

**Town of Becket
Board of Selectmen's Meeting
March 6, 2019
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall
557 Main Street, Becket**

Attendees

Board of Selectmen: William Elovirta, *Chairperson*; Michael Lavery, *Vice Chairperson*

Staff: William Caldwell, *Town Administrator*; Bev Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*;
Christopher Bouchard, *Highway Superintendent*

Others: Bob Gross, Laurel Burgwardt, Chris Swindlehurst, Alison Dixon (Chairperson – Conservation Commission), Dan Parnell

Call to order

Bill E. called meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Bill E. led the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Michael moved to approve the minutes for the 02-20-19 meeting. Bill seconded. Motion carried.

Broadband Update

Bob Gross, MLP Manager, discussed the following topics or provided for following information:

- After the Comcast Agreement is executed (Bob Gross had discussed with Town Counsel who vetted the agreement), Comcast will invoice the town for \$15,000.
- The rules and methods relating to short-term borrowing from stabilization need to be clarified The Broadband Ad Hoc Group will entertain further discussions with Town Counsel and DLS.
- Police Detail: Bill E. will contact Kris McDonough. The Broadband Ad Hoc Group would like to clarify detail requirements for cost estimates.
- Seasonal rates
- Bids on poles for private properties that need to be replaced, and reimbursements to town
- Becket Woods make –ready

Highway Superintendent's items:

BOS to consider Highway Superintendent's recommendation to accept MassDOT's Municipal Small Bridge Program Grant in the amount of \$430,000 for the Thomas Brook Bridge (Werden Road), and to award the engineering bid for that project to Beta Engineering.

Discussion of Springfield Materials Recycling Facility Advisory Board letter dated 02-14-19 suggesting that the BOS consider adding an Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article to authorize the BOS to enter into ten-year contract with DEP's qualified selected vendor to furnish recycling processing services.

Bill moved to approve the Highway Superintendent's recommendation to accept MassDOT's Municipal Small Bridge Program Grant in the amount of \$430,000 for the Thomas Brook Bridge (Werden Road) and to award the engineering bid for that project to Beta Engineering. Michael seconded. Motion carried.

Bill moved to include an article on the ATM that would ask voters to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a 10-year contract with DEP's qualified selected vendor to furnish recycling processing services. Michael seconded. Motion carried.

BOS to vote on Surplus Bond Proceeds re-appropriations:

Yokum Pond

Highway Vehicle

Bill C. advised that in accordance with the Department of Local Services, surplus on municipal loans in the amount of \$50,000 or less may be applied to the payment of any debt service with the approval of the municipality's Chief Executive Officer. Michael moved to accept the Town Administrator's recommendation to utilize the Yokum Pond Bridge Bond Surplus (\$18,134.94) for the Ambulance Vehicle debt service. Bill seconded. Motion carried. Michael moved to accept the Town Administrator's recommendation to utilize the Highway Department Loader Bond Surplus (\$1,521.02) for the Ambulance Vehicle debt service. Bill seconded. Motion carried.

Conservation Commission items:

Conservation Commission's recommendation for the Town of Becket to apply for the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Planning Grant

BOS to Review and possibly vote on appointment applications (John Deacon & Meredyth Babcock) to serve on the Conservation Commission through June 30, 2021

Conservation Commission's request to for the BOS to update the Conservation Commission on the Notice of Intent Application, DEP file #102-0441 filed in October 2018 re: filtration system. Conservation Com. asked for the BOS to vote to withdraw it NOI if the town is no longer pursuing this project.

Alison spoke in support of the Town of Becket applying for the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Planning Grant on the basis that it is a worthwhile program to help towns plan for climate change (by conducting assessments and developing plans to combat vulnerable areas), and once a town becomes MVP certified, it will be eligible to apply for additional MVP grants, and will be scored more favorably when applying for other state opportunities. The deadline to apply for the MVP is on May 3rd. Alison learned more about the grant program at the Massachusetts Association for Conservation Commission conference. She provided a handout re: Municipal Staff Commitment and Provider Tasks. Bill C. indicated that his current staff cannot absorb the additional workload affiliated with the MVP. Alison advised that if the BOS is reluctant to apply based on the inability to commit to staffing, Conservation Agent Mary Stucklen will step up to provide administrative support for MVP and Alison can explore other avenues for clerical support. Conservation Agent Mary Stucklen is available to prepare the grant application which may indicate that town staffing for this grant is a concern. Alison indicated that if necessary, Wetland funds may be used to pay for staff time affiliated with the grant. Alison stated that she did not find supporting documentation to indicate that the town is required to match 25% of grant funding awarded. Chris Bouchard stated that he would welcome funding to assist with paying for culverts. Bill move to apply for the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Planning Grant. Michael seconded. Motion carried.

