



February 2014



To our fellow Washington residents:

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Happy New Year!

We are delighted to hear that Dr. Rob Putnam will be taking over as Superintendent of Schools for the Central Berkshire Regional School District when Dr. Cameron steps down at the end of the school year. Outside of his outstanding credentials as an educator and the many good things he has done for our students, Rob is a great musician – as those who have attended recent Hoots already know! Also, congratulations to our own Mike Case who was elected Chair of the Central Berkshire Regional School Committee.

At the February 3 Select Board meeting representatives of Peru Concerned Citizens will bring us up to date on the five wind turbines proposed for Garnet Hill. The towers will be almost 500 feet tall. This issue goes to the heart of how we see ourselves as an environmentally aware community since the cost-benefit is not clear:

- The towers will be visible from some places in Town; we may also be able to hear them.
- There are suspected health impacts from the noise and shadow of large wind turbines.
- On the other hand wind power should reduce dependence on fossil fuels and a host community should expect some financial benefit.

Beyond our response as a Board and as a community to this particular project, we need to prepare our response if a similar project were proposed for October Mountain, or elsewhere in Town. Let us know what you think.

We are starting to discuss the Annual Town Meeting agenda and warrant. In addition to budgetary issues, the Board is considering:

- How to get all our residents access to high speed internet as soon as possible;
- Whether we should get a new plow truck;
- What to do about the lots – private and Town-owned – in North Lake;
- Whether we should re-apply to become a Green Community;
- How to quickly develop by-laws that preserve our character as a community, not only in light of the wind project in Peru but also for other types of potential development.

We would appreciate any and all comment on these issues.

Updates of ongoing projects:

- Further restricting vehicle weight on Blotz Road will have to wait until the Hinsdale Select Board works through some current issues.
- We are getting quotes for the replacement of the Cross Place Bridge.
- Pittsfield's Commissioner of Public Utilities assures us that transfer of five acres from Pittsfield for a new Town cemetery is being worked on.
- The complete rehabilitation of Washington Mountain Road is on schedule for the spring.
- Our grant requests for flood control of Depot Brook/widening Frost Road and for repaving Blotz Road have both been denied but both will be resubmitted.
- The contractor who chip-sealed our roads last fall has agreed to resurface them this spring and has been paying claims for damaged cars. We are still after them to reimburse the Town for the sanding that was done to minimize the problem.

Stay warm and keep healthy as we go through this extraordinary winter of deep freezes punctuated by unseasonable thaws.

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Shaun Lennon
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board



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A note from Crane Hill Tree Farm

As many of you know the Crane Hill Tree Farm recently stopped Christmas tree cutting after only two weekends. We sincerely apologize to those of you who were denied the opportunity to cut and enjoy a fresh local Christmas tree. We are a small farm and must limit the yearly harvest in order to have trees available for subsequent Christmas seasons; and we saw much more business than we anticipated on those weekends. However, we are also well aware that we provide a service that many Washington residents value. So, despite the "sold out" sign, we will never turn away a Washington resident. Again please accept our apology for this past season, and be aware that "sold out" does not apply to the residents of Washington.

Sincerely,

Dick and Raylene Spencer

Please send your Tracks info by 25th of the month

_mrsabeski@mac.com
put TRACKS in the subject