

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
May 31, 2017
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 6:30 pm

Present: Walter F. Alterisio, chair, Leah D. Basbanes, vice chair, Ronald J. Mikol, member; Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; James Dow, Chief of Police; Jon Swift, Dunstable Theater Collaborative; David Tully, Sr.; Chris Chisholm, MDAR; Alan Chaney, Conservation Commission; Anthony Longo, 91 River Street

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Vendor & Payroll Warrants
- Standard Commonwealth Contract for Board of Health
- Land Grant Application for Conservation Commission

Open Forum

Mr. Alterisio explained the purpose of the public forum and went over the Boards agenda which included FY18 Police Appointments, a Use of Town Property Request, Discussion of Projects and Action Items including the Town Administrators Goals, Discussion of Becoming a Green Community, Methods for Approval of Bills, and Remote Participation.

➤ *Concerns Regarding Pesticides*

Mr. Chaney addressed the Board about concerns over pesticide use by the towns landscaping company for the Town Hall, the Police Dept., and Fire Dept. He noted that the chemicals they used are concerning as they are primarily insecticides and herbicides. Such chemicals wipe out a lot of wild flowers that are good for the endangered bee, as well as do harm to other wildlife. The Board responded that the town has never done this before, this landscaping company is new, and the matter is of first instance. The Board expressed appreciation for the concern and stated the matter would be looked into further, and a request would be made to the landscaper not to use such chemicals in the future.

➤ *91 River Street Residents*

Mr. Longo addressed the Board, on behalf of himself and the other tenants living at 91 River Street, to request an accommodation on the order that has been issued that they vacate the residence within 30 days. Many of the tenants have lived there for nearly 10 years and moving in 30 days or less is arduous. They respectfully request more time. Ms. Hutton noted that the 30-day notice order has already been delivered. The Board was open to some kind of accommodation, but stated that Town Counsel would have to be consulted concerning any liability for the town, and to determine how that accommodation would look. Ms. Hutton agreed to consult with Town Counsel. Mr. Longo requested the date to vacate the premises be September 1st, 2017. Ms. Hutton assured Mr. Longo that she would call him once she has consulted with Town Counsel.

Tully CR

Ms. Chisholm started off by introducing herself again to the Board. She stated that she represents the Massachusetts Department of Food & Agriculture (MDAR). The document has previously been signed, but for various reasons the document needs to be re-signed. Ms. Hutton noted that this matter has already been moved by motion and formally executed. Ms. Chisholm agreed stating that a new motion was not necessary, just a resigning of the documents. The Board noted the long history behind this CR and thanked Ms. Chisholm and Mr. Tully for their patience and perseverance through this process.

Approved and adopted on 6/14/17

Appointments

Ms. Hutton presented the Board with a list of appointments for the Police Department for the upcoming FY2018 year. The list was prepared by Chief Dow and submitted at his request. Ms. Hutton highlighted several new leadership roles, including the promotion of Officers Papageorgiou and Hoar to the rank of Sergeant. This is part of the leadership structure changes proposed by Chief Dow. She then noted a new Reserve Officer, a Mr. Lafferty who has been hired. The Board was pleased to see the changes in leadership structure and seeing no reason not to proceed determined to do so.

Annual Appointments 2017 – One Year Term

James W. Dow – Chief of Police
Darrell Gilmore – Sergeant of Police
Erik Hoar – Sergeant of Police
Nicholas Papageorgiou – Sergeant of Police
Charles Chaprales – Patrolman
Matthew Tully – Patrolman
Shawn Drinkwine – Patrolman
Sean Ready – Reserve Officer

Annual Appointments 2017 – One Year Term

John Koyutis – Reserve Officer
Greg Sanborn – Reserve Officer
Jeffrey Swift – Reserve Officer
Matthew Sech – Reserve Officer
Philip Sepe – Reserve Officer
Timothy Ialeggio – Reserve Officer
Mark Lafferty – Reserve Officer

A motion was made by Ms. Basbanes to approve and appoint the police officers of the town as listed above for a term to expire on June 30th, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed unanimously.

Mutual Aid – Police

The Board had several questions for Chief Dow regarding mutual aid. This included how mutual aid impacts the town's ability to maintain certification, and whether mutual aid can include communities across State lines like Nashua and Pelham, NH. Chief Dow responded by explaining how mutual aid works and what compliance work is done to maintain the departments certifications. He finished by noting that Sergeant Hoar is instrumental in helping him on this topic.

Discussion of Projects & Action Items for FY2018

The Board started off by talking about what projects and actions it would like to see in concert with day to day operations. This is a high level concept, with the hope of bringing projects that would benefit the town. This may require creation of a list which should be considered and refined in later meetings. One of the proposed projects would be the establishment of a financial plan for the town. This stems from some suggestions made during this year's budget process. The plan would be to establish a plan that would include financial projections. A model plan is available from MMA. The plan would project over 5 years and would include existing assumptions covering capital and significant public works. It would also include defined expectations and feed into the towns Capital Plan. The hope would be to give clarity to investment opportunities and economic development. This led to some discussion of what roles would be played by various bodies of the town, including the Advisory Board. Ms. Hutton noted that at the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting on June 14th, 2017, a representative from DOR's Division of Local Services is coming to talk to the town about its financial process and some of the analysis done by DLS. Discussion then turned towards qualifying what assets the town owns that could help provide economic opportunities and development for the town to provide expansion to the tax base beyond residential property taxes.

