

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Executive Session Minutes
August 10, 2016
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Entered Executive at Session: 7:46 pm

Present: Daniel F. Devlin, chair, Walter F. Alterisio, Leah D. Basbanes, member(s); Lieutenant James Dow, Police Dept.

Interim Police Chief Contract Negotiations with James Dow

Ms. Hutton provided the Board with a draft of the contract for the Interim Police Chief. The document remains confidential until it is signed by both parties. Ms. Hutton recommends compensation as appropriate at the 1/3rd way point between the Lieutenant's salary and the current rate for the Chief of Police. Coincidentally, she noted, this rate is just a tad below the hourly rate in the middle of the base for the current Lieutenant and the starting Chief salary. It may be necessary to hold a special meeting between the 29th and 31st of August to iron out some of the final details. The rate is about \$44.00 to \$45.50 per hour approximately. Once the Chief position is filled, the candidate will likely start at the low end of the Chief's range; the bottom hourly rate is \$48.16 per hour for that position. It was noted that Lt. Dow's current compensation includes off duty details, which means that as Chief he may make less money than he does now. The Board was concerned with how to ensure that this difference is not enormous. Ms. Hutton asked Lt. Dow if the proposed rate is within the range of what he was looking for.

Lt. Dow responded that it is to an extent, but he is concerned about his benefits. Ms. Hutton noted within the agreement Lt. Dow would keep what he has now, but cannot work off duty details. Lt. Dow stated that to his knowledge many Chiefs are allowed to work off duty details. But fully determining that would require legal research and Lt. Dow wasn't looking for that assuming his compensation is at a level for which he can live. \$45.00 per hour would be dead center and was agreed upon for the interim period. Assuming the contract is agreeable to the Board; it will be provided to Lt. Dow for consideration and signed at a later date in the month. It was noted that the interim period contract will require Lt. Dow to essentially fulfill both positions Lt. and Chief. Lt. Dow asked whether this would mean he is the Lieutenant acting as Chief, or actually Chief but as Interim. Ms. Hutton clarified that what it means is that the town won't seek to fill the position of Lieutenant and Dow will act in both positions. So he will be clearly Interim Chief not just the Lieutenant acting as Chief. The Board agreed to the contract as drafted and Ms. Hutton provided a copy to Lt. Dow for his consideration.


Lt. Dow noted that Chief Downes had a cell phone paid for by the town, but was not sure that he would like this to continue. Ms. Hutton recommended that perhaps the phone be discontinued and should Dow determine he needs one that a new one be obtained. Lt. Dow expressed a willingness to use his own personal phone, but with a cell phone reimbursement. The Board was not entirely in favor of this, feeling that it would be perhaps better to have a separate line and phone which is the towns. Lt. Dow was willing to do this and merge it with another one of the town's plans. Ms. Hutton agreed to work with him on the topic. This will include consideration of the existing phone and its bill. Lt. Dow then had a few questions regarding the contract that he noted upon a brief review. Ms. Hutton addressed these. They included health insurance, longevity, and a few others. Discussion turned to the question of the interim period and the fact that it is open ended. It was determined that once the Board and Lt. Dow are comfortable with things, it will be time to put the matter on the Board's agenda. The interim period will function as a trial period not just for the Board but also for Lt. Dow.

Lt. Dow then turned discussion to some thoughts about the Department and his shifts. He will be losing a part time officer to the academy, but with him as Lieutenant and as Interim Chief he did not feel it prudent to hire. However, he would like to use some of the interim period to look at hiring and how to move forward. In the meantime, there will need to be overtime, but Lt. Dow and Ms. Hutton expressed confidence that the Lieutenant's salary line will help cover this overtime as the salary for the chief's position will cover his interim position pay. Right now he does not foresee any issues with getting coverage for overtime, but stated that over time, the longer things go, the less likely officers will want to do it. It was noted that the over time is \$127,000
Approved and adopted on 9/21/16

as of the budget. There was some follow up discussion regarding the budget process and the impact all of this transition will have on it. There was brief discussion regarding the Union Contract for police. Ms. Hutton noted that the Union leadership has indicated that the first letter on the matter will be received in October. Discussion finished on issues of budget and the role that Lt. Dow will play in this process.

A motion to adjourn and exit Executive Session was made by Leah D. Basbanes at 8:34 pm. The motion was seconded by Walter F. Alterisio. The motion was adopted without objection by Walter F. Alterisio and Leah D. Basbanes.

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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