

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
February 4, 2016
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:30 pm

Present: Daniel F. Devlin, acting chair, Walter F. Alterisio, member(s); Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; Joe Vlcek, Brett Rock, Joan Simmons, Planning Board

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Warrants & Payroll
- NMCOG letter of agreement

Open Forum

Mr. Devlin, acting as chair in Mr. Leva's absence, briefly explained the purpose of the public forum and went over the Board's agenda which includes the bid opening for the public safety building feasibility study RFQ, the community compact IT grant program, and an update from the Planning Board.

Bid Opening

The Board opened the bids for the Public Safety Building Feasibility Study, which would study the feasibility of building a new complex to house the Police and Fire Departments. The Board explained the reasons behind the RFQ, and what the RFQ process means for the town. This is the first step towards considering the possibility of building a new public safety complex and will provide the town with more information. There was some discussion of other options for the town, such as combining the Fire and possible Police Departments with the Town of Groton's. The Board noted that this is one of several considerations. Ms. Hutton also noted that the biggest barrier to regionalization of these departments would be response time, for Fire in particular. The Board then opened the bids, which were received from Dore & Whittier from Newburyport and DiMarinisi & Wolfe of Boston. Ms. Hutton announced there would be a meeting with stakeholders to consider the bidders proposals and schedule interviews.

Planning Board Update

Mr. Vlcek updated the Board on the situation with Alexander Way. He showed the Board the plans for Alexander Way indicating the location of the emergency access road, which already appears to be nearly complete. There were some problems with how the road has been planned and the state it is in now. Currently the Planning Board is holding the building permits. They've agreed to sign off on some in order to get some completion work done to the access road. The developer had also requested the bond be reduced, but the Planning Board mostly held firm negotiating a compromise that would lead to one of the last lots having a lien on it as security. The Planning Board wishes to ensure that the emergency access road isn't a road to nowhere. The road, as agreed, would connect to the area around Larter Field. The Board inquired about some erosion problems that may occur in the area. Mr. Vlcek noted that the Town Engineer was not concerned about this. The Town Engineer felt that the issue would be fine since the developer intends to plant vegetation along the access road that should mitigate erosion. Mr. Vlcek also noted that the town will have an easement to allow non motor vehicles such as bicycles and similar to use Alexander Way and the emergency access road to reach Larter Field. The developer has also agreed to improve the curve of the emergency access road to make it easier for fire trucks to navigate.

The Board noted some concerns about some wells on the development and where they are located. Mr. Vlcek assured the Board that he would look into the matter. From there the Board turned discussion back to the bond relief request from the developer, noting some concerns as to the actions of the developer. Mr. Vlcek assured the Board that the Planning Board will not raise the bond, but won't allow the bond to be reduced or the lot with a lien on it; until the requirements are met, in other words until the development is completed. Mr. Rock
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noted that the Town Engineers estimates for completion are based on prevailing wage. The developer doesn't have to pay prevailing wage. The Town Engineer was okay with the Planning Boards compromise with the developer. Ms. Hutton inquired with Mr. Vlcek as to whether they had contacted Parks & Recreation in regards to this matter. The Board clarified that this would not impact the park itself, but suggested that the Conservation Commission should be consulted with. There was some concern about wetland in the area as well. There was also concern about how the emergency access road might only work for 7 out of 12 months. Mr. Vlcek responded that the Planning Board has taken a hard look at how necessary this road is and begun to consult with the Highway Department. Mr. Rock explained that normally the towns don't want to see cul-de-sac roads that exceed 900 feet without one. Additionally, the Fire Chief has been adamant on the necessity of emergency access roads. There was then some discussion on why the road was placed where it was and the processes behind it. Ms. Simmons then noted that there was some concern about the width of Alexander Way, had it been wider the emergency access road would not have been necessary, but the Planning Board wanted to keep and maintain the old railroad bed as open space.

It is important to the Board that we think about possible issues that may arise from developments down the road, because they will likely come back to the town. The Planning Board will learn from its mistakes going forward and make a better development next time, but problems down the line will come to other bodies of the town and this needs to be thought out better during the process. This led to discussion of having a maintenance repair fund being built into the process so that if problems arise later, these issues can be dealt with. Mr. Rock noted that the developer is charged when the Town Engineer goes checks on the work and hasn't been happy about it, but the Planning Board feels that Mr. Rider's work will prevent bad behavior and helps ensure compliance. While no development will be perfect, the Board simply wants to ensure we think ahead and that we learn from past mistakes so that future developments will be improved. Mr. Rock noted that the town has consulted with Town Counsel about doing a maintenance repair fund, and Counsel has long felt it is not sustainable legally. The Board noted that other towns, including Dracut and Chelmsford have done this. Ms. Hutton noted that there might be some impact fees that would be permissible, but perhaps not to the extent that the Board would like to see. She assured the Board that she would do research as to what could be done by the town.

