Town of Dunstable Joint Meeting of the Selectboard & Advisory Board Meeting Minutes October 28, 2015 Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:03 pm

Present: Kenneth J. Leva, chair, Walter F. Alterisio, Daniel F. Devlin, members; Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; Brian Rich, Fire Chief; Ron Mikol, chair, Dana Metzler, Harold Simmons, Pamela Crocker, Amie Stevens, Advisory Board; Joan Simmons, Planning Board; Lorraine Leonard, Town Accountant

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Vendor Warrants
- > Standard Commonwealth Contract for Council on Aging
- Standard Commonwealth Contract for Cultural Council

Open Forum

Mr. Leva spoke briefly about the purpose of the open forum and briefly discussed the agenda noting that the principle focus of this meeting is to review and approve the warrant for the special town meeting. Seeing no members of the public in attendance the Board dispensed with the open forum.

Fire Chief's Article (Article 4)

The Board explained that this article was being taken out of sequence for consideration so that both boards would have an opportunity to speak with the Fire Chief. The figure for this article is approximately \$30,000. \$10,700 of it is to replace equipment that has already been purchased. The rest of the money would be used towards getting a repeater up and running near the Kennedy Farm on a special telephone pole. This project would involve a six-year contract with National Grid for the pole placement. This is to improve radio communications for the town's emergency response. We are currently at less than 40 percent coverage. There was some question as to whether estimates were sought for this. The Fire Chief explained the process that the town will have to go through with National Grid. He also elaborated on the location, which is on High St. That location exceeds all other locations considered and would provide the best coverage. They considered Forest Hill, but that location was not as good as was originally thought.

This location is one that can be enhanced in the future. Now that we know we can do this with National Grid, it appears that the town can do 4 telephone pole options like these rather than 90-foot towers. The Advisory Board noted that they support this article, however, they cautioned that based on some of the other articles that may or may not receive funding, they cannot be certain as to the availability of funds. Other costs to factor in would include the snow and ice deficit, the need to purchase a plow for the Highway Dept., and several other needs. They feel that Free Cash will need to be over \$200,000 going into the planning of Fiscal 17 and therefore urged the Board to critically look at the articles on the warrant to consider what we should expend resources on. Advisory Board further urges considering what are priorities and what are not for this. The Fire Chief urged the Board to support this article noting that it is a priority for public safety. The Board determined that they supported the article and citing Advisory Board's tentative support thanked the Chief and moved on.

General Discussion of the Warrant Articles

The Boards agreed to go article by article, briefly discussing and approving each. Article 1 was determined to be a housekeeping measure and both boards agreed in supporting the article. Article 2 was similarly a housekeeping measure as it pertained to authorizing the Board of Assessors to negotiate a PILOT. Ms. Hutton noted that at the past meeting the Board favored keeping Article 3 for boiler repair. This would take \$40,000 out of Free Cash for a just in case scenario. Currently it appears that the boiler may be repairable and the town already has \$10,000 allocated that may be used towards this end. Ms. Hutton elaborated on the state of the

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boiler, noting that it appears fixable but there are no guarantees. There is an outside chance, she noted, that attempting to fix the boiler will risk failure. Advisory favors going forward with repair efforts, and feels that the article can be left out. They suggest using the \$10,000 already allocated in the budget, and taking the article out entirely. The Board noted that these funds will likely only repair the boiler long enough to keep it going through this winter season and suggested that if we proceed on this course we take action this summer to replace. Specifically that we go through the budget process to allocate funds for a full repair. Ms. Hutton noted that if we fix it and the boiler is okay, with regular maintenance, it could be kept going for some time. The Board responded that they would like a more definitive answer as to how long the boiler can go with these repairs. Ultimately, the Board agreed with Advisory to remove Article 3.

Both boards noted that Article 4 was discussed earlier with the Fire Chief. From there they turned to Article 5 which had to do with stormwater and a collaborative with NMCOG. The Board and Advisory agreed to support this article. Article 6 involves a transfer of funds for the water department. Advisory supports this article as a housekeeping measure. Articles 7 and 8 have to do with the water system contingency plan for emergency failure of the system. This is required by CMR 310 22.04(13). There was some question as to where the funds for these articles could be taken out. Advisory felt that the funds could be taken out of the special projects funds. Ms. Hutton noted that it does not appear that they could use that source of funds. This is a project not generally covered by the special projects fund. Further, the town has a repair and maintenance fund and when you have such a fund you ordinarily would not use the special projects funds for something like this. The Board expressed the opinion that there is a responsibility by the town to put this in place. Additionally, the Board recommended going over these three articles together since they are interrelated.

