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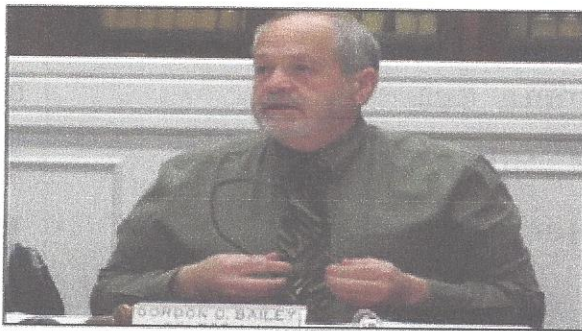
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## Longtime Lee Selectman Gordon Bailey to wrap up tenure

By [Dick Lindsay, Berkshire Eagle Staff](#)

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Lee Board of Selectmen Chairman Gordon Bailey at Tuesday night's regular board meeting. Bailey won't seek re-election in the May town meetings after 12 years on the board. (Dick Lindsay / Berkshire Eagle Staff)

LEE -- A veteran selectman won't seek re-election this spring, ending nearly 30 years total of public service to his adopted hometown.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Gordon Bailey says it's time to "concentrate on family and friends" after 12 years on the board.

So far, no candidates have officially emerged for the three-year term on the board, one of six townwide elected positions up for grabs in the May 12 Annual Town Election.

Town Administrator Robert Nason said Bailey's presence at Lee Memorial Town Hall will be sorely missed.

"He has a great knowledge base of zoning, building issues and he's a great editor of our

meeting minutes," he said.

Since the mid-1980's, Bailey, 60, has served on the Lee Planning Board, followed by a three-year stint as the town's building inspector from 1993-1996, then six years as a town meeting representative, before he was elected a selectman in 2002.

The California native, who moved to Lee almost 50 years ago, said the town has always felt like home. He valued the voter support in each of his four selectman races; the last two without opposition.

"[Running unopposed] feels like people appreciate what you do, but contested races are better so you can have a healthy discussion of the issues," Bailey said prior to Tuesday night's regular board meeting.

Under Bailey's watch, Lee has survived the country's Great Recession of six years ago, which saw the closing of four local paper mills, a weak housing market and a reduction state aid.

Bailey is proud to have helped shepherd the downtown revitalization, leaner town budgets that avoided significant layoffs and a pro-active approach to mill reuse.

"I can't take credit for any of it, as it's been a team effort," he said. "The board has gone out of its way to support downtown development and meet with people interested in the mills."

Selectmen Patricia Carlino and David Consolati praised Bailey for being an integral part of the board's role in improving the town. The trio have served together for the past five years.

"The three of us each have attributes we bring to the table," Consolati said. "We are all parts of the whole."

Bailey also is proud of how the board has kept an open mind on issues, willing to let residents air their concerns and suggestions.

"We pretty much let people have their say and some points made have changed our minds," he noted.

Bailey hasn't ruled out future involvement in town government, but for now he'll step back and let others handle Lee's future needs, which he says should include a centralized public safety facility.

"We need to have fire, police, the ambulance service, health department and others under one roof," he said.

Currently, those municipal services are in separate locations within the Main Street

corridor.

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### **Election calendar**

Nomination papers now available at Lee Memorial Town Hall for the six town-wide elected positions on the annual town election ballot: One each for selectman, moderator, Planning Board and three seats on the School Committee.

- **March 21:** Last day to obtain nomination papers from the Town Clerk; deadline to submit papers is March 24.
- **April 4:** Deadline to hold political party caucus.
- **April 7:** Last day to file caucus nomination papers.
- **April 22:** Voter deadline to register to vote -- if not already registered -- in the annual town election. Town Clerk's office will be open until 8 p.m.
- **May 8:** Annual Town Meeting, 7:30 p.m., preceded by a special town meeting at 7 p.m., both at Lee Middle and High School.
- **May 12:** Annual Town Election from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Crossway Village gymnasium, off High Street.

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