

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen's Meeting
May 17, 2017
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall
557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees:

Board of Selectmen: William Elovirta, *Chairperson*; Jeanne Pryor, *Vice Chairperson*;
Nicole Ledoux, *Clerk*

Staff: Ed Gibson, *Town Administrator*; Beverly Gilbert, *Recording Secretary*

Others: Bob Gross, Purr McEwen, Chuck Garman, Michelle Raymer, Jeff Piemont,
Vincent Garofoli, Meredydd Cooper, Frank Avalor Jr., Dan Parnell,
John Les, Michael Lavery, Marty Winters, Chris Lynch, Jeremy Dunn,
Chris Post

1. 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. Bill stated that the Board of Selectmen was recording the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairperson led those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Board to review minutes of previous meeting(s)

Jeanne moved to accept the meeting minutes of March 15, 2017 and March 23, 2017. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Michelle Raymer and Purr McEwen re: Hilltown Brouhaha (Becket Washington Community Fair)

Michelle Raymer and Purr McEwen gave the BOS a postcard about the July 8th Becket Washington Community Fair. The hours of the fair will be similar to last year's (9 a.m. till 4 p.m.) and will be determined at the Becket Washington Community Partnership's next meeting. Bill Elovirta indicated that the Fire Department's beer garden will occur from 6 p.m. till 11 p.m. and music will begin at 7 p.m. Michelle described the plans for parking and placement of the vendors. The Fair Committee will block off the parking lot between the Arts Center and the Library for some of the vendors. The beer vendor Wandering Star will take extra measures to ensure that the public understands and keeps beer within the designated roped-in areas. They discussed restroom usage and advised that additional restrooms will be available through the Becket General Store, and the Olde Village Market. They further discussed how they will manage parking. Ed advised that there is no public access for cars to drive into the park near 21 Maple

Street and that the end of Maple Street is private property. They reported that the Police Dept. conveyed it is fine, as done at last year's fair, to convert to one-way traffic on Brooker Hill Road. To consolidate the footprint, they will not use Ballou Park and the Tennis Courts which will increase parking. Except for two handicap spots in front of the church, there will be no parking on Main St. from the church to Bidwell Park in order to place vendors there. They will ask residents for permission to locate booths on the sidewalks in front of their homes. The Town of Washington will loan no-parking signs, and the fair committee will rope-off areas to communicate where parking is not allowed.

5. Chris Post/Wandering Star's applications for One-Day Wine & Beer permits - Hilltown Brouhaha (Becket Washington Fair) on July 8, 2017

Jeanne moved to approve one-day beer and wine licenses to Chris Post of Wandering Star Brewing Co. that will occur from 11 a.m. till 4 p.m. on July 8, 2017 at the Town Fair on the lawn in front of the Becket Athenaeum and 5 p.m. till midnight on July 8, 2017 at the Becket Fire Station (108 Washington St.), with the stipulation that TIPS certificates are submitted to the BOS. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

It was noted that the Police Chief had reviewed both applications and provided comments on the application with the Becket Athenaeum listed for the event location. Based on the Police Chief's comments, Chris Post agreed to increase checks to ensure patrons do not bring their beers outside the roped-off area designated for beer at the athenaeum. He is also considering the Police Chief's suggestion to assign a specific colored cup that contains beer so that if necessary, the police may easily identify and ask individuals to return to the designated beer-drinking area.

6. Broadband recommendation from Ad Hoc Group – discussion & possible vote

Jeremy Dunn and Bob Gross of the Broadband Ad Hoc Group fielded questions pertaining to the Broad Ad Hoc Group's recommendation for the town to build its own broadband fiber network. Bill asked if the Broadband Ad Hoc Group was confident that \$5.96 million dollars will be sufficient for the broadband project. Jeremy stated that he imagines that the Town of Becket's pole survey findings will be similar to the Town of Otis's pole survey findings which showed that less work (and cost) would be needed than originally estimated to prepare or add utility poles for the fiber network. Jeremy acknowledged that although the group has tried to provide conservative figures for this project, there is uncertainty and it is possible the town may need to adjust its plan to stay within our budget. Jeremy stated that he appreciates the questions and concerns of the BOS and he tries to provide information to the best of his ability. Ed agreed (with Jeremy) that there is a degree of risk supported on the findings of a report comparing towns' make-ready estimates to the actual costs. Some estimates were under, some were similar to the estimates, and some were over the actual costs.

Nicole pointed out that Eversource offers more competitive costs. Jeremy stated that the state negotiated with Eversource to reduce the pole application fee to \$10 (originally it was \$50 per pole). Eversource has agreed to reduce the cost for the replacement of each pole from \$4,500 to \$2,200. Jeremy explained that last winter WiredWest had negotiated pricing (good for 5 years) with vendors that were substantially lower than Leveret's figures that had been used over the summer.

Jeff Piemont stated that he believes that the town needs to take on its own broadband because private companies are driven by return on investment and they cannot make enough money in the Town of Becket to keep our technology up to date without substantial price increases.

