

**Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 26, 2017**  
**Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827**

**Convened:** 2:00 pm

**Present:** Daniel F. Devlin, chair, Walter F. Alterisio, Leah D. Basbanes, member(s); Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; James Dow, Chief of Police; Brian Rich, Fire Chief

**Open Forum**

Mr. Devlin explained the purpose of the public forum and went over the Boards agenda which included a Banner Application, Warrant Article Recommendations, Evaluations, and an Executive Session.

**Banner Application**

A banner application was submitted by Veterans Services Officer Joe Dean to honor Jared Stubbs who is returning from Army service in Afghanistan. The banner will hang across Main Street approximately from April 26<sup>th</sup> until May 7<sup>th</sup>. The Board saw no reason to oppose the banner and extended thanks to Mr. Stubbs for his honorable service to his country.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve the banner application. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed unanimously.

**Warrant Article Recommendations**

Ms. Hutton started off by reminding the Board of its previous review of the warrant itself before signing it. She stated that the Board could go through each article to recommend or not. The Board determined to go by each article. There was a brief discussion regarding the end of the Town Moderators term and the complications that could arise once his term expires on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017, should the town meeting have to be continued. Ms. Hutton stated she would inquire with Town Counsel as to the procedure. An emphasis was placed on having things prepared just in case. The Board expressed some concern about the articles regarding debt exclusions and the understanding of the public. While those present at the town meeting have the process explained in detail to them, those who do not and still vote may simply not understand what the term even means. There was a question of whether some kind of explanation as to what a debt exclusion is could be put near the polls. Ms. Hutton responded that this would be a question which would have to be answered by the Town Clerk. MGL on polling places is strict.

Article 1 is reports. The Board noted that the Annual Town Report will from 2016 forward include a page honoring employees for years of service. The Board was in favor of Article 1. Article 2, the Advisory Board recommends no action. Article 3 relates to the Summer Concerts. Advisory Board advises taking no action as the Summer Concert Series says they have enough funds. Article 4 and 5 and 7 are take no action. Article 6 relates to CPA. It was determined that the Special Town Meeting would be opened after Article 3 with the Annual suspended. After acting on the Specials two articles, the Annual would be resumed. Advisory Board recommends in favor of the Special Town Meeting's articles. Article 8 is salaries for elected officials. This article is recommended. Article 9 is advised as no action. Article 9 relates to a collective bargaining agreement. This agreement is not ready for approval at this time. The Board noted it is likely that there will be a Special Town Meeting in the fall. Article 10 is recommended. There was brief discussion regarding the budgeting process, last year's override, and what the tax rate was. Article 11 is acceptance of Chapter 90 funds and is recommended. Article 12 is recommended.

Article 13 is also recommended. The Board noted that it is engineering that relates to the water system and contingency plans to prevent failure. There was then discussion of the hydropneumatic tanks. This led to discussion over what impact the water system as it is would be on the MUD and any development there. Ms. Hutton elaborated on the strategy and what the possible solutions would be. Further action on the water system

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may be required to be taken at a Special Town Meeting in the fall. This led to discussion of how to explain the needs of the water system to the general public. What the public utility is, how the impact is felt town wide, and how this plan is different from prior proposed plans. Article 14 is recommended. The Board noted that the article relates to the purchase of a new fire truck and is a debt exclusion. Article 15 and 16 are also recommended. It was noted that Safe Pathways will assist with explaining Article 16. Articles 17, 18 and 19 are also recommended. The Board noted that all of these articles relate to revolving funds, including the official chart for revolving funds. Articles 20 and 21 are recommended.

