

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2015
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:24 pm

Present: Daniel F. Devlin, Walter F. Alterisio, members; Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Payroll & Vendor Warrants

Open Forum

Mr. Devlin spoke briefly about the purpose of the open forum and briefly outlined the evening's agenda. Seeing no members of the public in attendance the Board dispensed with the open forum.

MIIA Proposal

The town has received a proposal from MIIA, the town's insurer, for the next two years. Ms. Hutton explained that MIIA is proposing that coverage for property, liability and workers comp stay at a zero percent rate change for Fiscal 17 and no more than a 2 ½ percent change for Fiscal 18. This would be a two year commitment by the town. The Board noted that the level of service the town gets from MIIA is exemplary and the rate increase is modest. Ms. Hutton highlighted the excellence of their customer service and how helpful they have been to her during her transition. The Board decided to agree to the proposal.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to accept the MIIA proposal. Mr. Devlin seconded and the motion passed without objection.

Nexamp Net Metering Agreement

Ms. Hutton started off the discussion by reminding the Board that at a prior meeting they asked her to reach out to other towns that have agreements with Nexamp. She spoke most recently with the Town of Westford. Westford felt it was more advantageous for them to have a fixed price. In a fixed price scenario Dunstable would pay a fixed rate per kilowatt. This would be less risky for the town because no matter what happens to the project rate, the town would always be paying the fixed discount rate. If the project rate greatly decreases then we would be better with the fixed discount. If the rate dips below the 8-cent floor, then the town would pay the floor price (the 8 cents) and not the 25 percent discounted price. This is done because a minimum revenue stream needs to be proven to Nexamp's bank for financing.

Currently, Ms. Hutton explained, 18 cents is the going rate. Generally speaking rates go up rather than down but there may be less risk with the fixed rate. However, she noted, the 25 percent discount is the going rate as far as discounts are concerned. The Board agreed that this should be explored further and approved Ms. Hutton going forward with having counsel review the agreement. From there the Board discussed the possibility of seeing the town explore what other opportunities exist for solar in Dunstable, including but not limited to solar farms. The town has a great deal of land and open space, and a reasonable sized solar farm could be constructed. The Board finished by noting that this could potentially generate revenue for the town in cost savings as well as in selling back into the grid.

People GIS

Ms. Hutton began by explaining how some communities are already engaging People GIS directly for their mapping services. She noted that some towns are still willing to work with NMCOG for this service as well. For the cost, working with NMCOG is the best way to go for the stormwater mapping at this point in time. This is the cheapest way to go right now and Ms. Hutton recommends working with NMCOG. She noted that *Approved and adopted on 12/30/15*

the town has a technology budget this year that still has enough room to help pay for this. The stormwater permit is likely to come in January according to the EPA, so the requirements will kick in by about July. Dunstable has a little more time since it had waivers in the past. But this budget season the town will have to prepare for this. The Board noted that the problem we have is a lot less compared to other towns and cities in Massachusetts. Ms. Hutton has and continues to look into grant programs and student volunteer intern programs that could help lessen the cost. The Board approved giving Ms. Hutton the authority to speak with NMCOG about opening negotiations on this topic.

Community Compact

Ms. Hutton presented the Board with drafts of what she thinks the town should do for this, which considers the Board's goals. She explained that a long-range plan for finances would be a good goal given the town's budget plans. The Master Plan will also be one of the goals. Ms. Hutton expressed the opinion that the town should focus on two things for this compact. The town could do up to three, but she expressed thought that it would be best to focus on financial planning and the Master Plan for the community compact. The Board agreed and discussed some necessary revisions and updates for the Master Plan. The Planning Board will be conducting the revision of the Master Plan. Ms. Hutton has already begun to provide them with information for this.

Additionally, they will likely need a consultant and that cost is likely to exceed \$10,000. Ms. Hutton noted that she's done many Master Plan revisions in the past and explained how important it is to have help with the revision doing some work in house and some work with the outside help. There was further discussion on how to handle the Master Plan and what the timetables should be. The need to update and revise the plan is urgent and needs to be done. Ms. Hutton noted that doing this work under the compact, the town would get a lot of help and assistance from the Commonwealth. The Board agreed noting that now is the time since there is no guarantee that this program will continue to have support from Beacon Hill.

Alexander Way

Ms. Hutton reported that she's been working with Mr. Rider the Town Engineer to monitor the situation with Alexander Way and Alexander Estates. The Board expressed the concern that if the issues continue solutions will need to be explored. Ms. Hutton noted that she's been working with Mr. Rider and Town Counsel to work this out. The terms of the permit were clear and there was no ambiguity. The developer and his legal counsel were present and the Board was clear on what was expected.