Dan Parnell provided a survey showing that Yokum Pond area residents have a strong desire for the town to build its own broadband.

Chris Lynch of Matrix Design stated Westfield, Holyoke, Greenfield, Taunton and Concord are installing fiber because they are finding that cable is inadequate for the 21st Century. He also mentioned that Shutesbury is one of the only municipalities in the state that runs its own cable company and they are putting in fiber for the same reasons. Based on studies, in his opinion, fiber is superior to cable.

Ed reported on a Berkshire County Manager's meeting he attended in which several towns (Williamstown, Great Barrington, Lee and a few others) indicated because cable is not able to directly meet the needs of the businesses which are spread-out, they are considering broadband.

Jeremy indicated that the Town of Becket could enter into an agreement with Westfield Gas and Electric (MLP) to do each step of the process (pole surveys, design and engineering), and if the town wanted to contract them to do so, Westfield Gas and Electric would supervise the building of their sub-contractors. Once built, WiredWest could operate the network by contracting Westfield Gas and Electric.

Jeanne made a motion to accept the Broadband Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation for the Town of Becket to build our own fiber network to our homes. Nicole seconded. Bill asked each member of the Board of Selectmen to provide their reasoning behind their vote which was unanimously approved:

- Nicole stated that she sees no other way to go about it. She has had problems with big companies such as Dish and Verizon and she had talked to them for hours and hours on the phone to try to get internet. She thinks fiber will be beneficial for the future and as technology advances, we will need to be up to speed. Nicole voted yes.
- Jeanne stated that for over eight years, she has been working to obtain broadband for the town. She had been a WiredWest Delegate for a while and bringing broadband to the town is a goal that had motivated her to run for Selectman. She is sad that it has taken us so long. She thinks fiber is best for the town's future as it relates to our children's schoolwork, real estate values, and businesses. Jeanne envisions that fiber will be in place to serve our needs well into the future so that we will not have to worry about this utility in forty years. Jeanne voted yes.
- Bill has read the Broadband Ad Hoc Committee's and State's materials. He reflected on the town's vote of 2015 to install fiber and he thinks fiber will help with our real estate values. Bill voted yes.

The BOS praised the Broadband Ad Hoc Committee for their time and efforts and for doing such a great job with their research and analysis. Jeremy indicated that the next steps will be to communicate the BOS's decision to the state, and to authorize Ed to apply for grant money.

7. BOS to consider an extension of Olde Village Market's Common Victualler's permit

Ed reported that he received a communication from the Becket Board of Health Agent who has been in contact with Registered Sanitarian Fred Sears. Mr. Sears had advised that he hopes to submit the plans to the BOH for the septic system upgrades for 30 Washington Street, and if approved, construction will occur during June. The BOH Agent specified that he thinks the timeframe for the installation of the septic system upgrades is acceptable. Jeanne moved to extend The Olde Village Market's common victualler's permit to coincide with the BOH's extension to operate the business. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Solarize Massachusetts Program (Request from Town of Washington to join with them)

Ed received an email from Jim Huebner, Town of Washington Finance Committee Member, advising that the Town of Washington is interested in the Solarize Massachusetts Program but does not qualify because it does not meet the minimum number of houses required. Jim asked Ed if the Town of Becket would co-join the Town of Washington in order to satisfy the requirement for the minimum number of homes. The BOS indicated that before considering this program, it would like to receive a recommendation from the Becket Energy Committee.

It was noted that the Town of Washington opted to accept a proposal from County Ambulance. Effective 7/1/2017, the Town of Washington will no longer use the Town of Becket's ambulance services.

9. Becket Woods Road & Maintenance District's Notification of the District's Annual Meeting to occur on May 27th with enclosed Warrant, Budget, and Proxy.

The BOS reviewed the above mentioned correspondence. Jeanne noted that the warrant includes an item for discussion of participation in the Town of Becket's broadband project. Per her suggestion, Ed will forward a copy of Becket Woods' communication to the members of the Broadband Ad Hoc Committee. Jeanne asked Nicole and Bill if they want her to remain a member of the Broadband Ad Hoc Committee after her term on the Board of Selectmen expires. Bill moved to ask Jeanne to stay on the Broadband Ad Hoc Committee. Nicole seconded. Motion carried with Nicole and Bill voting yes. The BOS did not take action on the proxy.

10. Draft Street Acceptance Policy – discussion and possible vote

The BOS took this matter under advisement to provide an opportunity to review town counsel's remarks. Jeanne will review the attorney's draft with Ed who will provide comments to the Board of Selectmen.

11. Proposed District Legislation Amendments

Jeanne submitted proposed district legislation amendments for the SFRD, SFLD, Center Pond, Becket Woods, and Sherwood Greens to the BOS with a request that the amendments be presented for a vote at the next Town Meeting.

