

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2016
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:30 pm

Present: Daniel F. Devlin, chair, Walter F. Alterisio, Leah D. Basbanes, member(s); Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; Brian Rich, Fire Chief; Robert Nelson, Moderator; Carol Skerrett, Town Clerk; Police Lieutenant James Dow

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Warrants & Payroll
- Letter to the GDRSD School Committee

Open Forum

Mr. Leva briefly explained the purpose of the public forum and went over the Boards agenda which included the re-organization of the Board, appointments of police officers, use of town property requests, and an amendment to the Complete Streets Policy.

Re-Organization

A motion was made by Walter F. Alterisio to open nominations. His motion was seconded by Daniel F. Devlin, and passed by roll call vote in affirmation by Daniel F. Devlin, Walter F. Alterisio, and Leah D. Basbanes. Walter F. Alterisio nominated Daniel F. Devlin to be Chair and Leah D. Basbanes as member. Daniel F. Devlin nominated Walter F. Alterisio as member. A motion was then made by Walter F. Alterisio to approve and close nominations. This motion was seconded by Daniel F. Devlin, and passed by a roll call vote in affirmation by Daniel F. Devlin, Walter F. Alterisio, and Leah D. Basbanes.

Therefore, the officer positions of the Board of Selectmen shall be as the following from May 2016 until May 2017, assuming no intervening vacancy shall occur, Daniel F. Devlin as Chair, Walter F. Alterisio as member, and Leah Basbanes as member.

Override Vote Results

The Board noted the failure of the override vote in both Dunstable and Groton. Ms. Hutton provided the Board with correspondence to be sent to the School Committee asking them to act quickly on recertifying the school budget so that the towns can act. From there the Board discussed how the town's budget was fully contingent on the override, so on July 1st the town has no budget. The few areas where the town can still spend include salaries and debt payments, and not much else. From there the Board discussed the differences in how the two towns are governed. In Groton the School Committee is able to deal directly with the Town Manager because his office gives him far greater power over the budget. The relationship with Dunstable is a bit more complex. There was then discussion of what the school may be able to negotiate with Groton, and the fact that Groton has not yet "closed" their town meeting. This means that should Groton and the School Committee come to any understanding regarding the budget, a decision could be made as early as Monday. This provoked discussion about how Dunstable would determine a budget in the face of this situation. Ms. Hutton reported that she has meet with the Superintendent, the Advisory Board Chair, and the School Business Director about how this kind of situation will look like. It ultimately comes down to what the School Committee ends up doing, she said. The ball is in their court.

Ms. Hutton then continued by reporting that the Advisory Board will be meeting Monday night to assess the situation and the town's options financially. The Board expressed concern about future overrides noting that there must be some consideration of the failure of this override. The figure is likely to change and move a lot in the next few days and possibly weeks. The troubling thing for Dunstable is how Groton has been able to
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configure their finances in ways that Dunstable cannot. Groton's override did include a municipal number as did Dunstable's. The Board expressed the hope that this override failure leads to some introspection and reassessment. The general sentiment appears to be why so much was being asked for so quickly. If common sense prevails, it would appear that things should be more spread out and done on an incremental level that is more sustainable. The big concern is what the school will certify as its budget in the face of all of this. If that number is certified before May 23rd, it could provide Groton time to act. Such action could potentially cause issues for Dunstable primarily by leaving Dunstable without a voice in the process. It cannot be forgotten that Groton has a lot more resources by which to affect the number they have to pay.

Ms. Hutton noted that Groton has posted a joint meeting between the School Committee and their Selectboard. Any participation by Dunstable at that meeting would be in an observer role. However, Ms. Hutton stated, it would be likely that they would allow comments from Dunstable. The Board noted that it is very important to establish a timeline. This led to some discussion of how the School Committee will configure things and how much they might reduce their budget. The Board then turned to discussion of the debt exclusion and the fact that one of the exclusions passed but the others didn't. In all likelihood there will be another override ballot and this could give the town an opportunity to attempt to re-address the debt exclusions. Mr. Nelson inquired as to how the school's budget might look without the override. The Board elaborated on the figures further. Ms. Hutton also explained some of the machinations of the Advisory Board regarding how the budget was determined in relation to the school assessment. She stated that if Groton goes on Monday with their no override number, the portion for Dunstable would still be greater than the town would normally increase and could face another override. The Board clarified that it is indeed possible for Groton to manage a no override budget. Ms. Hutton noted that the meeting in Groton will ultimately decide how things move forward. The Board expressed doubt that a no override budget for Dunstable would be feasible. Dunstable, the Board stated, has been upfront from the start about what the town can afford. There has been no sense that Groton has really considered any impact on Dunstable.

