possible point of view that some taxpayers may deem a delay (even a week or 10 days) in demolition/re-construction as unfair and problematic. He pointed out that sometimes the expectation is that the demolition will commence immediately after obtaining a permit. Sandi stated that they are not trying to inconvenience anyone. Sandi and Rita indicated that they do not want to give the Building Inspector additional burdens. Rita suggested that the HC be provided a copy of all demolition permits (regardless of the age).

Ed indicated that he had met with the Building Inspector who conveyed that the building permitting software does not have the ability to flag properties by date. Ed agreed to review the Assessors list of properties 75 years or older with the building inspector and discuss the possibility of manually notating those properties in the computer permitting system, or through another avenue. Rita offered to give Ed a listing. It was noted that the listing of properties 75 years or older would need to be updated annually.

Acquisition of Portraits:

Sandi updated the BOS on the HC's interaction with the owner of the Dewey portraits. Sandi advised that the owner stands firm on his price of \$3,500, and offered that the town may pay over several years. He was not amenable to donating the portraits to the town. Bill suggested countering with \$500 on the basis that he cannot imagine that Becket has any competition for acquiring these portraits since no one else has the familiarity (other than the Dewey family which is not interested in the portraits) with the Deweys.

Sandi advised that one avenue for paying for the portraits may be through Community Preservation Act funding. Although the HC intends to have the portraits appraised before asking that the town purchase the portraits, it may not be possible to obtain an appraisal by the 2/28/2017 application deadline for Community Preservation Act funding. The BOS recommended that the Historical Commission apply for Community Preservation funding (up to \$3,500 for both the portraits) to meet the application deadline and provide the

appraisal when it is obtained. The Annual Town Meeting Warrant will include an article to vote to approve CPC recommendations.

Other:

In response to Sandi and Rita's request, the BOS will announce (town's website and news item in the Country Journal) that the town seeks residents to serve on the Historical Commission.

Police Chief McDonough's recommendation to appoint Part-time Reserve Police Officer Kenneth Pettibone as a Probationary Full-time Police Officer effective 1/29/2017

Police Chief McDonough reported on his recruitment for the Probationary Full-time Officer position to fill the vacancy created when Sergeant Portieri resigned from the Police Department. Three individuals applied internally and took physical fitness assessments. Chief McDonough spoke in support of appointing Part-time Reserve Police Officer Kenneth Pettibone as a Probationary Full-time Police Officer starting 1/29/2017 and sending him to the Police Academy (The next 26 week session begins on June 19th). Mr. Pettibone's probationary status would be lifted upon his graduation from the Police Academy. Ken Pettibone has been under the Becket Police Dept.'s employ since September of 2014, and Chief McDonough stated that based on his job performance, personal attributes including his work ethic, as well as his high scoring on the physical fitness tests, Chief McDonough is confident that Mr. Pettibone has the potential to successfully complete the Police Academy and become an excellent full-time officer. Bill moved to approve the Police Chief's recommendation that the Town Administrator appoint Kenneth Pettibone as a Probationary Full-time Police Officer effective 1/29/2017 until 6/30/2017 (July 1st is the annual appointment renewal date for Police Dept. personnel) with the condition that he will attend the Police Academy. Jeanne seconded. Roll call: Bill Elovirta – aye, Jeanne Pryor – aye and Nicole Ledoux – aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Discussion and possible vote on Street Acceptance Policy

To afford the BOS an opportunity to review Town Counsel's remarks, which arrived today, on the Draft Street Acceptance Policy, this agenda item was tabled until the 2/1/2017 meeting.

Discussion and possible vote re: Becket Energy Committee's request for the BOS to send a letter to the Legislature initiated by Mass Power Forward Coalition re: Utility Pipelines/Tax

Michael Lavery on behalf of Al Blake and 350.org, an environmental group, spoke in support of the Selectmen sending a letter initiated by Mass Power Forward Coalition re: Utilities and Pipelines/Tax. The essence of the letter is to convey that the town agrees it is not fair to tax or issue fees to consumers for the construction of fossil fuel pipelines, and that the town supports renewable energy efforts.

Bill asked Michael what forms of renewable energy residents want developed. Michael indicated that many communities exhibit a "not in my backyard" syndrome for wind

turbines and solar panels, and regard offshore wind turbines (technology allows for connections up to 10 miles offshore) and hydroelectric from Canada favorably.

Jeanne asked if the Becket Energy Committee voted on Al Blake's request that the BOS send a letter to the Legislature initiated by Mass Power Forward Coalition re: Utility Pipelines/Tax. Ed clarified that this request was submitted by Al Blake (not the Becket Energy Committee) and that the BEC has not taken any formal action. The request came in after the BEC's last meeting and their next meeting is tomorrow.

Jeanne stated that she favors sending this letter to demonstrate support of the town's 2010 vote to become a green community, and to help the Becket Energy Committee's role with meeting the town's criteria toward the goals of a Green Community. Jeanne stated that she does not want a fossil fuel pipeline on conservation land in Becket and other surrounding communities in the Berkshires. Bill indicated that although he favors the State Supreme Court's decision to not allow a pipeline tax, he thinks pipelines are a much safer mode of transporting fossil fuels compared to tanker trucks and railroads which are at risk for accidents and explosions.