12. Highway Superintendent's recommendation to increase the Town Mechanic's rate of pay on the basis that he has successfully completed his 6th evaluation period.

The BOS received a letter from the Highway Superintendent reporting that the Town Mechanic has successfully completed his 6th evaluation period. Nicole moved to authorize the pay increase of the town mechanic's rate of pay to \$21.64 per hour. Jeanne seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

13. Town Hall HVAC Study Update

Ed provided a spreadsheet that indicated that with contingency costs, engineering costs and construction oversight, we are about \$42,000 short of approved funding before the bid. Ed had instructed the engineering firm to identify and incorporate any rebates into the study. Ed will then submit the study to DOER to garner the town's \$28,000 grant funding. Once the rebates are identified, Ed will advise the BOS of shortfalls and recommend transfers of funds. The BOS agreed that Ed should continue to the next step with the HVAC Study.

14. Monthly or Quarterly Reports: Becket Volunteer Fire Department (March & April 2017)

The BOS reviewed the March and April 2017 report of the Becket Volunteer Fire Department.

15. Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements

Jeanne stated, "It was nice working with you all."

Bill reported that several residents had received a 21 cents postage due notification on an envelope with the Town Clerk's return address because placement of items (dog license and tags) required the USPS to hand cancel the letters. The Selectmen will bring this to the Town Clerk's attention.

There was a concern about the length of time it takes for the Town Clerk to deposit his checks.

Bill noted the County Journal listed free Becket Parks & Recreation Committee Summer programs which had not been voted on by the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Ed indicated that last night the Parks & Recreation Committee conducted a meeting at the Town Hall. This meeting was not listed in the room-use calendar. Jeanne made a motion to send the Parks & Recreation Committee information about the room reservation procedure along with a copy of the open meeting law. Nicole seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The BOS, Town Administrator and Town Secretary expressed appreciation to Jeanne for all she has done while serving on the Board of Selectmen.

16. Town Administrator's Report

Ed provided updates on the Town Hall Construction Projects. The roof and gutter replacement project will be completed this week. The architect and Ed have signed off on

the work that had been done denoting Cornerstone Construction has completion the ADA project.

Ed will attend the Becket Energy Meeting on May 18th.

Ed provided an update on the installation of the new playground equipment which is near completion.

17. Public Input

None

18 Any other business to come before the Board

Frank Avalle inquired about the Route 20 Spring and was told that the Town is awaiting further instructions from the Dept. of Environmental Protection. Ed indicated that he had forwarded to the Town of Chester a copy of the Dept. of Environmental Protection letter (with report and compliance plan enclosed) dated 4/24/2017 re: the Route 20 Spring.

19 Review Correspondence:

- 05/10/2017 MassDOT re: Route 8 Paving

20 Board of Selectmen intends to go into Executive Session under MGL c. 30A:

- **Approval of Executive Session Minutes: 11/16/2016**

Nicole made a motion to go into Executive session for the purpose of approving the 11/16/2016 Executive Session meeting minutes. Bill seconded. Roll call: Nicole aye, Jeanne aye, and Bill aye. At 8:54p.m., the Board went into Executive Session.

21. Board of Selectmen to adjourn the meeting.

At 9:02 the BOS returned from Executive Session. Jeanne made a motion to adjourn. Nicole seconded. At 9:02 p.m. Bill adjourned the meeting.

Reviewed Payroll/Expense Warrants.

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, Secretary



William Elovirta, Chairperson

Documents discussed at this meeting:

Becket Washington Fair Postcard

Wandering Star One-Day Wine & Beer permit applications

Broadband

Becket Woods Road & Maintenance District's Notification of the District's Annual Meeting

to occur on May 27th with enclosed Warrant, Budget, and Proxy
Draft Street Acceptance Policy
Proposed District Legislation Amendments submitted by Jeanne Pryor
Highway Superintendent's letter dated 05/08/2017 re: Town Mechanic's rate of pay
Town Administrator's HVAC Project and budget spreadsheet
Town Administrator's Report
Letter from Mass DOT dated 05/10/2017 re: Route 8 Paving
Jeanne Pryor letter dated 05/17/2017 re: support to bring fiber-to-the home broadband to Becket
Email from Charlie Kaniecki re: 30 Washington Street, Becket Septic Upgrades
Email from Peter Larkin dated 05/17/2017 re: Becket Spread Sheet
Email from Peter Larkin dated 05/17/2017 re: Charter Performance in Berkshire County
Email from Peter Larkin date 05/16/2017 re: Charter contributes to MBI Review of Materials
from the Becket broadband committee
Email from Dan Parnell dated 05/16/2017 re: Broadband Survey in Yokum Pond area households
Email from Todd Corcoran re: MDI Make Ready Comparison Summary
Email from Jim Huebner, Town of Washington Finance Committee Member re: Solarize Mass
Hand out on Solarize Mass www.masscec.com/get-clean-energy/residential/solarize-mass
Becket Volunteer Fire Department March & April 2017 Reports