

**Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, March 18, 2013**

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

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM with all members present. Chairman Leva reviewed scheduled agenda items: 1<sup>st</sup> item being Fire Chief Brian Rich re: dispatch for Fire and EMS. Chief Rich advised the main problem with EMS dispatching from Groton and Fire dispatch from Pepperell means they're on two frequencies which requires 2 different frequencies and carrying two separate portables. With 911 dispatching from Groton and then transferring to Pepperell, delays response time. Consequently he's been looking at transferring Fire Dispatch to Groton - have spoken with Groton and they've agreed to provide Fire Dispatch for \$3K and Pepperell currently charges us \$5K - and would cost another \$2K for EMS dispatch. Groton feels can probably hold to 3K. Only downside is he really likes Pepperell dispatch but with timing, all on one frequency and chances for delays that could be very detrimental to patient. In addition, goal is to look for higher ISO rating and dispatch is a key item. No additional equipment would be required for the conversion, the only thing that would be necessary would be a better repeater - currently on top of Trask Way - only problem is where it's on top of garage, but this is the ideal location - another option is on top of Sky Top which would require running power and would be more susceptible to damage. Karl indicated that

Selectman Alterisio's only comment was that Chief may or may not be aware of research into regional dispatch survey thru NMCOG - Brian didn't think it would be a problem, but worried if the regional dispatch encompassed too large a community, could affect the response for our residents. Selectman Alterisio reported on the pressure from the state to try to consolidate and maintain standards of operation and equipment - resulting in communities being serviced with state of the art. Brian advised that dispatch in Groton at one point was just about stopped and only salvation was the Town of Dunstable. Selectman Alterisio provided the background of the NMCOG survey and the Maryland example and how well it has worked with regional dispatch. Selectman Alterisio noted concerns with the political will and how it may block real progress and standardization but Brian felt regionalization could have a negative effect on the Town. Discussion continued into what the possible effects would be and Selectman Devlin indicated that the state is getting very involved in insuring that towns operate more economically and maintain service. Selectman Alterisio continued to explain the subject and stressed the ultimate being that cities and towns will no longer have their own - will be an entity created to handle all dispatch for communities - in terms of putting a community at risk, Dunstable is the model for other towns that it works. Brian cautioned where our guys don't do it for a living, there's more risk and generally doesn't have the response needed. Brian reluctantly agreed that regionalization can work but needs to be like communities with same response capabilities - not Lowell & Dunstable, for example.

Selectman Alterisio noted that while some don't agree, shouldn't be a turf issue - Brian advised the facility will be in Billerica, not Lowell. Brian advised that we've never had a contract with Pepperell, but Chief Palma has suggested representative from Dunstable Selectmen, Fire.

Before exiting, Brian presented an article for the town warrant - also presented info on a 5 ton truck that has been located in Dedham - program thru the state. Board will review cooperative agreement presented for this program...after two (2) years

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becomes property of the Town of Dunstable- for any equipment received through those two programs.

Next item was regarding establishment of a capital planning group – Ron recalled discussion which would have group that would identify items that – asking for appointing, Ron Mikol, Bill Ahern, Pat Plaehn, Alan Davis and Jim Regan. Ron advised that he has an interest in pulling together a couple of meetings before close town's budget to include a place holder in FY2014 budget. Chairman Leva advised part of the issue is to charge the committee and make the appointments so that they might move forward. Selectman Alterisio advised would rather look for a plan for 3-5 year, and also to focus in on the what and the why and not on what the cost is. Identify the kinds of things we need to invest in and revise and what types of resources are available and costs.. encouraging and directing the committee to interview all of the boards that have issues to deal with public safety, may be other kinds of needs that haven't been recognized but would rather focus in on the brick and mortar – regular committee would need to present themselves to Town Clerk and be subject to all rules of committees – elect Chair, secretary, etc. minutes kept of meetings and meetings posted according to open meeting law. Take a look at and come up with list of projects and present in a public forum of some type and bring back to the Selectmen and appropriate elected authority for moving forward; i.e. Water – would be looking for Water Department endorsement, for Fire or Police would be the Board of Selectmen. Ron advised one of their biggest challenges is the debt, if building a Fire Station of say \$5M, need to know how best to finance. Selectman Alterisio explained how the finance, design, etc. could be addressed once the projects are identified and supported. Need to have ability to understand and justify the funding and requirements. Selectman Alterisio cautioned the need to do the homework up front, in terms of looking at how the debt will be handled, etc. must be turned over to the Advisory Board once the town meeting has voted to support the project. Selectman Devlin indicated agreement need to have a complete supportable project and idea to move forward. Selectman Alterisio to continue to explain the community needs to be given a supportable basis for pursuing the financial support. Selectman Alterisio advised there are solutions in terms of grants, state money and also timing is very important. Karl advised that a lot of times when you're looking at funding project must be shovel ready in order to qualify at that time. Board continued to briefly discuss the number of issues that could be included into the scope.