Michael Lavery stated that fossil fuel is the most profitable industry on the planet and should not be subsidized by the town.

Nicole stated that she is not in favor of any unnecessary tax.

Jeanne moved for the BOS to send a letter re: Utility Pipelines/Tax to the House and Senate members of the State Legislature in response to the request initiated by Mass Power Forward Coalition. Nicole seconded. Roll call: Bill Elovirta – No, Jeanne Pryor – aye and Nicole Ledoux – aye. Motion carried 2-1.

Discussion and possible vote re: WiredWest's suggested Regional Broadband Resolution

Jeremy Dunn, Becket's Delegate to WiredWest, discussed WiredWest's recommended Regional Broadband Resolution (stating a desire for cooperation to overcome obstacles to a regional solution for broadband) for towns to send to Jay Ash - Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Carolyn Kirk - Deputy Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Peter Larkin - Special Advisor to the Secretary of EOHED and MBI Board Chair, State Senator Adams Hinds, Representative Smitty Pignatelli and WiredWest. Jeremy stated that he does not agree with MBI's recent stance on changing its policy to insist that each town own its own network infrastructure individually. Jeremy stated that much like regional schools, WiredWest's vision has been to work together regionally to provide cost savings and efficiency.

Steven Reiss stated that he implores the BOS to do whatever it can to expedite obtaining high speed internet in town.

The BOS agreed with Ed's suggestion to change the word, "demand" to "implore" and Jeanne's suggestion to remove an extra word (...at all parties ~~to~~ work together). Jeanne moved that the BOS send a regional broadband resolution as amended to Jay Ash -

Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Carolyn Kirk - Deputy Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, Peter Larkin - Special Advisor to the Secretary of EOHED and MBI Board Chair, State Senator Adams Hinds, Representative Smitty Pignatelli, and WiredWest. Nicole seconded. Roll call: Bill Elovirta – aye, Jeanne Pryor – aye and Nicole Ledoux – aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Jeremy announced that WiredWest found a potential vendor to operate the broadband service and will discuss a new plan at a meeting and workshop scheduled in Northampton on January 28th.

Monthly or Quarterly Reports: TBA

The BOS reviewed the Volunteer Fire Dept.'s Dec 2016, and the Police Department's Nov. and Dec. 2016 reports.

BOS Approval to add The Olde Village Market to the list to sell Transfer Station bag stickers.

The BOS approved adding The Olde Village Market to the list of businesses which sell Transfer Station bag stickers.

Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements

Bill is working on the 2016 Annual Report for the BOS and will e-mail his draft to Nicole and Jeanne for their input.

Nicole suggested talking to the Wild and Scenic Westfield River Committee for possible photographs for the Annual Report or town's website.

Fiscal Year 2018 Budget

The Town Administrator reported that he is reviewing the budgets requests.

Town Administrator's Report

Ed provided an update on the Bonny Rigg Hill Road Culvert Replacement, Special Legislation Borrowing Exclusion (The request was approved and signed by the House, Senate and signed by the Governor), CDBG Application Process, Town Hall Heating System and Meetings.

CDBG Application Process: Berkshire Regional Planning would like to start a waiting list for potential Housing Rehabilitation applicants either applying to BRPC or here at the Town Hall. Pat Mullins of BRP asked who the town would like to use for its contact person. Bill moved that Beverly Gilbert be appointed the contact person to sign up applicants for the Housing Rehabilitation project. Jeanne seconded. Roll call: Bill Elovirta – aye, Jeanne Pryor – aye and Nicole Ledoux – aye. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Input

None

Any other business to come before the Board

None

Review Correspondence:

- 01/05/2017 re: Mass Dot bridge inspection – Quarry Rd./Cushman Brook,
- Wild and Scenic Westfield River Community announcement (and description) of the availability of the Wild & Scenic River Community Grants (application due date 2/1/2017). Mercedes Gallagher had called the BOS office to offer Carrie Bank's and her assistance to answer questions.
- Hampshire County Select Boards Association invitation to 1/26/2016 meeting, Northampton. Nicole will attend. Bill stated that because the Berkshire County Association has been inactive, next time he attends a Hampshire County Select Board meeting, he may suggest that the association which has informative meetings, expand to include Hampton, Berkshire, and Franklin Counties, all which share common challenges.

Selectmen to Adjourn Meeting.

Nicole moved to adjourn. Jeanne seconded. Roll call: Bill Elovirta – aye, Jeanne Pryor – aye and Nicole Ledoux – aye. Motion carried 3-0. At 8:17 p.m., Bill adjourned the meeting.

Reviewed Payroll/Expense Warrants.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Secretary



William Elovirta, Chairperson

Documents discussed at this meeting:

The Olde Village Market agreement to sell bag stickers
Correspondence - MassDOT 010517 bridge inspection Quarry - Cushman Brook
Correspondence - Hampshire County Select Boards Dinner meeting.
Correspondence - Wild and Scenic Westfield River Grant Info
Historical Commission request for Demolition Notification Policy
Historical Commission information on Dewey portraits
Police Chief's recommendation to appoint Kenneth Pettibone
BEC request for BOS to send letter about Utility Pipelines and Tax
WiredWest's suggested Regional Broadband Resolution
Fire Dept. Dec 2016 report
Police Dept. Nov and Dec 2016 report
Town Administrator's Report