There was further discussion of the contingency plan, including the tanks, the process by which the town would respond, and how a failure would impact the community. Ms. Hutton elaborated as to why the measure was done the way it was including time sensitivities and weather concerns. The funds to put this plan in place were taken out of the operating fund and these articles will help make that account whole (Article 7's cost is \$5,518). Advisory Board prefers to defer this decision until they receive more information from the Water Dept. because they want to preserve Free Cash. The Board made clear that this article has nothing to do with a re-design or revised water system and is purely a contingency. DEP requires this plan be in place.. Advisory voted in favor of supporting the article. The Board agreed. Discussion then turned to Article 8. This article involves the establishment of a water stabilization fund that will be funded from the existing stabilization. Ms. Hutton noted that this article sets aside a portion of the existing stabilization. There is just over \$300,000 in stabilization currently. This article would authorize setting aside funds, essentially earmarking them from the existing stabilization. There is no reflection on Free Cash. Ms. Hutton noted that the wording of this article is what it is based on the advice and opinions of Town Counsel and the Town Accountant. Advisory asked that the article's wording be clarified to ensure it is connected to the contingency plan. The Board agreed. Ms. Hutton reminded the boards that the warrant must be posted by Tuesday.

Article 9 involves the library and is to fix an issue with ingresses and egresses. The article was originally \$10,000, but the figure has been reduced to \$7,000. The Library feels they can come up with the \$3,000. Advisory Board originally decided to defer this. There were questions as to whether this could be done under the normal budget. Ms. Hutton explained why this is being done and why Capital Planning recommends moving forward. She elaborated further on the Library's problem and why an architect has to design a solution in this case. The Board noted that there is currently, the possibility of a dangerous situation developing. Ms. Hutton responded that she's working with the Fire Chief to work out a solution for this winter, but this needs to be dealt with for next year. Advisory voted in favor of supporting the article. Article 10 involves a repair to the Town Hall's elevator. Advisory is in favor of deferring this article. They feel that the price is rather high, considering the elevator floor is all of 15 feet. Advisory wishes to seek alternative prices. Ms. Hutton noted we are due for inspection of the elevator and if the elevator is deemed to fail, the Town Hall will be closed. Capital Planning has attempted to get other quotes, but has had difficulty. The Board favors leaving the article in with its current number, noting that the number could be changed on the floor. It was agreed that alternate quotes would be sought between now and the special town meeting.

Article 11 involves the acceptance of open space. This is a routine matter and the town has already accepted the land, this article is simply ratification. Both boards support it. Article 12 relates to paying off the snow and ice deficit. Advisory has focused on using the 3 year amortization that is allowed by the Commonwealth. The *Approved and adopted on 12/2/15*

Board favors paying the entire sum now, which is what the Town Accountant recommends. There was some discussion of how that amortization would work and the mechanics of the process. Ms. Hutton clarified that the number on the article was erroneous, the number is \$58,518.71 not \$50,518.71. There were some levy capacity questions. The Town Accountant joined the meeting to answer some questions in regards to this article. She explained that new growth for the levy capacity was predicted to be \$40,000 but now appears to be closer to \$70,000. The Board resolved that amortization was acceptable if it meant saving Free Cash. Advisory explained why they feel that amortization is the best choice and Ms. Hutton clarified that in light of this discussion Article 12 will be taken off and an amortization schedule will be presented to the Board. The Board asked if they could vote on the schedule now. Ms. Hutton and the Town Accountant did calculations. They clarified that it is over 3 years, the first year would be \$19,507, and the subsequent years would be \$19,506.

A motion was made by Mr. Devlin to adopt the amortization schedule for the three-year period. It was seconded by Mr. Leva and passed unanimously.

There was some final discussion regarding the plow that needs to be purchased for the Highway Dept. Advisory noted that there is the potential to take these funds out of snow and ice. This can be done legitimately according to Ms. Hutton, which the article for this was pulled. This, with the amortization, leaves \$240,000 to \$250,000 in Free Cash. There was talk of only giving the Fire Dept. \$20,000 for Article 4, and waiting until the end of year and using funds from the reserve fund to cover the difference. The Board expressed tentative okay with this. Ms. Hutton noted that the article could say, "some sum of money" with the actual figure given on the floor. It was determined that this course should only be pursued after consultation with the Fire Chief.