Motion was made to appoint Pat Plaehn, Alan Davis, Bill Ahern, Jim Regan and Ron Mikol to the Capital Projects Committee, with charge developed by the Board of Selectmen. 2<sup>nd</sup> Selectman Devlin and voted with all in favor. Selectman Alterisio suggested caution at rushing to have ready for Annual Town Meeting, work toward sometime in December or thereabouts for a special town meeting devoted to a master plan.

Ron asked whether there were articles that might not be ready for an Annual Town Meeting. Selectman Alterisio noted that we've heard of a number of items out there – recalled some articles that weren't familiar – in order for an article to be on the town warrant, board is going to have to understand why it's on there and why do we need it and how will they be administered.

Ron Mikol advised that with Special Town Meeting, noted the issue with the water – need to look at a Special Town Meeting some time in ...like September to December time range.

**Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, March 18, 2013**

Selectman Alterisio indicated he and the board a little embarrassed that at some point don't understand the articles and unprepared – discussion continued on the technology request from school district and how to best make a decision – need to have supportable argument. Ron advised that Groton has similar concerns relative to this technical update they're looking for. Chairman Leva felt that in terms of presentation and discussions at last meeting, they are aware. School board, none the less has authorized the article in the budget so will be on the ballot none the less. Flexibility that Groton has in coming up with financing vs. Dunstable is very different – they have so much more levy capacity whereas Dunstable can't do anything without a debt exclusion, meaning that all the projects weigh heavily on the taxpayers. Most towns don't have the same problem with staying within the levy limit. Selectman Alterisio advised that the subject of whether Dunstable and Groton can continue to be cohabited and make good partners because of such different circumstances may have to be addressed at some point in the future. Ron will get in touch with each of the members of the new committee and Selectman Alterisio advised that if they needed support or representation from the Board of Selectmen, one of them will be there.

Ron advised that Fincom wasn't meeting this week but would be meeting next Monday... there are too many items that are out there. Selectman Alterisio advised that for the BOS, are looking for a nominal amount for the inspectors – inspectors are not adequately compensated for the job - for callouts, etc. Must come up with rules on how it is applied and where it comes from. He hopes to have an understanding of that number by next week and will look at Chairman to push for a number for next week. The board will then establish the rules for dispensing, noting at a minimal call outs must be documented. Secretary was asked to schedule inspectors for next week's meeting.

Selectmen's budget is basically looking at level funding with the exception of the administrator issue.

Review and approval of Town Clerk fees: After brief board review, Selectman Alterisio offered the motion to endorse the recommendations for fees for the recording of out of Commonwealth births, deaths & marriages, home birth's records of birth and delayed record of births. Motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> and voted with all in favor.

Minutes of 3/11 – Selectman Alterisio to approve, 2<sup>nd</sup> Selectman Devlin and voted with both in favor. Selectman Alterisio advised that secretary has given him the specific dates for minutes he was preparing – 7:15 March 25<sup>th</sup> for new pole along Lowell Street down around Leo Dumont's from drawing.

Jeff Ryder stopped in to see if the Board had any questions or needed clarification – board addressed estimate for added drawings for wall project – understood that once went to bid were done – additional includes additional meetings and submittals with Mass Highway – this hasn't been addressed as a line item in the budget but believes there is sufficient funding within existing budget. Selectman Alterisio advised that fact is job has been enhanced as well as reduction of costs – while town isn't directly paying, residents are. Selectman Alterisio questioned where the oversight for the budget lays, who's monitoring the activity to insure it's done correctly – Jeff advised it's really up to the Board of Selectmen or the Road Commissioners'; if not Town Engineer could make himself available. Board questioned whether there'd been any discussion on the oversight of the project, on the board's request they could certainly

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be there. Selectman Alterisio noted BOS doesn't want to usurp the Road Commissioner's authority.

Kemp Street: some concerns from Police and Road Commissioners and they'd asked Jeff to bring together base plan to make that intersection safer. Selectman Alterisio jokingly (???) suggested takings that might spruce the area up and make the project work.

Chairman Leva then referenced request for determination on whether there should be a separate special town meeting and the board after discussion, Town Accountant is in on Wednesday morning, and Chairman Leva will follow up with her to see if there are any items which she feels necessitates action at a special versus being addressed in the annual.

Discussion briefly addressed the contract for Town Accountant services. Board confirmed deadline for articles for the ATM warrant noting it doesn't leave time for discussing submission from Fire Chief.

Selectman Alterisio advised by next Monday the Board should be able to get some form of hard number to the Advisory Board.

Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed, and meeting adjourned at 8:22PM after appropriate motion and vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Danice N. Palumbo,  
Board Secretary