

## Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, July 23, 2012

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

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM with quorum present. Ron Mikol appeared before the Board reporting on discussions at their last Fincom meeting – a number of issues that need to get working sooner than later. 1<sup>st</sup> one is – when DOR did their audit – some of the items required modification to bylaw – Fincom. Other items included budget issues. Selectman Alterisio advised report from DOR was recommendation – did not mean it had to be done; it was up to the town to look at and make decisions – Selectman Alterisio noted question on bylaw related to some confusion that appeared within the Advisory Board bylaw. Subsequently Town Clerk gathered further info on votes from Town Meetings pertinent; same thing with reports and recommendations for management changes. Governance Committee put together a plan from those recommendations prioritizing items and how to proceed. Ron advised that Fincom had never discussed – one of the items for creating a subcommittee for review of the budget – what could be improved – Fincom needs opportunity to review budget recommendations.

Other thing on hit list is something that's near and dear to his heart – Sky Dive Pepperell – 3 weeks ago had mishap – 3 men in trees; this past year Pepperell had one – 2 guys in trees. Essex County has organization who aids in these types of incidents – Ron referenced the issue back a few years ago – bill was forwarded to the individual from Windham NH but it hasn't been paid as yet. Rich has recommended the town adopting a bylaw which would inhibit Sky Dive Pepperell from divesting themselves from that liability. Fincom would like to get this bylaw in place, working with Rich, to protect the town. The bylaw would be the vehicle to fix it – to absolve the town from liability. Selectman Alterisio suggested the bylaw limiting to sky divers might be best if referenced to any dangerous operations outside the town's control. Selectman Alterisio indicated to his mind there was no support in terms of how they arrived at that amount of money and why the Town of Dunstable became involved in the billing – arrived at bill by using FEMA's formula for natural disasters. Chairman Leva asked whether it was the 1<sup>st</sup> event for that operation and Ron responded, if not the 1<sup>st</sup>, was one of the first. Selectman Alterisio advised it died because of lack of information; Chairman Leva advised whether it's \$1K or \$12K. Ron advised that concern is that the Town could be on the hook for these charges, if all the individuals recuse the bill – need to fix; not specifically addressed to Sky Dive Pepperell would be addressed to any organization operating within the town to

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maintain their own insurance or coverage for these liabilities, whether it's Verizon, National Grid, Sky Dive Pepperell, whoever it is. Takes time = it's a huge process and doesn't give us any relief from Essex Special Tactical. Selectman Alterisio referenced an article on how exposed communities are with Special Education costs for students with special needs, some as much as \$300K per year. All agreed those types of liabilities come up. Selectman Alterisio noted the article in the newspaper and consulted with Chief Rich as to whether we might be able to prepare our teams somewhat for dealing with those things...find out what the program is and whether our men will be interested and then approach the airport advising they need to help underwrite the program. Chief Rich looked into it and found a pretty good investment involved; uncertain there was a lot of interest from volunteer firefighters to participate. Selectman Alterisio motivated because 1, we live here; seem to come into our town, albeit uninvited, still needs to be addressed as they come up. Ron referred to contract, have had 5 of these now in 6 weeks – need to do something. This is a bogey that's out there – motivation to get Chief Rich, town counsel and board together to look at a bylaw. That's on the strategic agenda for this year – looking for support and direction from the Board.