Ms. Skerrett noted that she sent the Board the information mailing summarizing the ballot questions mailed by Groton. She stated that voters usually don't understand debt exclusions, and her office and other offices in the Town Hall received a great deal of calls from confused voters on the day of the election regarding the ballot questions. If the Board is willing to consider it, she would be willing to work on something for Dunstable. The Board responded by noting how the usual process would occur with debt exclusions, and agreed that the town may not have spent enough time articulating the topic. Ms. Skerrett responded by stating that voters rarely want to vote in favor of something that they don't have a dollar figure on and that they don't understand. The Board agreed in principle but noted the very limited timetables the town is functioning under. Mr. Nelson then reminded those present that some of the exclusions are the result of votes that occurred years ago, and there wasn't enough refreshing of memory in his opinion. The manner by which the topic was dealt with, he stated, was not straight forward. The Board agreed that the issue could have been explained better and encouraged Ms. Skerrett to research her proposal further. Chief Rich informed the Board of the recent costs of a mailer sent out by the Fire Department and suggested it would be similar for a ballot mailer. Ms. Hutton finished the discussion by reminding the Board and those present that the town really can't act without knowing what the school is going to do next, and what the timetable that results will be.

Appointments

Ms. Hutton directed the Board to a letter from the Police Chief requesting re-appointment of the town's police officers. The appointments are being done early to help provide officers with enough time to be sworn in prior to July 1st. The Board agreed to make the appointments. Ms. Hutton then elaborated on a request for appointment of Paul Dalida to Safe Pathways.

Paul Dalida is appointed as the member of Safe Pathways

Term Expires: June 30th, 2017

Motion by Mr. Alterisio, seconded by Ms. Basbanes, passed without objection

Annual Appointments 2016 – One Year Term

James G. Downs – Chief of Police

James W. Dow – Lieutenant of Police

Nicholas Papageorgiou – Master Patrolman

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Annual Appointments 2016 – One Year Term

Darrell Gilmore – Sergeant of Police

Eric Hoar – Master Patrolman

Charles Chaprales – Patrolman

Matthew Tully – Patrolman
Sean Ready – Reserve Officer
Greg Sanborn – Reserve Officer
Matthew Sech – Reserve Officer
Timothy Ialeggio – Reserve Officer

Shawn Drinkwine – Patrolman
John Koyutis – Reserve Officer
Jeffrey Swift – Reserve Officer
Philip Sepe – Reserve Officer

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve and appoint the police officers of the town as listed above for a term to expire on June 30th, 2017. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed unanimously.

Police Job Descriptions

Ms. Hutton reported on the Personnel Board's current situation regarding job descriptions. So far the Personnel Board recommends approving the applicable job descriptions for the Police Chief, Police Lieutenant, and the Police Administrative Assistant. These descriptions, particularly the Police Chief and Lieutenant, have been approved by the accreditation authority relating to police and Personnel Board recommends their adoption. There was some brief discussion of policies and general orders issued by the Department which cover how the officers act and what they can do. From there the Board determined to accept and approve the job descriptions.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve the job descriptions of the Police Chief, the Police Lieutenant, and the Police Administrative Assistant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed unanimously.