Article 22 is recommended by Advisory Board. Article 23 is also recommended. The Board noted that Article 22 relates to Free Cash. The town is working towards using less Free Cash, and has reduced the amount considerably this year from last year. Article 24 is recommended. The Board noted that the article relates to the protection of green space along Salmon Brook and should be explained as such to the town. Article 25 is also recommended. The Board noted that Article 25 has to do with the GDRSD agreement accepted as amended. There was brief discussion surrounding the agreement. Article 26 is recommended. Ms. Hutton reported this is the first step towards making Parks & Recreation one committee that is appointed. This article will help the town move forward with the town's delegation to the General Court. Ms. Hutton noted that this is being handled by Town Counsel. The Board suggested contacting Representative Harrington regarding this. Article 27 is a take no action. Article 28 is recommended. Article 29 is also recommended. The Town Clerk requested this article as well as Article 30 which is recommended. Articles 31, 32, and 33 are also recommended. Ms. Hutton noted that these relate to zoning. Article 34 is recommended. This article is being championed by the Planning Board. Article 35 is also recommended.

A motion was made by Ms. Basbanes to accept and approve the articles on action and no action as recommended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed without objection.

### **Evaluations – Police Chief & Town Administrator**

Ms. Hutton started off by asking the Board to review the employee evaluation forms provided to them for her and the Police Chief. The Board noted that Chief Dow was Acting Chief up until about December and then full Chief thereafter. There was discussion of how to break up the evaluation from Lieutenant to Acting Chief to Chief. Ms. Hutton explained the process further. The Board had some reservations about doing the evaluation at this time. Ms. Hutton suggested doing the evaluations at the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting set for May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017 if that made the Board more comfortable. The Board was generally in favor. It was noted that, especially in the case of the Town Administrator who was evaluated last year, the process really should start from the last evaluation and consider the progress made since. Ms. Hutton agreed to give the Board copies of her evaluation from the past year. The Board then noted that with Ms. Hutton, due to her previous evaluation, they have a jumping off point. But this doesn't exist with the Police Chief or Fire Chief. As such the Board determined that a baseline has to be considered. The Board felt that this would make sense to postpone and percolate on since Chief Rich's evaluation was already scheduled for the Board's next meeting.

### **Administrators Report**

Ms. Hutton started off by informing the Board that the Annual Town Report has been delivered. This year is the first year that the reports will not be delivered to each household by the Boy Scouts. Instead they will be available for pickup at the Town Hall and the Dunstable Free Public Library and on the night of the Annual & Special Town Meetings. She also reported that the postcards notifying citizens of the upcoming ATM and concurrent STM have been mailed. Ms. Hutton then asked Chief Rich to report on his status. Chief Rich addressed the Board elaborating on his surgery and the current restrictions he is under from his doctor as he recovers. He is on light duty until May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017. Ms. Hutton then turned to a complaint from Valley Street. The complaint relates to a matter that was settled by the Zoning Enforcement Officer in 2015. The complaining party did not appeal the decision at the time. The opinion written by the town was written by then Town Counsel. The Board noted that this particular complaint has been on going and relates to the storing of commercial equipment on residential property. The matter appears to have been settled with some finality, but Ms. Hutton and the Zoning Enforcement Officer will deal with the latest development.

## **Minutes**

The Board considered the minutes for the joint meeting held with the Advisory Board and GDRSD School Committee on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017 as well as the minutes for the Board's regularly scheduled meeting held on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Seeing no necessary changes or modifications the Board determined to proceed with adoption of the minutes as written.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve the minutes of March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017 as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed without objection.

A motion was made by Mr. Alterisio to approve the minutes of April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017 as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed without objection.

## **Warrants & Mail**

Ms. Hutton reported that there was no warrant this week. There will be multiple warrants to sign next week. The Board then reviewed its mail.

## **Executive Session**

Daniel F. Devlin made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purposes of a Contract Negotiations Strategy with Union Personnel in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A §21(a)3, and with the intention not to return to ordinary session afterwards. The motion was seconded by Walter F. Alterisio. The motion was adopted without objection by Daniel F. Devlin, Walter F. Alterisio and Leah D. Basbanes.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 3:05 pm

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Basbanes at 3:35 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Alterisio and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by



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

*Approved and adopted on 5/17/17*