

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
December 2, 2015
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:30 pm

Present: Kenneth J. Leva, chair, Walter F. Alterisio, Daniel F. Devlin, members; Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; Brian Rich, Fire Chief; Vicki Tidman, Assistant Assessor; Bonnie Ricardelli, Treasurer/Collector; Bob Ricardelli, Assessor; James Dow, Police Lieutenant; Susan Prescott, Parkhurst Free Lecture Funds

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Warrants & Payroll
- Tax Classification forms for DOR
- Letter to Delta Beckwith
- City Elevator Contract

Open Forum

Mr. Leva briefly went over the agenda including the tax classification hearing and several topics of new business. Seeing no members of the public in attendance the Board dispensed with the open forum.

Tax Classification Hearing

Ms. Tidman started off by recommending that the Board choose a residential factor of one. Doing so would mean that the residential tax rate would essentially stay the same. Nothing has changed on the commercial rate. Currently, she reported, values are up and growth has doubled in the last year. Land in particular has gone up about 20 percent. Total assessments are up about 10 percent throughout the town.

Mr. Devlin made a motion to accept the tax status recommendation of a residential factor one based on the evidence and testimony from the Assessors. Motion was seconded by Mr. Leva and passed without objection.

Intervenor Status

Mr. Ricardelli started off by requesting the town consider becoming intervenor's on the pipeline issue. Becoming an intervenor would give the town additional options and a seat at the table should the pipelines route revert back to passing through Dunstable. This would also demonstrate that Dunstable remains opposed to the pipeline regardless of the route. FERC could always say they don't like the route chosen by Tennessee and force them to revert back to the path through Dunstable. Mr. Ricardelli presented a report from Attorney General Maura Healy's office concerning this matter. The AG has determined there is no need for this pipeline, a position, which is the result of a finding commissioned by her office.

The Board inquired as to what other towns have intervenor status. Pepperell and about half a dozen other towns Ms. Hutton reported. Additionally, Mr. Ricardelli reported, some private citizens have applied to be intervenors. The Board noted that it is publicly not in favor of the pipeline but has waited in the past so there would be time for more facts to come out and more information to become available. Ms. Hutton noted that becoming an intervenor is really the Board making statement of adverse impact to the town as a whole. This statement is on behalf of the town, and as a result it should be considered carefully. However, she reminded the Board that this is simply an action to preserves the town's rights to object to the pipeline. The Board inquired as to whether this is something that should be considered for town meeting. Mr. Ricardelli responded that there simply isn't time to wait and doing so is unnecessary.

Mr. Devlin made a motion for the town to become an intervener on this matter. Mr. Leva seconded the motion and the motion carried without objection.

Approved and adopted on 12/30/15

Fire Chiefs Update

Chief Rich updated the Board on a location on Forest Street for repeater equipment that would be a short-term temporary site for 9 months. Any equipment used there would be used on the next location except for one item that is \$200 and another that is \$75. The original plan is still in motion, but the process is drawn out. Right now the town is checking out liability issues for the final location. He hopes to have this up in three weeks. This will give the town time to get the final location right so that there won't be issues later. The Chief also wants to make sure that the town is correctly covered by insurance. The Board agreed with the Chief and expressed support. The Chief then finished his report by updating the Board on some bird flu related concerns, noting specifically that there's been a rapid spread throughout the country. He's been working with the Emergency Response Director on this topic. He'll be meeting again with the Emergency Response Director and the Police Chief regarding plans for winter. From there he gave a brief overview of their last meeting and noted that they also discussed what equipment the town has ready for winter storms.

Designer Selection Procedures

The Board then turned to the RFQ for the public safety building feasibility study. This will require the Board issue a policy. The town has set aside \$30,000 to study building a new public safety complex. There is no particular location set out or building planned. This RFQ will investigate what the town needs and recommend what should be built. Ms. Hutton has looked at several other towns, including Rowley, MA's study. Currently she's still waiting for Groton to send her a copy of theirs as well. Meanwhile, both the Office of the Inspector General and procurement MGL require the town put in place a designer selection procedure. From there the town can proceed with the process and eventual selection of a designer. She will have a conversation with town counsel about how all of this should look. The bulk of this involves procurement law requirements, but the rating criteria fall on a scale set out in law that the Board will have to use.

To help get an idea of how this policy should look she looked at what other communities have done. Rowley's is different in a few areas and she weeded that out to focus on the feasibility. This process will take a couple of months and she'd like to see the process started this year. The process will likely enter next fiscal year. The Board inquired as to location. Ms. Hutton stated that the designer would look at various locations. Chief Rich noted that in many cases they end up asking the Fire and Police Chiefs for recommendations. He stated that the property behind the Police Station would be ideal for the town in regards to such a complex. This property is currently attached to a house on Pleasant Street that has been on the market for a number of years. This location would keep the Fire and Police central in the town. The Board briefly discussed this possibility as well as a few others. Ms. Hutton finished the topic off by asking the Board to consider her proposal for the policy.