GDRSD Regional Agreement

It was noted that the last few meetings have been productive. The Board is currently pleased with the direction, which is building towards a consensus point. Progressive ideas are being laid on the table and both communities are willing to talk about them. Ms. Hutton agreed stating that the response from all parties has been positive. The Board was pleased to note that the issue is being depoliticized and appears to be moving in the right direction. Ms. Hutton reminded that this won't happen overnight and it will be a process, but positive progress is occurring.

Special Town Meeting Review

The Board felt that the meeting went well, that there was a high level of voter participation and it appeared that all parties were satisfied by the information and answers provided to them. The Board discussed how the articles were presented and how to improve performance in regards to the presentation of articles to the public moving forward.

Administrators Report

Ms. Hutton started off her report by noting that she has heard back from Town Counsel on the Point Software contract. Mr. Larkin has approved the Board proceeding with the contract and found no issues with it. With the Board's approval she will ask Mr. Leva to sign the contract in his capacity as chair. From there Ms. Hutton moved on to the request from the Town Clerk for more assistance either in the person of an Assistant Town

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Clerk or just help around the office. Ms. Hutton explained how she thinks the existing staff can accommodate the Clerk's needs without hiring additional help. The Board noted that next year will be a busy election year and the Clerk obviously needs help. The Clerk still feels that she needs someone dedicated to help her, but for the time being is willing to work with Ms. Hutton on the matter.

Ms. Hutton then pivoted to the elevator contract. Currently we have a maintenance contract with Delta Beckwith. The contract is expensive and has built in costs to cover all sorts of maintenance that has never been required. Ms. Hutton has elicited quotes from other elevator service companies and it appears that the town can save money by going with a different company. The town would still get oil and grease maintenance done, and help with the inspection process. Delta Beckwith met with Ms. Hutton this past week, but they were not able to reduce their rates. Ms. Hutton would like to pursue working with City Elevator once the Delta Beckwith contract is discontinued. She has spoken with four different companies, and what she's learned is that elevator services are hard to get because there aren't a lot of companies around that provide them. City Elevator has excellent customer service and has provided the lowest quote already for the elevator floor. The Board agreed that pursuing this would be a good move for the town.

A motion was made by Mr. Devlin to discontinue work with Delta Beckwith and authorize the Town Administrator to come to an agreement with City Elevator to be presented to the Board with the contingency that Delta Beckwith be given a week to provide any lower price quotes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed without objection.

Ms. Hutton then moved on to discussion of the upcoming budget season. This included talk about the need for the Advisory Board, the Board, and Capital Planning to have joint meetings to talk about some of the work that needs to be done. As services are professionalized and streamlined in town, the Board wishes to see proper budgeting and funding. From there Ms. Hutton moved to discussion of how to handle the contracts that are coming before the town. She has spoken with Town Counsel and he agrees with the town hiring additional services from other lawyers and firms to help aid in review. Especially with contracts which are a specialty in the legal field. The Board noted that the town isn't necessarily ready to move all counsel services to a big firm, but they agree with determining on a case-by-case basis with Town Counsel the best path forward. Ms. Hutton noted that Town Counsel has a wealth of knowledge that we do not want to lose, but it makes sense to use some additional resources.

Town Common Use

The Dunstable Evangelical Congregational Church has applied to use the Town Common and Gazebo on the 12th of December. This will include caroling and a living nativity drama. There was some question as to the living nativity in regards to the Establishment Clause, but the Board determined that the living nativity being a drama production, intended to occur only once, would be acceptable and noted the caroling had been done in the past.

A motion was made by Mr. Devlin to accept and approve the application for use. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed unanimously.

Burn Rate

The Board noted only a couple of anomalies. The Emergency Management Director was one of them. Otherwise the departments appear to be doing well. Ms. Hutton noted that some of her lines are pretty expended, but that is because of the training that she had to complete this fall in particular the procurement training in Boston.

Minutes

The Board tabled the minutes until the next meeting in light of Mr. Leva's absence.

A motion to table the minutes from October 28th and November 2nd was made by Mr. Alterisio, and seconded by Mr. Devlin. The motion passed unanimously.


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Warrants & Mail

The Board reviewed and signed the vendor and payroll warrants. Subsequently the Board reviewed its mail and seeing nothing of controversy or requiring immediate action by the Board, the Board concluded its meeting.

A motion to adjourn at 7:15 pm was made by Mr. Alterisio and seconded by Mr. Devlin. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jakob K. Hamm', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jakob K. Hamm
Admin. Assistant to the Selectboard & Town Administrator

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