The BOS discussed John Deacon's and Meredyth Babcock's appointment applications to serve on the Conservation Commission. Bill E. stated that he would prefer to hold on Meredyth's appointment and request for her to complete a question on the appointment application that was inadvertently not fully answered. Alison stated that due to that she is familiar with Meredyth's environmental-oriented/science background, and Meredyth has attended Conservation Commission meetings, she is eager to see Meredyth become a member of the Conservation Commission. Alison requested that the BOS hold on voting on John Deacon's appointment application to provide her with an opportunity to talk to him since he has not attended Conservation Commission meetings. Bill moved to appoint Meredyth Babcock to the Conservation Commission with a term expiring on June 30, 2021 with the stipulation that she completes the appointment application, seconded by Michael. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill moved to withdraw the town's notice of intent application, DEP file #102-0441 filed in October 2018 re: filtration system (Because the January 22, 2019 Special Town meeting did not approve the necessary funding, the town is no longer pursuing this project.). Michael seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion and operator's (Housatonic Basin) possible response to Dept. of Environmental Protection Enforcement letter dated 02-22-19 re: Becket Arts Center Water Supply

Bill C. advised that the above captioned letter is a follow up to DEP's August 2018 Boil Water Order issued for the Becket Arts Center Water Supply due to coliform and e-coli presenting during testing. Bill C. indicated that the town's water operator, Housatonic Basin is developing an action plan to submit to DEP.

Bob Gross, a member of the Board of Library Trustees, indicated that the Athenaeum is interested in the tying in with the Arts Center and Mullens House buildings' water supply (and septic system).

BOS to review and possible vote on John Garvey's Appointment Application to serve on the Historical Commission (term through June 30, 2021)

Michael moved to appoint John Garvey to serve on the Historical Commission with a term to expire on June 30, 2021, Bill seconded. Motion carried.

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Discussion

Bill C. provided and discussed his handouts entitled Capital, FY 2020 Capital Request, and FY2020 Operating Budget (dated 2/10/19). Health insurance expenses will decline by 3%. School District will increase by 8.3 %. COLAS will be 3%. He awaits the outcome of the special election for the CBRSD Wahconah building construction on April 6th which will impact the budget.

Bill C. reviewed the debt service schedule. Debt payments have increased due to the recent purchases of the ambulance and Fire Department's rescue mini pumper number 6. Bill C. will inquire with the Town Treasurer to see if these two-year bonds may be restructured to a longer period. Bill E. indicated that the Chair of the Finance Committee had recommended looking into this. Bill C. is not certain if the Highway Backhoe will fall under a 2020 or 2021 bond payment.

Other areas of the budget discussed: Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District no longer exists, E-911 (the town will pursue building its own communication tower), Board of Health expenses increases.

The municipal building expense account has been restructured: Starting FY20, there will be a Municipal Buildings Account designated for building repairs, and maintenance.

BOS to review and vote on Attorney Jack Houghton's request dated 02-14-19 for the BOS to sign a revised easement for 344 Wells Road. The easement was revised to meet Registry of Deeds' filing requirements.

Bill moved to approve Attorney Houghton's request to sign a revised easement (to meet Registry of Deeds filing standards, no material changes were made to this revised document) for 344 Wells Road. Michael seconded. Motion carried.

Board of Selectmen's Comments and Announcements

Michael inquired about the status of Tax Title and Tax Auction. Bill Caldwell will talk to Bob Markel and meet with the Town Treasurer for an update.