Next item on his hit list – is something that worked with Jon Crandall on – that's whether or not to put an emergency generator in Town Hall – whether has been changing and have had outages in the past few years. This is corporate offices for the town – need to look at strategically to put together bids, etc. and funding resources that may or may not be available for this purpose. Decision is – do we want to put this in, and if there's no funding sources available, does the town want to take it on and how will we pay for it, if we do. Selectman Alterisio indicated he'd want to take a look as to whether or not an emergency generator would support an administrative function - his preference would be for those to be located at the police station and fire station – the emergency command centers for Dunstable, as opposed to City of Lowell. Ron, in discussion with Jon, there are some pieces that go along with it – 1<sup>st</sup> thing that comes to mind, if had a long term outage in freezing weather, Town Hall could freeze as it's heated with water. Chairman Leva noted could operate with a portable generator, just to protect the basic needs. This building could also be used for temporary shelter – fire station not air conditioned, police station too small; church not air conditioned – suggested getting together with Police Chief, Fire Chief, Emergency Management Director as to the best approach. Selectman Devlin questioned what was available at the High School – seems like best building. Ron advised that in the winter time worked out with High

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School, but most Town Halls have emergency generators. Suggested to have BOS, Chief Downes, Chief Rich, Building Inspector & Jon Crandall sit down and discuss options.

Last item is initiative for Public Safety Building – Fire Station has a number of issues – working on roof to sustain it but on the West side of the building are a number of issues – issues as to functionality – Police Station also has issues although a little newer. Ron advised that if town is going to start this process, need to move forward. All starts with Public Safety Building Committee to establish requirements, design, grants, etc. How long before FEMA funding runs out – Chairman Leva indicated by October 1<sup>st</sup> should be charging committee. Selectman Alterisio indicated he felt need to put together a facility that deals with Fire, Police, Highway and communication. Ron indicated need to understand does Police want to have lockup possibilities, does Fire need additional equipment and/or storage capacity, etc., need to charge committee, in order for the committee to have some understanding of money and be prepared with a budget for January or February.

Selectman Alterisio noted a strong component of the DOR report was a long range committee to determine where the town wants to go – once decided the Town has more control as to how things happen, rather than an aggressive approach at individual items. Ron indicated we don't have that here not – back when Roads came in and spoke with them re: McGovern wall – came in with understanding that state was going to take over that project. His point is that had they not come in and said to us, we have this issue. Have a number of items beside that – bridge on Main Street, Shaw Pond dam, all these items should have been addressed or put into the planning stages. All these items keep coming up. Brian has talked about replacing a fire truck in a few years; public safety building, etc. should have all been on the radar.

Selectman Alterisio referenced the level of assistance and recommendations – an overview provided by Tim Sheehan as to how to best move forward. He presented document to be distributed to Town departments. He'll provide the overview and may, in fact, be willing to help a committee to form direction for addressing. Basically, short answer is to convert our all-volunteer town to a policy approach rather than line responsibility. Chairman Leva indicated the good news is Fincom and BOS are all taking a proactive approach to move a number of the agenda items the town has to keep addressing – will have a better direction on how best to approach. Ron noted

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some of the items we're missing without Town Administrator, always struggled with funding for the position, approved back in 2007, but don't have the funding. Advisory Board was applauded their efforts and Selectman Alterisio noted that will take cooperation from a number of the boards and individuals to move this initiative forward. Ron advised fiscal year budget closed – in good condition. Fincom will be taking August off. Plan is to have all those things worked out by Christmas.

Minutes of 6/18, 6/25 and 7/9 – Selectman Alterisio as far as 18<sup>th</sup> only Chairman Leva & Selectman Alterisio; moved by Selectman Alterisio, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chairman Leva and voted with both in favor; 6/25 – just Selectman Devlin & Chairman Leva – 6/25 motion by Selectman Devlin to approve, voted with both in favor; Selectman Alterisio on 7/9 to approve, 2<sup>nd</sup> Chairman Leva and voted with both in favor.

Board approved distribution of the memo prepared by Selectman Alterisio – looking for meeting a week from Wednesday. The Board noted that Town Engineer had presented copies of the NPDES relative to National Clean Water Act which deals with preparation and mapping for manholes, where runoff goes, etc. While Dunstable is somewhat limited, to have it done is a requirement. - Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed and the meeting adjourned at 7:45PM after appropriate motion by Selectman Devlin and unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,  
Board Secretary