Appointments & Resignations

Ms. Hutton started off by informing the Board of a resignation of a police officer. Officer Daniel Adams is resigning temporarily from the force while he is at the Police Academy and requests to be re-instated as a patrol or reserve officer upon graduation. The Board made no determination as to eventual re-instatement but moved to accept Officer Adam's resignation. Ms. Hutton also informed the Board about the Council on Aging's request to have Danice Palumbo appointed to fulfill the remainder of Gerald Simmons term.

A motion to accept the resignation of Officer Adams was made by Mr. Alterisio. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed unanimously.

Danice Palumbo is appointed as a member of the Council on Aging

Term Expires: June 30th, 2017

Motion by Mr. Alterisio, seconded by Mr. Devlin, passed without objection

Administrators Report

Ms. Hutton started off by reporting on a request by Capital Planning that the Board consider doing an assessment of the buildings under its supervision including the Town Hall. The Board is not the only entity being asked to conduct an assessment. They are currently working with various department heads to arrange assessments of other town buildings such as the Fire Station, Police Station, and the Library. The only buildings that the Board would have to do an assessment on would be those directly under the Boards oversight. That would be essentially the Town Hall. The Board responded by requesting that Ms. Hutton look into the matter and determine what the best course forward would be in conducting the assessment. The Board would like to see the town become more proactive rather than reactive. Ms. Hutton told the Board that she would attempt to prepare some things that need to be addressed and present them to the Board for their meeting next week. There was further discussion of repairs and how to prioritize them. The Board indicated they would like to see a maintenance fund setup to help with follow through on maintenance to, again, bring the town into a proactive role. Ms. Hutton highlighted the towns need for a maintenance position and how that will need to be discussed during the budget process.

She then went over some repairs that will be done through the town's insurer including repairs to the lady's room, the kitchen, some cosmetic repairs to the conference room as well as the elevator and elevator control room. The Board also discussed the situation with the Town Hall's slate roof and necessary repairs that will likely have to happen there. Ms. Hutton then moved to discussing the use of People's GIS for stormwater *Approved and adopted on 12/2/15*

mapping. She noted there may be money in the technology budget to pay for this. This is a tool that has been developed to help towns with GIS. Ms. Hutton has used it for mapping and it is an okay tool for what it does. The price is right, about \$2,000, and will go a long way towards showing the town is working on stormwater. Ms. Hutton further updated on some meetings and trainings for stormwater that she and Ms. Stein, the Stormwater Consultant, are working on. On Monday night, Ms. Hutton will be meeting with Planning Board to discuss the community compact and talking Master Plan. She then noted some MMA topics, after that she finished by asking the Board if the town could close the Town Hall on Black Friday since all three employees here on Fridays are intending to take vacation time. The Board had no problem with allowing this closing. While on the topic, the Board decided to discuss closing on December 24th for Christmas Eve. It was determined that the town would have a half-day.

A motion to close the Town Hall on Black Friday was made by Mr. Devlin, and seconded by Mr. Leva. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to have the Town Hall operate for a half-day on December 24th was made by Mr. Alterisio and seconded by Mr. Devlin. The motion passed without objection.

Ms. Hutton finished her report by asking the Board to make two final motions, one to reject the bids for the boiler replacement and one to authorize the Conservation Commission to spend funds out of the Wetlands Protection fund. The Board agreed. She also briefly discussed two standard Commonwealth contracts that required Mr. Leva to sign as chair. One was for Cultural Council and the other for Council on Aging.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to reject the two bids that were received by the town. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed without objection.

A motion was made by Mr. Devlin to authorize the Conservation Commission to spend the sum of \$150 out of the Wetlands Protection fund. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed unanimously.

Special Town Meeting Timeline

There was some light discussion of the timeline for the special town meeting. The Board determined they will meet for a final meeting on the warrant at 8pm on Monday to do this. The special town meeting will be on November 17, 2015 at 7pm. The Board further determined that they will conduct a full meeting on Monday starting at 8pm and will not hold a meeting on November 4th.

Town Hall Use Requests

There were two requests for use of the Town Hall, one from DYAA and one from the 2^{nd} Massachusetts Regiment.

A motion was made by Mr. Devlin to approve the DYAA application and seconded by Mr. Alterisio. The motion passed without objection.

A motion was made by Mr. Devlin to approve the 2nd Massachusetts Regiments application. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed without objection.

A motion to adjourn at 7:53 pm was made by Mr. Devlin and seconded by Mr. Alterisio. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by

Jakob K Hamm

Admin. Assistant to the Selectboard & Town Administrator

Approved and adopted on 12/2/15