

To our Washington neighbors:

March 2017

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Washington resident Melissa Martinetto as our Tax Collector.

- After Melissa has had some time to learn the ins and outs of her new position the Select Board will consider the need for a position to assist the Tax Collector and the Treasurer.

After many years of effective service as our representative to the Central Berkshire School Committee Mike Case is stepping down. Anyone interested in filling this important role for our community, please let Jodi know.

The Central Berkshire School Committee has voted unanimously to apply for state funding assistance (MSBA) to upgrade or replace Wahconah. The first step will be a vote on April 8 for all of the seven towns to authorize the funding of an \$850,000 feasibility study which will include preliminary plans.

- The Education Task Force looking at how best to organize and structure the Berkshire's schools should have the results of their separately funded study available this summer to incorporate into the Wahconah feasibility study.

We rely on Becket for our ambulance service and they are asking us to cover a portion of their costs. The Finance Committee is working with Becket to come to an equitable solution.

- The idea of inter-municipal resource sharing for both improved reliability and reduced cost was behind Representative Pignatelli's Community Compact initiative which we joined last year. The Select Board has also requested funding through a BRPC grant to work directly with our neighbors in Becket, Dalton and Hinsdale on shared services.

Road & Bridge:

- Bad news: the headwall of the culvert at the top of Frost Road has collapsed. This culvert is over 30 feet below the level of the road and will be expensive to repair; we may need to restrict Frost Road to local traffic.
- Good news: we have been awarded \$250,000 through the new Small Bridge Program to replace the Middlefield Road Bridge, presented to us by Lieutenant Governor Karen Polito on February 16.
- DOT still has not signed off on the Eden Glen culvert; work must be completed this year.
- We expect work to begin on the Summit Hill Road bridge over the CSX tracks on April 29 and the road to be reopened by August 29. A map of the detour route is printed elsewhere in today's *Tracks*. We will make sure that DOT makes good on its promise that the road surface throughout the detour will be acceptable.

After the presentation of the Middlefield Bridge grant, we urged both Lieutenant Governor Polito and Michael Knapik, the Governor's representative in Western MA (well, Springfield) to empower Wired West and get high speed internet to us as soon as possible.

Upcoming events: Special Town Meeting Monday March 20; Capital Meeting Monday April 3; Vote to approve the Wahconah Feasibility Study Saturday April 8; Annual Town Meeting, Wednesday May 10; Town elections Saturday May 20 – see Allison if you plan to run or re-run for office!

Is it spring yet? Or just an extended mud season.....

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Tricia Drugmand
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board