Town Administrator's Report

Bill Caldwell discussed the following items:

- HVAC system for the Town Hall. Bowman Engineering submitted its report. Bowman Engineering's study specified that without a solar array, the town would yield a negative savings on a forced air, heat pump system, and as for going from an oil to a propane system, the town would save 20% of its fuel, and yield approximately \$600 annual savings. Based on the cost to install the system, payback from converting to propane system would take 146 years. Bill C. will send Bob Gross's information to Bowman and ask Bowman to provide recommendations for zoning to control the temperature in the Town Hall area that will house broadband equipment (perhaps a mini split system that does not tie into the building system).
- Green Communities Competitive Grant Open – The Selectmen indicated that they would like Bill C. to apply for funding of an HVAC system.
- Route 20 Spring – DEP requires that the town close the Spring by April 30, 2019. The Highway Superintendent is working to obtain the permit to do roadside work on Route 20, he is ordering materials, and will arrange to perform the work prior to the deadline.
- He continues to explore options for digital records.
- Collins Center at UMASS Boston is working on budget presentation – GFOA Certification. Bill has a meeting next Friday with a representative from the Collins Center.
- Town buildings light upgrades. Kyle Houser is coming to the Town Hall.
- Bill attended the Energy Committee, 7 Town Advisory CBRSD and the Broadband Ad Hoc meetings
- Annual Town Meeting Warrant – Bill discussed several potential ATM Articles that relate to Meal and Room tax. The BOS agreed with Bill's plan to stick with state language for the Meal and Room Tax. The town already approved a 3 percent marijuana tax.
- Reminder March 7th is the Becket Washington School Building Information Session
- Bill toured Wahconah High School.
- The Annual Caucus and CBRSD Election are on April 6
- Annual Report is nearing completion
- March Becket bulletin – Michael suggested reconfiguring MailChimp to include the entire Becket Bulletin rather than showing only the first page (with the need to link to the rest)

- Tax Titles/Delinquent properties – The Treasurer had discussed combining some of the lots to make them more attractive for auction.

Public Input

Bob Gross indicated that Broadband would like to conduct Broadband Information and may arrange to combine the Informational Session with other public informational sessions (such as the Annual Energy Committee Informational Session). June 1st is the deadline for submit a tax insert to the Collector's Office.

Any other business to come before the Board

Beverly discussed the 2018 Annual Town Report cover.

Correspondence

- **Highway Superintendent letter dated 02-25-19 to Town Administrator re: status of Highway Department winter expenses**
- **Laurie Casna, Treasurer of the Central Berkshire Regional School District, letter dated 02-19-19 announcing that on April 6th, district towns will hold an election to vote on funding a new Wahconah Regional High School.**
- **Discussion of Springfield Materials Recycling Facility Advisory Board letter dated 02-14-19 suggesting that the BOS consider adding an Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article to authorize the BOS to enter into ten-year contract with DEP's qualified selected vendor to furnish recycling processing services.**
- **United States Census Bureau letter dated February 2019 re: Boundary and Annexation Survey. Request for town to complete Voluntary Contact Update Form. We can do that**
- **MassDOT letter dated 02-18-19 – Pending passage of bond authorization, Becket's Chapter 90 local transportation aid apportionment for Fiscal Year 2020 is \$237,326 (statewide total is \$200 million pending final legislative approval).**

The BOS reviewed the above mentioned correspondence.

BOS to review and sign payable warrants

The BOS reviewed and signed payable warrants.

BOS to adjourn the Meeting

Michael moved to adjourn. Bill seconded. Motion carried. At 8:35 p.m., Bill adjourned the meeting.

Date Approved 3-22-2019

Respectfully submitted,
Beverly Gilbert, *Administrative Assistant*



William Elovirta, *Chairperson*

Documents discussed at this meeting:

- Board of Selectmen 2-20-19 Meeting Minutes
- Correspondence as listed above
- Town Administrator's Report

- FY2020 Operating Budget (dated 2/10/19)
- Capital, FY 2020
- Capital Request
- Appointment Applications: John Garvey, Meredyth Babcock, John Deacon
- Discussion of Springfield Materials Recycling Facility Advisory Board letter dated 02-14-19 suggesting that the BOS consider adding an Annual Town Meeting Warrant Article to authorize the BOS to enter into ten-year contract with DEP's qualified selected vendor to furnish recycling processing services.
- Contract between the Town of Becket and Beta Engineering
- Dept. of Environmental Protection Enforcement letter dated 02-22-19 re: Becket Arts Center Water Supply