

Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, May 2, 2011

Present: Kevin W. Welch, Chairman, Kenneth J. Leva, Clerk and Procurement Officer and Member Walter F. Alterisio

The board met with Fire Chief Charles H. Rich, Jr. relative to a transfer request he'd like to submit to Fincom. Chairman Welch advised him that the new public safety administrative assistant was available to assist Fire Department as well, noting he'd made sure that Chief Downes included that provision within the job description. Chief Rich advised that he'd received a bill from an individual who went to EMS school and has been billed for \$1050.00 and since he doesn't have the funds in his budget will need the board's authorization before submitting the transfer request. He further noted that Fincom has asked whether we have any kind of policy that requires a commitment from the individual. Selectman Alterisio noted this is the 1st bill that Dunstable has seen. Chief Rich indicated this is pretty standard protocol for other towns.

He referenced his earlier initial request regarding a mutual aid agreement that would allow them to respond out of state - and a later packet regarding mutual aid for police, fire, highway, etc. Chairman Welch noted that there are expenses that are involved which could be huge were there a lot of responses. Chief Rich indicated there's a lot of things changing all around here and the need may increase, we need the help as well - we need so much help, if we expect to get assistance, we have to give it. Chairman Welch indicated that we have to take a logical approach, can't just keep expanding the service at a whim. Chairman Welch noted all the types of expenses that could be incurred, can't be passing a law without taking the costs into consideration. A lot of it you get a break the 1st time, but there's a lot you don't know, if area expands dramatically. Chief Rich indicated in most towns they have an overtime budget, etc which we don't have. Chief Rich indicated that grants are going to start to dissolve - we've been very fortunate with the forestry grants - probably got about \$4k in equipment from that grant since he's become Chief - waiting to hear on grant for thermal imaging cameras. Look at other towns that get grants, but from what they tell him, they have a grant writer. Chairman Welch advised that he's been pushing for such an individual for Dunstable for years - Groton has a full timer that pays for her own salary over and over with the grants she brings in. Chief Rich reported on the individual that wrote their grant for the new truck who was certain we'd get it, but we didn't.

Trinity situation with the medics is ongoing - P1 responded today. He reported briefly on some of the rumors he's heard relative to the

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pending case relative to EMT certifications. He advised that Trinity has done a great job for Dunstable – no problems at all.

The board reviewed the precinct map, made a couple of corrections and signed same for return to office of our Secretary of State along with the single precinct request completed earlier.

Road Commission Chairman Mike Martin presented end of fiscal year request for transfer from within snow line items. The Selectmen approved transfer from snow & ice fund to snow & ice wages for \$----- after motion and vote. Chairman Welch signed form accordingly.

Commissioner Martin further advised that state is looking for written statement that the individuals from Historical Commission before their hearing. Terri will find out when Historical Commission meets so that Road Commission Chairman Martin can attend the meeting. Chairman Welch indicated the ball is in the state's court; we need to get the 25% meeting done now. As far as Mike and everyone else is concerned, like Arthur Frost recalls, that this was all decided back at the meeting in December with Historical, MassDOT, Highway, Town Engineer with all in approval. He cautioned to be sure the Town Engineer is in attendance as well.

Fincom, Town Moderator Ted Gaudette and Town Counsel met with the board and reviewed worksheet. Ted noted that if anyone has any announcements, they could get them to him through board secretary. Ted advised on the changes that are being made in the process for the next town meeting. Discussion continued on the importance of keeping town meeting under proper control. Town Moderator declares the votes on hand raise, and in any doubt, then moderator calls counters who come up front with the numbers. Counters work for the moderator and should report to moderator. Chairman Welch indicated that didn't happen – counters gave numbers to Town Counsel – as has been done for possibly last 10 years at request of Moderator. Town Counsel was working for the moderator – it's the moderator's duty. Discussion continued in the challenges that have come about when counters can't determine their own numbers – counters should have a certain discipline. It's not our meeting, it's not the town moderator's meeting, it's the voter's meeting and they're entitled to accuracy in count. Chairman Welch took it from Town Meeting Times – Ted advised in the process he'd followed in Tyngsboro. Discussion continued – Selectman Alterisio's preference would be to give the moderator the number. Chairman Welch noted dividing hall into appropriate sections for counting. Via public address system, if

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available, counters deliver their count so that all voters can hear the count. Rich indicated that if this type of procedure was followed, there'd be no questions. Point being made is the way they're doing it now – there leaves some question as to an accurate count – really should be counting specific sections with at least two tellers for each section to count the rows together. Ted is familiar and knows what to avoid and what works – all agreed the new process would be implemented moving forward.

All basically agreed, the only controversial article anyone was aware of appears to be the Beagle property on Depot Street.

The group reviewed articles and as in the past the argument came up relative to the article for the well for the town hall sprinkler system – and there was some discussion on possible leakage and source for leak. Ted Gaudette suggested it might be the older line down near the front. All agreed to table it for this year – shut the water off in that area and see if that makes the difference.

There was a brief discussion of Article 18 relative to possible sale of water to other entities before Article 19 regarding the sale of the Beagle property to Fish & Game. Alan explained that Fish & Wildlife could put up a gate – that's basically the most we'd expect them to do. Fish & Game doesn't do anything with their land except for protection of wildlife habitat but town's can change their usage of parcels owned by Conservation except for possibly town forests which requires a roll-call vote. Alan advised the town bought it to keep it open and they would be buying as open space, not as a house lot. Issue from Fincom is how much is that land worth – we bought it for \$90K – if we wanted to sell it for a house lot it would be house lot price, we bought it to keep it open and keep it from being built on. He advised that Tyngsboro has done the same thing with parcels they've owned – Fish & Game not only purchases the parcel but maintains it. None of the beagle club land is less than 500' from Depot Street or any other street so it can't be hunted upon.

The board requested support from Town Counsel relative to water commission's indirect cost allocation plan agreement and Rich indicated that as long as the job description includes both departments, there's no problem.

Request for town hall use for Dunstable Republican Town Committee meeting on May 17th was approved and secretary will take care of notifying the applicant.

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Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed and the meeting adjourned at 8:50PM after appropriate motion and vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,
Board Secretary

