

To our Washington neighbors:

August 2016

Last month we forgot to mention that residents need a sticker to use Becket Beach. They are free and we have a new supply available at either the Town Hall or the Transfer Station. Selectman Mike Case one of whose other hats is heading up DCR in Western Mass is looking into making the Washington Mountain Lake recreational area on West Branch Road more accessible to Town residents.

Road & Bridge:

- Washington Mountain Road remains on schedule. The drainage work should be about done as you read this. Pavement reclamation has started from the Dalton line and, once completed, will be followed by paving. Guard rails, loam and seed and other roadway finishes will complete the job.
- We have contracted for the resurfacing of Blotz Road and the replacement of the Cross Place culvert. Work on both should begin this summer.
- We are still waiting for DOT commentary and approval on our plan to use the existing Middlefield bridge abutments.
- Likewise DOT still has not given full approval of the plans for the Eden Glen culvert, but we still expect to bid the project for work to be done this year. In addition to applying for a MassWorks grant we may also be able to tap into the state's new small bridge funding program.
 - There will be an informational session on the culvert work at the Select Board meeting on August 15.

Although MBI will pay for the survey work on the Town's utility poles in preparation for the installation of fiber optic cables, both Verizon and Eversource (owners of the poles) are imposing "filing fees". Verizon wants \$425 – bad enough – but Eversource is charging us \$10 per pole – between \$5500 and \$6000. Since these specific costs were not planned for (they would have been wrapped into the overall project had not MBI insisted on towns, not WiredWest, owning the infrastructure) we may have to have a Special Town Meeting to authorize the spending.

A proposal to put the new Veterans' Memorial on the Old Town Common and move the existing veterans' memorial there from the Old Town Hall is being considered by the Historical Commission and the Select Board. We have reached out once again to Eyal Shapira to see if he will head a committee to work through design and finance while maintaining the proper focus on the solemnity of the memorial.

The Board is pursuing two new proposals for reduced-price renewable electrical energy:

- Becket is working with a firm named Syncarpa that is building "Community Solar" arrays in Pittsfield and Hancock. Syncarpa has offered to provide the Town and any of our residents who want to participate solar-generated power at a rate 12% below Eversource's.
- Another firm, Clean Footprint, is building solar sites in North County and is offering a similar proposal.
- The Board will follow up on both, get more details, and keep you posted.

Enjoy the Summer!

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Tricia Drugmand
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board