

## Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting – Monday, December 05, 2011

Present: Chairman Walter F. Alterisio, Daniel F. Devlin, Clerk and Procurement Officer and Member Kenneth J. Leva

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM with all members present. The 1<sup>st</sup> item on the agenda is the continuation of the Tax Levy hearing – voted to continue @November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting; motion to reopen by Selectman Leva, 2<sup>nd</sup> and voted with all in favor. Victoria Tidman, Assistant Assessor presented packet with particular numbers and scenarios of the impact of a split rate. The Assessors recommend maintaining a single rate. The long and the short is Assessors recommend a single factor for FY2012 with recommended tax rate of \$14.88, which will be approved by the state. Vicky explained the levy limit and how the tax rate is determined. She confirmed that Dunstable has always maintained a single tax rate – with the limited amount in other classes, it doesn't make sense to have multiple rates at this point. Chairman Alterisio noted expectations that new house permits are expected to skyrocket at some point – know of 34 lots approved in subdivision – any plan on how to address. Vicky advised she didn't think the town was in position to project what the impact would be. Chairman Alterisio referenced the expectations for the impact and members of Assessors and others noted some of the items that might come into play. Chairman Alterisio indicated as a town, we have a few years to take a look at the impacts – concerned that we're not building farms anymore, and town has dodged the 40B bullet; although have played along to come up with a program – have begun to take a look at resurrecting the project in the Mixed Use District and have contacted the company whose plan had been approved – resurrecting in anticipation of possibilities – Chairman Alterisio indicated that there may have been a misunderstanding amongst the community and explained the particulars when accept state or federal funding for a project. Almost by design, it cut out a lot of the population who might have been attracted to that type of housing. Discussion continued on the possibilities for the project – and particulars involved with housing authorities, developer's attachment to CTI, etc. and how the town will step up to addressing the needs and how best to move forward.

Debt exclusion is going down; anticipating reduction in receipts compared to 2010 modestly; Bob Ricardelli advised that not much changes from year to year. Selectman Devlin questioned the last sheet- new growth has gone down and Vicki explained the statistics. Selectman Leva provided motion to close hearing and accept Assessor's recommendation for single rate; 2<sup>nd</sup> and voted with all in favor. Vicky advised while she's included a projected rate in the packet, the State still has to certify the rate.

Fire Chief Rich advised he'd followed up on the truck body – got 3 quotes – went underneath with hammer – comfortable with the route Chief is following. He further reported on MIIA inspection of Fire Station. He noted he's researching the costs for the items they've recommended and the board suggested there may be some options for addressing. Chairman Alterisio indicated he's less concerned with what the insurance representative is

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recommending than what's the best for protection of individuals working at the facility.

Rose Russell advised she has a 26 acre farm on 112 Thorndike Street with horses, cows, chickens, etc. and for past several years has had a problem with her neighbor's dogs. She advised she has a shared driveway and the only way to get from her property to the road, she must go down that shared driveway. Unfortunately her neighbor has 2 Great Pyrenees who are loose and causing havoc – haven't been trained. She's tried to be neighborly – her horses and animals are contained within a fence – doesn't want her animals loose because they could get hurt. The dogs are always continuing to get loose and no one has taken responsibility. She advised she's called the dog officer and he's done a few different things – she's called the police; Chief has actually come out at one time & put them in the chain link enclosure but apparently latch is broken. She suggested if she can keep her own dogs and animals contained and under control, others should keep theirs either contained or under control. She doesn't know what to do any more – noticing in researching the bylaws –there are a number of issues that have never been addressed - these dogs have been attacking the horses with riders-if these dogs were to cause the horses to spook, rider could be hurt – owners need to step up and do something. Doesn't know what the solution is – how best to address. She's taken pictures of the two dogs chasing her horses when they were in their paddock. Chairman Alterisio noted the essence of the town's bylaw is that while Dunstable doesn't have leash law dogs must be under control. Selectmen will recognize her appearance as lodging complaint, and will be in contact with Dog Officer and Chief of Police and confirm. She repeated that she's spoken with Sean on the phone a few times and has gone to the police as to what to do and they don't see it as their issue. Dogs aren't in control, really upset, but in conversation as to what was happening with the dogs, she was told she could keep her 16 horses contained within the barn. She reported she's made sure that all their animals are properly taken care of... her horses are never loose – she does rescue work – helps organizations with rescue of all forms of animals. Not the dogs fault, it's the owners who've fallen short with obedience training. Board indicated they would follow up with dog officer and police in order to move forward with steps that are permitted to address these issues. Chairman Alterisio advised that failing compliance process will move forward with a disciplinary hearing. At some particular position the board will be in contact.

