

Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, January 13, 2014

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

Chairman Devlin called the meeting to order at 7:00PM with all members present.

The board discussed appointments needed and Chairman Devlin advised that he has an individual interested in position on ZBA.

Selectman Alterisio reported on his visitation to that board's recent meeting -

Minutes of January 6th were approved as written. Selectman Alterisio advised there's a meeting coming up this week on dispatch which he will attend. He indicated for the larger communities a consolidated dispatch facility could mean some loss of control to those communities whereas for Dunstable it could provide more experienced dispatch facility options although Dunstable has been very pleased with the service provided by Groton. Going to be interesting - and hoping that if we don't end up in the consortium of Tyngsboro, Westford, Lowell area, another smaller consortium facility might be available - uncertain that the Groton-Dunstable relationship is going to fly for the state's requirement.

Selectman Alterisio advised on update on the school committee meeting - interesting meeting - upshot is problem started with the budget process of FY2013 - had put in an amount that said it was going to be level funding salaries as negotiated in union contract and had put the money into ??? so that it wouldn't be easily seen for the negotiations. After negotiations were completed, they began paying based on the new rates, and the mechanism didn't trigger any notification of excess spending. Like \$146K-148K and then the problem exacerbated because moving forward into FY2014 continued to roll without making appropriate adjustment. Looks like it's going to be around \$2.5M - money already spent - no way to get out of it. Selectman Alterisio sees as the fork in the road - we can become very ugly and ask for responsible parties to be identified, but thinks can make sure that provisions are put in place to insure this won't happen again; focus on getting it solved and put things in place to protect against a reoccurrence. Board agreed best way is to address it, move forward and make sure there are safeguards against a re-occurrence. Selectman Alterisio advised he thinks it's going to have to be a cooperative effort of the school committee, the unions and the towns. Groups are going to have to work together; probably going to require

Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, January 13, 2014

a 2½ override – and will affect all budgets. Couldn't come at a worse time when towns have to face a lot of capital issues that need to be addressed for the town. Next step is the school committee and officials will be researching the problem and possible solutions. Once we know what the number is, Selectmen and Advisory Boards, etc. will have a better idea of how to proceed. We have to make everyone understand it and move forward to address. At the end of FY2014, it's 1.2M – they're really right down on their E & D account. Apparently doesn't affect the technology spending from last year – issue though is question came up, moving forward, what's the schedule for updating that equipment – asking for a handle on replacement strategy. School is also looking at the opportunity for opening up school choice – school choice program is really attracting the cream of the crop as opposed to special needs students, etc. Problem that Selectman Alterisio has is that we're opening up school choice for all the wrong reasons. Selectman Alterisio read story in paper – yet doesn't see River Street development or the one off Lake Street included – could be a shift where Dunstable's piece of the pie becomes larger – that's a real issue in that the revenue that would be generated by additional housing isn't necessarily going to offset the additional costs for education, and really underscores the needs for the town to come up with some form of revenue generation. Discussion continued on the implications and effect of different forms of growth. Selectman Alterisio promised more to come but Selectmen are going to have to get involved along with Advisory Board on this process, maybe a general get together with all boards.

Selectman Alterisio provided marked up police budget review – noting where the budget is now compared to the requested – as far as radio communication – noted that Groton is adding another dispatcher to comply with the new requirements. The board gave Selectman Alterisio clearance to share the spreadsheet with the Chief so they can work toward a revision he's comfortable with. Selectman Alterisio would like to have Marc Terry look at a statement that Chief has put forward indicating there's a federal requirement in terms of wages – board gave him the approval to follow-up on that. Once resolved, will set up a time to get together and knock it out. Hopefully can work with Marc Terry to get an idea of where we're going with the negotiations. Selectman Alterisio didn't know whether the board would be actively involved with the negotiations – Chairman Devlin indicated would be this time but would like to get Marc in one more time before kicking off the negotiations.

Minutes: Selectmen's Meeting: Monday, January 13, 2014

Selectman Alterisio advised School Committee has 2 week window – certain period within which they certify and once certified, towns have an allotted time to respond.

The board approved the use of the Town Hall for meeting 1/27 from 7-9 for Dunstable Republican Committee.

Chairman Devlin reported he'd talked with Dog Officer Sue Hogan and will work to schedule for next Tuesday morning at 11AM.

The Board then discussed their plans for meeting next week with Monday being the Martin Luther King Day holiday; Board rescheduled their meeting to Tuesday at 11:00AM – on the agenda will be discussion with Dog Officer.

The board will look into candidates for appointment to fill vacancies – know we have one member for the ZBA.

Selectman Alterisio advised the last meeting with the Advisory Board was left somewhat up in the air, Selectman Alterisio wouldn't like things to fester, board would like to extend an olive branch – have had some time for people to think about things, Chairman was asked to approach them and see where they stand. Chairman Devlin reported he'd spoken with Ron Mikol prior to tonight's meeting on the subject.

Treasurer's warrants were reviewed and signed, and meeting adjourned at 7:50PM after appropriate motion by Selectman Leva, 2nd and vote so the board could visit Advisory Board as their agenda indicated communication was pending to BOS.

Respectfully submitted,



Danice N. Palumbo,
Board Secretary