Town Elevator

After everything was settled with the elevator service company and the Commonwealth, an inspector finally came out and looked at the Town Halls elevator and lift. The inspector will allow the town to operate for the next 90 days pending the town's repairs. Following that time period the inspector will return to re-inspect. There are a few things that need to be fixed including the elevators floor, a light switch in the mechanical room, and some problems with the elevator lift in the Grand Hall. The town's insurer will provide for repairs to the elevator mechanical room. This process will include a certified elevator technician who must be present as well as an electrician. Additionally, Ms. Hutton intends to get a quote for the lift's needed repair and reminded the Board that the elevator floor already has a quote and she intends to proceed with the work (this was approved at the special town meeting). Ms. Hutton then moved the discussion to the elevator maintenance contract. She reported that changing from Delta Beckwith to City Elevator will save the town money and in light of recent events she strongly recommends the change. Ms. Hutton had a letter for Delta Beckwith which she asked the Board to sign. The letter is to inform Delta Beckwith that the town intends to discontinue service with them. In addition she had a contract for City Elevator that has already been reviewed by town counsel which she requested they sign as well.

Parkhurst Free Lecture Trust & Others Mission Statement

Approved and adopted on 12/30/15

Ms. Hutton reported to the Board that currently none of the trust funds have missions. The will in question for the Parkhurst Free Lecture Trusts doesn't provide much guidance for the commissioners either. Ms. Hutton informed the Board that she intends to work with town counsel to provide mission statements. The Board agreed that adopting mission statements for the trusts would be helpful.

Stop Signs on Thorndike

Ms. Hutton informed the Board that there's been a complaint in town regarding the need for stop signs on Thorndike Street. She elaborated on the topic further by explaining that the complaint centers on the intersections between Forest and Thorndike and Thorndike and High Street. Chief Downes has responded to the complaint by stepping up patrols, but doesn't see an issue with putting up stop signs. The Roads Commissioners are split on the topic. Ms. Hutton noted that this is ultimately a decision for the Board. The Board inquired as to the split with Roads. Ms. Hutton noted that Roads isn't certain that there is enough traffic to warrant the signs. However, the Police Chief recommends a change from yield to the stop signs. The Board determined that it agreed with the Police Chief's recommendation.

DLTA

The town has received a letter from NMCOG about the availability of direct technical assistance funding. This kind of funding goes hand in hand with the towns desire to look at the master plan under the community compact. Ms. Hutton reported that she has spoken with the Commonwealth concerning this topic and stated that with the Boards approval she'll send in an application to seek these funds to help pay for portions of the master plan. The Board had no objections to this course of action.

Administrators Report

Ms. Hutton started off by reporting that she's went to a meeting regarding the Main Street reconstruction project. There are some suggestions from DOT for proceeding. One is to extend the limits of the project up to the Town Hall. This would add about 400 feet to the project. The project is about 1,600 feet now and would be 2,000 feet. This would include additional work by the engineering firm. The preferred alternative was to go without sidewalks, but under the current Governor that would be tough. As a result she recommends including a sidewalk on one side of the street. This would tie into what Safe Pathways would like to do. Ms. Hutton expressed that she intends to seek funding for this from the Commonwealth. Ultimately this brings multiple points of interest in the community together.

From there she moved on to reporting about the Inspections Dept.'s move to tablets and software for inspections. The new software is up and running and Point Software has already done training and met with the various parties that will need to use the software. Ms. Hutton has procured three iPad Minis and a data plan for them through Verizon. The system is up and running and the inspectors will need to get used to them. The assessor's terminal at the Town Hall will be tied into the system and the inspector's page on the town website will change. Ms. Hutton also reported that she's had a meeting with the Chair of Parks & Rec. They had an in depth discussion of what the Parks Commission and Recreation Commissions have been doing. The Chair's opinion is that both should be combined.

The Board noted that this topic has been brought up before but did not recall any reasons as to why it hasn't been done. Parks is elected and Recreation is appointed. The Board agreed that a combined commission would be a good idea. Ms. Hutton then informed the Board of a meeting she had with the Advisory Board and GDRSD. GDRSD is asking for a significant increase in funding for FY17. This will be a topic of deeper discussion with Advisory going into the budget season. The Board noted this is a substantial increase that the school is talking about. There are a number of expenses that are roll over, with some being for supplies and new staffing. We will have to consider how this funding will happen without an override and this will continue to be an ongoing discussion, but this needs to be dealt with. The Board noted that the school warned the town that there would be an increase in FY17 when they agreed to what amounted to essentially level funding in FY16. Ms. Hutton noted Dunstable pays for about 23.9 percent of the school district's budget. Groton pays the remainder.

Approved and adopted on 12/30/15

Minutes

The Board considered minutes from October 28, November 2, 17, and 18th. The Board determined to proceed with the minutes from October 28th, and November 2nd.

Mr. Devlin made a motion to accept the minutes for October 28th and November 2nd Mr. Leva seconded and the minutes were adopted unanimously.

Warrants & Mail

The Board reviewed and signed the warrants. They also considered their mail.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Devlin at 7:20 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leva and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by



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

Approved and adopted on 12/30/15