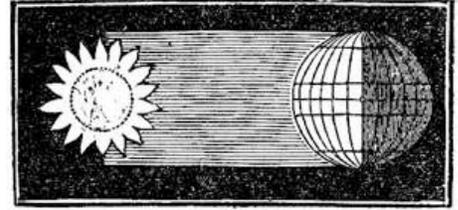




March 2015



WiredWest can bring broadband to Washington...if all of us pull together!

Construction will begin this summer of a fiber broadband network to serve homes and businesses in western Mass. For Washington to become a "Fiber Town" on the network, two things must happen: **40% of our households** must sign up in advance for service with a small deposit, and a **2/3 vote at town meeting** must authorize borrowing Washington's share of the construction financing.

You'll soon get a mailing from our Selectmen with information about WiredWest and a sign-up form. In the meantime, sign up online with a secure credit card payment at **wiredwest.net**. It will link you to our Fiber Town campaign site, where you can follow the progress of Washington and 31 other towns toward the 40% goal. We've been without high-speed internet for far too long. Now, together, we can make it happen. So sign up for service and show up to vote at the annual town meeting in May. Let's make Washington a Fiber Town!

Questions? Call Steve Nelson, Washington Delegate to WiredWest, 413-623-2221, or e-mail steve@wiredwest.net

Senior Pot luck Dinner, March 20, 5:30 pm.

Western Massachusetts Master Gardeners' Association Berkshire county symposium, Lenox High and Middle School, 197 East St. Lenox. MA Pick three classes from fifteen offered Gardening Topics. Registration includes lunch and breakfast snacks, \$30. Registration after March 31, \$40. contact Marilynwiley8@gmail.com, call 413 623 5859 or go to WMMGA.org. Includes sale of gardening gloves, plant sale of early spring vegetables and flowers from Blossoming Acres, Southwick, MA and raffle. Please note there aren't any book sales this year.

The Veterans Agent is requesting any interested town resident that would like to participate on a committee to begin the work of establishing a veterans war memorial for Washington residents to please meet with him on the evening of 2 March 2015 at the Town offices at 6:30 p.m. for an initial discussion. Thank you.

2014 Dog Licenses Set to Expire

This is a reminder that the 2014 dog licenses will expire on March 31, 2014. To get your dog's 2015 license, stop by the Town Clerk's office with the following (or send it in the mail - 8 Summit Hill Road).

- Current rabies certificate
- Proof that your dog is spayed or neutered
- Appropriate fee: \$4 if spayed or neutered; \$10 if not

Questions? 413-623-2185 or washingtontownclerk@yahoo.com

2015 Town Election Nomination Papers

Nomination papers for the 2015 town election are now available from the Town Clerk. Offices that will be on the ballot this year are:

- Auditor: 3 year term
- Finance Committee: 3 year term
- Planning Board: 5 year term
- Select Board: 3 year term
- Tax Collector: 1 year unexpired term
- Town Clerk: 3 year term
- Tree Warden: 3 year term

If you are interested in running for any of the above positions, please contact the Town Clerk to obtain nomination papers. The deadline to take out papers is Wednesday, March 18, 2015.

The nomination papers must be completed, signed by at least 25 registered voters residing in Washington and submitted to the Town Clerk by Friday, March 20, 2015.

Questions? 413-623-2185 or washingtontownclerk@yahoo.com

2015 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Petitions

If you have an article you would like included on the 2015 Annual Town Meeting Warrant, you must submit a petition with the wording of the article and the signatures of at least 25 registered voters from Washington.

The deadline for submitting a petition to the Town Clerk is Monday, March 23, 2015.

Questions? 413-623-2185 or washingtontownclerk@yahoo.com

Girl Scout Cookies are Available

The Becket / Washington Girl Scout Troop has cookies for sale. The price per box is \$4.00. Cookie varieties this year:

Savannah Smiles (lemon)
Trefoil (shortbread)
Do-Si-Dos (peanut butter sandwich)
Samoas (coconut and chocolate)
Rah Rah Raisins (crunch oatmeal raisin) NEW
Tag-a-Longs (chocolate covered peanut butter)
Thin Mints (Yum!)
Toffee-Tastic (Gluten Free) NEW

Please call Allison Mikaniewicz 413-623-2185 if you would like to purchase cookies.

To our fellow Washington residents:

March 2015

The Pipeline Working Group sponsored by BRPC has engaged legal and engineering resources to make sure that the Town has full participation in the approval process and to put ourselves in the best position to thwart its construction or take maximum benefit if we cannot block it and the route – which may not be settled until 2016 – comes back to Washington.

- The Group now has at least ten members which means that the Town's cost will be less than \$6000 in calendar 2015 – and Kinder-Morgan may pay for all of this expense.
- A pdf document "FRCOG – Community Talking Points" outlining possible objections and suggested by-laws that could delay or hinder the pipeline's construction is available on the Town's website. We urge all those who oppose this pipeline to familiarize themselves with it, but don't take it as "gospel" – check the facts yourself.

DOT makes a practice of demanding compliance on bridges the Town owns but continues to shirk its own responsibility for the bridge that spans the CSX tracks on Summit Hill Road. DOT knew that the bridge needed to be replaced over six years ago, and has ignored the recommendations for repair made by its inspector in 2012. We have demanded remediation if not replacement of the bridge immediately – not when they get around to it. We have also reached out to our legislators, the new Secretary of Transportation and our new Governor for help.

Please plan to attend a Special Town Meeting on March 16 at 7:30. The warrant items include borrowing authority for the replacement of the temporary bridges on Middlefield Road and Cross Place Road as well as for the Town's portion of the restructuring of Frost Road where it crosses Depot Brook to supplement the \$788,350 grant from FEMA.

- We are working with BRPC to apply for a Grant to fund part of the work needed to address the overall Depot Brook drainage basin.
- From an engineering perspective removal of the Eden Glen Dam makes sense but has not yet been decided and we hope to get a sense of the community during the meeting.

We may have two volunteers to serve on the Board of Health. We are still looking for someone interested in becoming Tax Collector. If no one comes forward we may need a warrant item to make the position appointed instead of elected.

If you haven't seen the WiredWest letter yet it should be in your mailbox soon. Please respond by signing up for high speed internet and making a small refundable deposit. After 40% of our households sign up we will have a warrant item at town meeting to approve the town's share of the financing. Our new Governor strongly backs the project and has confirmed a significant amount of its cost will be funded by the Commonwealth. Construction will begin as soon as this summer.

It's no secret that the Berkshires have been losing population – especially young adults – over the past decades. BRPC has commissioned a survey to help understand why and what can be done about it. If you, or anyone you know, is between 18 and 39 and lives or has lived in the Berkshires please take it and/or forward the survey link. Answers will help us all understand what we can do to promote long-term growth and stability. The following link is also available on the Town's website: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BerkshireYoungAdults>.

This winter just won't let go! Stay warm, plan your garden and remember that mud season always get here – whether we want it to or not.

Jim Huebner
Select Board Chair

Shaun Lennon
Select Board Clerk

Mike Case
Select Board

Spring Vernal Equinox March 20, 2015

The Spring Vernal Equinox brings days and nights in equal proportions. It is simply the day when there is exactly 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of nighttime. But, did you know that this is only true on the Equator? For the rest of us, the timing is a little sooner, or later, depending upon where we live on the planet.



Washington Tracks
Town Hall
8 Summit Hill Rd.
Washington, MA 01223

www.washington-ma.com

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Please email your TRACKS info by the 25th of the
month to:
mrsabeski@mac.com
Put TRACKS in the subject line.