Appointments

Brian O'Donnell is appointed as a member of the Affordable Housing Comm. Term Expires: June 30th, 2016
Motion by Mr. Devlin, seconded by Mr. Alterisio, passed without objection

This appointment was made to correct an existing appointment erroneously recorded by the Administrative Assistant.

Alan Chaney is appointed as the designee for Affordable Housing to CPC Term Expires: June 30th, 2016
Motion by Mr. Alterisio, seconded by Mr. Devlin, passed without objection

This appointment was made to correct an existing appointment erroneously recorded by the Administrative Assistant.

Maureen Booth is appointed to the Parkhurst Free Lecture Fund Term Expires: May 16th, 2016
Motion by Mr. Devlin, seconded by Mr. Alterisio, passed without objection

Carol Bacon is appointed as the designee for Historical Commission to CPC Term Expires: June 30th, 2016
Motion by Mr. Devlin, seconded by Mr. Alterisio, passed without objection

Community Compact Agreement

Ms. Hutton started off by updating the Board on the signing of the Community Compact Agreement with the Commonwealth. Both she and Mr. Leva attended the signing with Lt. Governor Polito. She then explained to the Board that now that the town is a community compact town, the town has access to an IT Grant Program. She will be applying for funds from the grant to help the town improve services on the town website for tax assessing software. She is currently working on the grant, which is due at the end of this month. The Board was glad to hear of the signing and the grant program. The Boards greatest concern is to ensure that we sustain these kinds of improvements and development and that the town move forward in terms of funding, with this

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being part of the fundamental thought process for any grant application projects. At the Boards next meeting which is scheduled for the 24th, Ms. Hutton noted some other grants that she intends to bring information to the Board about.

Online Permitting Update

There has been a little bit of a struggle, and a learning curve Ms. Hutton reported. Some of the issues the inspectors have been having are being brought to both the Town Administrator and to the Inspections Secretary. At this point, it is necessary for the Inspectors to work on how to use the equipment. This includes coming in and asking for help. But the process is coming along. There have been some applicants who haven't been overly happy in the transition, but the process is moving along. The Board noted that patience will need to be part of this, after all, in a way we are reinventing the wheel.

NMCOG Letter of Agreement

Ms. Hutton noted that this letter has to do with People GIS and this is something the town needs to sign in order to agree to it. The cost is \$1,300 to be taken out of the technology fund. The letter was to be signed by the Chair, Mr. Leva, but in his absence the Board agreed to authorize Mr. Devlin to sign as Acting Chair.

A motion to authorize Mr. Devlin to sign the letter as Acting Chair in Mr. Leva's absence was made by Mr. Alterisio and seconded by Mr. Devlin. The motion carried unanimously.

School Community Brainstorming Event

The Board reported on this event. There were many attempts to grasp an understanding of the budget process for Groton and Dunstable. There are some concerns about performance standards, and how some are based not on current ones but on past ones. There are some elements that could concern problems for students to perform at the levels they have historically performed at. There are also some inferences and in roads to the status of the school facilities. There are a few concerns about deferred maintenance and how this is impacting school facilities in the district. Unfortunately there were few proposals for how to fully tackle the issues raised. The reasons for not doing some things will be longer than the list of doing. There was, happily, high attendance to this event that bodes well for the communities.

Burn Rate

The town is still well under budget with most accounts being at 49 percent. There are some accounts that are creeping up, but the Ms. Hutton has agreed to monitor them to ensure that any transferring of funds is done when necessary. Now that we are at 7 months in the budget, some issues will begin to develop the Board noted, based on past history. In the meantime the Board will continue to monitor accounts and depletion rates.

Stormwater

The Board noted the concern that for this budget process we need to ensure that we have the funds to maintain the town's current pace. Ms. Hutton noted within the budget some of the planning for funding and some of her recommendations, which she has made to the Advisory Board on the matter. This includes some possible grant considerations. She noted that the numbers might not be as low as they could be, but we want to budget conservatively. This is something that has to be done. While burdensome for the town, it is doable.

Administrators Report

Ms. Hutton reminded the Board of her vacation which starts tomorrow. She will be bringing some of the grant paperwork with her, but otherwise she will be out of town for the next week.

Building Use Applications

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Requests were received by the Board from the 2nd Mass Regiment for use of the Town Hall, as well as a request for permission to erect a banner for the summer concert series, an application to use the Town Common for an annual plant sale by DIG, and permission for the Grange to use the Gazebo and Town Common for their annual fair.

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

A motion was made to approve the banner permit application for the summer concert series by Mr. Alterisio. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed without objection.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve the Dunstable Gardening Groups application for use of the Town Common for their annual plant sale event. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve the request by the Grange to use the Gazebo and Town Common for their annual fair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed without objection.

Minutes

The Board considered the minutes from the 14th, but decided to table them until the next meeting. The Board did decide to accept the minutes from January 27th.

A motion to accept the minutes from January 27th, 2016 was made by Mr. Alterisio and seconded by Mr. Devlin. The motion passed.

Treasurer Warrants & Mail

The Board reviewed the vender and payroll warrants and went through their mail.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Devlin at 7:40 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by



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

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