Complete Streets Policy

Ms. Hutton started off by explaining the modification of the policy. She has had the policy looked at and this resulted in two recommended changes. The changes will get the policy a higher score and put the town in a better grant position. The Board inquired into some of the ways this policy will impact the town. In particular, would this policy impact any street in town? Ms. Hutton elaborated on how the policy would impact each project noting that the policy's standards are not applicable in every situation. Instead the policy simply requires the town to look at the complete picture and act appropriately. This does not require the town to go above and beyond what is required. As the policy stands without the modifications the town would still score well, but the changes will increase the score in all likelihood. These modifications will not create any greater burden on the town than what was established by the policy when it was adopted.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to re-adopt the policy in its amended state. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed without objection.

Administrators Report

Ms. Hutton started off by discussing a grant the town applied for with Pepperell on public safety. The two towns have re-grouped and are applying for a different grant. The application for this second grant has now been submitted. The Police Chief has worked tirelessly on both grants. The Board noted that the only concern with grants is that they tend to be seed money and often come with requirements to continue whatever program was funded. There needs to be an effort to ensure that accepted grants start sustainable programs. The grant in question covers addiction and could require continuing funding after the grant funds are gone. Ms. Hutton explained that this is being led by Pepperell and Dunstable is simply supporting them. Lt. Dow and Chief Rich elaborated on Pepperell's efforts with this grant. The project is mostly geared at helping Police and Fire deal with the opioid epidemic. Lt. Dow stated that he agrees with the Board's reservations regarding grant funding, but noted that this is a bit different and involves a number of towns and that there are so many people involved in this that it isn't just a seed money situation. There has been outreach to businesses and private funding as well. Chief Rich reported that fundraising has been done by private individuals. This appears to have a lot of commitment by multiple community organizations and residents in the multiple towns. The Board asked whether Narcan has been needed. Chief Rich responded in the affirmative. He also noted the discovery of needles discarded on public roads in Dunstable stating that the opioid crisis is here. Ms. Hutton reminded the Board that the town has gotten a grant for a "hotstick." This is a safety device designed for professional emergency responders which provides warning of exposed high voltage. The device gives an early audible sound and flashing warning of the presence of dangerous voltages. The device only cost \$300. Ms. Hutton then

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briefly reported on the public safety complex feasibility study, stating that the contract has now been signed by all parties and as a result, the town will need to establish a committee to work on it.

Ms. Hutton recommends the committee be the same individuals as the committee that chose the bidders for the study. The Board was in general agreement, but it was determined that Ms. Basbanes should replace Mr. Alterisio as the Board's representative to this committee. Chief Rich then requested that the Board consider having someone in the construction field added to the committee. He has spoken to some other towns about this and those who did have such a person have reported favorably. The Board agreed with this idea and asked Ms. Hutton to explore it further. Ms. Hutton then reported that Tyngsborough has adopted its municipal ambulance. This will impact the town. She has spoken with the relevant departments in town. Chief Rich reported that he is in discussions with Trinity Ambulance. He is working with all surrounding communities to determine what should be done in the face of this. Trinity is interested in keeping Dunstable, but they would respond from Drum Hill in Lowell. They currently respond from Tyngsborough, but won't keep that location for coverage of Dunstable alone. He stated that he would get everything he has on this topic together and present it to the Board in the near future. Ms. Hutton then provided the Board with the letter to the School Committee for review and signature. She then finished by reminding the Board of the time and date of the Advisory Boards next meeting.

Use of Town Property

Ms. Hutton explained to the Board that the application by the Crusaders.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to accept the application for use of the Town Common and Gazebo/Bandstand by the Crusaders Youth Cheer Program. This application is being approved retroactively. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed without objection.

Nashoba Valley Peddler's

Ms. Hutton noted that she has spoken with both the Fire and Police Chiefs and neither have any concerns or objections or the route or plans of the Peddlers.

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

Minutes

The Board considered the minutes for May 4th and May 9th. No immediate edits or modifications were proposed or considered for the minutes. It was determined to accept them as written.

A motion as made by Mr. Alterisio to approve and accept the minutes of May 4th. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed without objection.

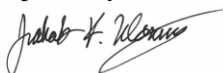
A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to accept and approve the minutes of May 9th. The motion was seconded by Mr. Devlin and passed without objection.

Warrants & Mail

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

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Alterisio at 7:30 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by



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

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