Town of Dunstable Selectboard Meeting Minutes September 10, 2014 Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 7:00 pm

Present: Walter F. Alterisio, Chair, Kenneth J. Leva, member, Daniel F. Devlin, member; Madonna McKenzie, Town Administrator; Brian Rich, Fire Chief; Bonnie Ricardelli, Treasurer/Collector; Susan Psaledakis, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee; Alan Philips, MEMA Representative; Richard Larkin, Town Counsel

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Payroll & Vendor Warrants
- ➤ Mutual Aid "Opt-In"
- > MIIA Health Benefits Trust Paperwork
- > Previous Minutes Approved

Open Forum

Mr. Alterisio opened the meeting, and the Board then discussed the concept and vision for the Open Forum section of Selectboard meetings. The idea is to allow public discourse at meetings to bring up topics of note and concern to the Dunstable public within the community. No votes or motions will be entertained during this forum due to the requirements of the Open Meeting Law; M.G.L. Chp. 30A, §§ 18-25 (Effective: July 1, 2010). Chief Rich, the Fire Dept, informed the Board that there will be controlled burns behind the Post Office this Sunday. This is being done in order to train new fire fighters on how to fight brush fires. The burn training will be conducted between 8:30 and 11:30 am and will include not only Dunstable fire fighters but also Pepperell fire fighters.

Pam Perreault, spoke about her experience and frustration with the town over attempting to find out what the rules and process would be to post a welcome home banner for her son returning from military service. Given her experience she requests the town create a clear process for application and approval. The Board asked whether she thought there was enough information posted online, to which she responded that the information was not extensive and all questions were directed to the inactive email of a recently retired town employee. The Board extended its apologies on behalf of the town and determined that a better process will be put in place. It was noted that there are existing rules concerning banners and the Board was asked to consider putting a defined window for posting and then removing signage.

Mutual Aid & MEMA

Mr. Philips (sic), provided a map of the town opt in coverage and informed the Board that 282 of 351 municipalities in Massachusetts are participating. The MEMA goal is 100 percent. All current town mutual aid agreements remain unaffected. The Board asked if the agreement extended to New Hampshire border municipalities, to which Mr. Philips responded it did not. He did, however, inform the Board that another opt in agreement that is part of the same MEMA program exists that allows border communities to opt in as well. The agreement, gives power to first responder officials, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Emergency Director, to determine if and when the town will respond. This is, however, power that is limitable by any standing orders of the Board. The Board indicated general support and Mr. Leva subsequently moved to adopt, the motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed unanimously.

Special Permit – Earth Removal

The Board made note of the fact that this kind of issue has not arisen in a number of years. The permit will be for a development, Alexander Estates, on Lake St., under Section 15 of the Zoning By-Laws. There is a \$250 fee, which has been paid. There will be a hearing in no less than 35 days but no greater than 65 days. Notice to residents will be given 14 days before the hearing. Various boards will be requested to consider the matter and respond to the Boards inquiries. Ms. Ricardelli, Treasurer/Collector, asked if this process can be used to collect unpaid taxes. The Board responded affirmatively that it could. Ms. Ricardelli explained that the developer was not current on his taxes and owed first quarter of financial year 2015. Mr. Larkin, Town Counsel, noted the Zoning By-Law is really to prevent gravel mining in the town, saying the process is meant in part to bring some clarity to what would otherwise be an ambiguous process concerning private property.

Special Town Meeting - Warrant Articles

Articles are to be in by the 22nd of Sept, and posted on the 30th. The Board was informed that the Finance Committee (Advisory Board) would like the meeting to be postponed till the start of Nov. As the process moves forward various boards and committees will be requested to cooperate so that the target date remains viable.

Appointments

Robert Jacobson (sic) is appointed to the new Capital Planning Committee 30th 2015

Term Expires: June

Motion by Mr. Devlin, seconded by Mr. Leva, passed unanimously.

Consultant's Report

Ms. McKenzie reported on her recent efforts with the Personnel Board and updated the Board. She is still looking at policy changes and implementation within the administration aspect of the town, there is a bid process that is moving forward under her supervision, and she continues to meet with various committees, boards and interested parties. The Board noted on the record that it is the Boards intention to free Ms. McKenzie's time so that she can focus on her primary duties and for the new Administrative Assistant to take over "housekeeping" duties within the administration. Ms. McKenzie's focus will remain on higher duties, with the Administrative Assistant taking on all routine tasks as assigned and arising. The Board expressed comity towards the new Administrative Assistant and voiced their expectations.

Ms. McKenzie noted that there was a request for a Selectboard member to attend a Groton Dunstable Regional School strategic planning meeting and Mr. Leva volunteered to go.

Business – Pipeline Update

Citizens present requested the board adopt a nonbinding resolution to oppose the use and transportation of natural gas which has been removed by means of "fracking," and further declare the policy of the town to be that of championing clean energy alternatives. The Board highlighted its anti-pipeline stance while also noting that the matter of energy policy is ultimately a national one. The Board further discussed some themes involving energy policy in the region, and the fact that 20 other local municipalities in the region affected by the pipeline have already adopted the resolution. After some consultation with Mr. Larkin, Mr. Leva moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Mr. Devlin and adopted by unanimous consent.

Alarm, Sprinkler, Police

Mr. Rich, Fire Chief, spoke briefly about the need to test the alarm systems at the Town Hall and Library. He also presented several options to the Board concerning alarm systems and coverage, and agreed to work with the Town Administrator and other relevant officials to conduct the needed tests. He has spoken

to four different companies and costs range from \$950 to a high of \$2,100. The Finance Committee (Advisory Board) was concerned about the low bid, so Chief Rich checked their references and they appear to be reputable. The overall cost would be broken up between different affected parties, such as the Town Hall and Library. The Board noted that these are the kinds of hidden costs that it needs to flush out. There was also discussion about finishing work to tie the emergency responders in with Groton Dispatch and the available funds to do so. Moving on to another matter, the Board noted that there will be some work done on Rt. 113 that will require a police cruiser and also noted that an alarm system is good, but that the town needs to have police coverage for response and will need to look into that side of the matter as well.

Adoption of Previous Minutes

The Board adopted minutes from previous meetings. Motions were made by Mr. Leva and Mr. Devlin to do so and passed without debate or issue. All motions passed unanimously. Selectboard minutes from May 5th, May 12th, May 27th, June 4th, August 13th, August 27th, and September 3rd were all approved.

Police School Question

An officer has requested the town, under relevant MGL, help pay for higher education expenses. There is some question of whether the officer's choice in academic institutions is acceptable under the relevant law and town policies. The Board concluded it would need to discuss the matter further with Police Chief Downes.

Treasurer's Warrants/Mail

The Board signed and authorized the payroll and vendor warrants as submitted by the Treasurer/Collector. No important mail or correspondence to discuss at this meeting.

Executive Session

Selectboard adjourns public meeting and enters Executive Session. Motion by Mr. Devlin, seconded by Mr. Leva, passes unanimously without objection.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:25 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Jakob K. Hamm

Admin. Assistant to the Selectboard & Town Administrator