Ms. Russell advised it's not just herself, the women and children that ride the horses are terrified to go down the driveway. She provided the board with the bylaws and confirmed there's been other issues with the other residents on that common driveway – with them blocking the driveway – have had a problem since they bought the place.

Chairman Alterisio reported on the meeting with Fire Chief, Police Chief and representatives from National Grid related to their response in the recent

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snowstorm. By virtue of their addressing emergency facilities, hospitals, etc. and areas by greatest population impact – after 5 days Dunstable still out...needed to understand that within the small number there are people with emergency needs and we are still small enough to know the individuals who have special needs. Moving forward will be more meetings – but need to look to see if there's something that can be done to avoid the calamity – suggested that National Grid make an assessment of the town and come back and tell us the areas we're exposed and what steps could be taken to help avoid some of the key issues that needs to be addressed or may need some adjustments. He asked them to take it on and come back with recommendations for moving forward .. as a town we're going to have to take a look at being good neighbors. He's uncertain what they'll come back with but understand they're getting beat up pretty good.

Meeting Wednesday @1PM to take a look at process for selection of replacement for Fire Chief; while we agreed to extend thru the end of the year with vote of legislature, but discovered that required a vote of Town Meeting not simply the Selectmen. His term will therefore terminate at the end of March.

Minutes of 11/21 & 11/28 were approved as amended.

Chairman Alterisio advised he has spoken to a number of individuals who have agreed to serve on the Governance Committee (and briefly reviewed projected individuals with the Board). He reported these individuals are reviewing the electronic copy of the report - will consist of five members, will have to elect a chair and clerk and see that minutes are posted, etc. He advised members will take care of ethics and conflict of interest requirements. Will be looking at the organization of the town and how it's structured – embrace the report and come back with their recommendations from the report. Town will look to NMCOG as to bylaw amendments that may be recommended; will be sensitive to job descriptions. Town Clerk suggested that need to look at quorum for the committee meetings, etc.; must be defined what the committee shall have. Board continued to discuss the process, with Chairman Alterisio reporting he'd like to have them charged next week and setting timetable for recommendations sometime in February. Grant money available that will permit NMCOG to do some work relative to amending bylaw.

Chairman Alterisio reported he'd also had conversation with Road Commission Chairman Mike Martin dealing with issue of Pine Street – no residents on Pine Street, have had this conversation before there was a new development put in there – one resident on Maple Street – the Danforth Farm. Chairman Alterisio visited area this morning and yes the road is in tough shape and asked Mr. Martin to consider putting cold patch in the holes and to contact the residents – is also a point @which the road goes into Tyngsboro at the v where Maple & Pine come together – suggested the BORC get in touch with Tyngsboro to take care of their portion and to remind that

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Tyngsboro that there was an agreement with developer who hasn't made his commitment.

Four invoices have been resolved – can understand where Mike is coming from, but that's not the way to do it. Chairman Alterisio referred to his conversation with Mike Martin relative to reimbursement, etc. and how these items are customarily handled...it's not that somebody made a decision we were going to do this – was an emergency condition that required the details. The billing for the notice in the newspaper will be paid from Selectmen's account but earmarked as being related to the storm.

The Board approved the Dunstable Congregational Church's use of the bandstand AKA gazebo, for their caroling session on Sunday.

The Board also noted request from Road Commission Chairman for the board's approval for Bartlett Industries and couldn't see any reason why the Selectmen should take on that responsibility as the Road Commissioners were in better position to confirm the service had been completed appropriately.

Selectman Devlin reported on his discussion with Frank Schmidt relative to equipment needs for broadcasting meetings and got the board's input on what they're looking for.

Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed and the meeting adjourned at 8:30PM after appropriate motion and vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,  
Board Secretary