Through the Master Plan process, a number of directions have been discussed, and the Board would like to see what can be done. It was noted that the town has a number of recreational opportunities that could be developed. Resources like conservation, rail trail, and others could be utilized. This kind of idea could fit the character of the town. Ms. Hutton suggested a GAP analysis. This would tell the town what it has, what needs to be improved, and what the market can support. This led to some discussion of infrastructure investment and what that might look like. Follow up discussion centered on comparison of Dunstable to other communities and seeing what has worked and what has not worked. Ms. Hutton suggested determining multiple comparison communities with a similar profile to Dunstable. It was then noted that DLS will actually help the town with this overall process and that DLS very much so encourages the towns to put together a 5-year financial plan.

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They also advise putting together a debt policy, as well as a reserve policy pertaining to Free Cash among other policy recommendations. This prompted discussion of the roles of the Board of Assessors in regards to Free Cash as well as the role of the Advisory Board. Another specific project would be making the town a Green Community. Ms. Hutton noted that this topic is already on the Board's agenda.

Discussion then turned to the issue of the town being a dry and what will be required to change that status. This was followed by discussion of creating an overlay district and the possible creation of a restaurant as proposed by Mr. Mason at the Board's last meeting. The Board stressed the desire to see the preservation and re-utilization of historic buildings as part of this process. Discussion then turned toward how to categorize projects. It was proposed that they be placed in categories such as necessary, tactical, and feasible. Free Cash has been on the decline in recent years and the town has faced increasing deficits. New initiatives should have a financial review to determine sustainability over time. This returned to the consensus that the towns assets and ultimately tax base need to grow and diversify, especially in the face of ever mounting costs. Those increasing costs include the practical, like roads. Several roads in town need work. In the past the town gave the Highway Dept. funds above and beyond Chapter 90. This has changed in recent years, and so has the use of Chapter 90. Ms. Hutton noted that she is working with the Roads Commission on a pavement plan. She then suggested writing up the various plans, projects, and goals expressed by the Board and to assist in determining what the benefits and costs are. There was then an inquiry as to the towns status as a community compact beneficiary.

Ms. Hutton responded that the town is part of the community compact program and this is part of why DLS is coming to talk to the Board. Discussion returned to the topic of roads and increasing traffic through town. Ms. Hutton elaborated further on the prioritization plan, and the work being done with the Roads Commission. The existing prioritization plan was paid for by MassDOT. The issue now is implementation. A presentation was done by the engineering firm. It was noted that bike racks and park benches are part of that plan and being paid for by grant funding. There was ensuing discussion of how to deal with traffic and make it flow better as well as how to maintain existing roads and conduct repairs. Ms. Hutton noted several solutions under consideration like roundabouts, bypasses, and other similar projects. She noted that few towns in Massachusetts have gotten to the place the town is in for grant funding on this topic. This means the town will be able to have a better likelihood of success at obtaining grant funding due to less competition. Discussion then turned to the issue of the Town Hall's roof. The building has a slate roof. So far the town has avoided major roof issues, but the roof needs significant repair. This prompted discussion of how to fund the repairs or replacement and whether this would be through CPA. Ms. Hutton noted that using CPA has specific pros and cons. The Board finished by expressing the desire to keep the roof slate rather than see some other alternative that might look foreign to the building and change its character.

Town Administrators Goals for FY2018

Ms. Hutton started off by noting some parts of the evaluations that the Board should consider firming up, this would include what its goals and projects are for the community, and then from that set what they should be for her and for the different department heads including the Police and Fire Chiefs. The Board agreed.

Discussion of Becoming a Green Community

Ms. Hutton reported that there is funding available to have NMCOG help the town explore becoming a green community. There are some grant opportunities for the town that would open up once this status is obtained. Many communities have gotten substantial funds through the program and they don't require the town take drastic steps from what it is already doing. The Board agreed noting it would fit the character of the town and could help fund a project like a solar farm.

Methods of Approval of Bills

Ms. Hutton reported that part of the Municipal Modernization Act of 2016 allows the Board to designate one member of the Board to sign the warrants. This is on the condition that that member report back to the Board at its next meeting. Under the law, warrants are supposed to be signed in open public meetings, which means that the Board's signing of warrants during off weeks (week's where the Board has no meeting scheduled) is

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questionable. Therefore, she recommends the Board do this. The Board inquired as to how that reporting requirement would work. Ms. Hutton went over what the report would look like. The Board discussed whether the chair should be the one appointed to do this. It was generally agreed that it would be appropriate to have whichever member is chair be the designee.

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to accept the provisions of Chp. 218 §57-58 (An Act to Modernize Municipal Finance & Government 2016) and under the authority of said Chapter to designate that the Chair of the Board shall be authorized to sign the warrants. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed unanimously.

Remote Participation

Ms. Hutton stated out by outlining some of the past history regarding remote participation. In the past Town Counsel had reservations, but times have changed and it now appears to be tenable. Ms. Hutton then outlined some of the technological investments that could be made to make this easier and more feasible. The Board would have to okay remote participation before any of the boards, committees, or commissions can do it. It was noted that the person participating would not be counted as part of the quorum, so enough members would have to be present to substantiate a quorum. Ms. Hutton agreed to put the matter before the Board again at its next meeting for more formal action to allow remote participation.

Administrators Report

Ms. Hutton started off by providing the Board with several things to sign. This included some documents from Conservation and the upcoming Land Grant application, as well as the Board's payroll, and some standard grant paperwork for the Board of Health. She then reported that she will be conducting the Board's Administrative Assistants evaluation. Additionally, the Town Accountant will be conducting the Assistant Accountants evaluation. She then turned towards a proposal to have a special BBQ at the Town Hall in August. She will close the Town Hall down for an hour on August 23rd, 2017. The Board saw no reason not to approve. The time frame would be noon to 1 pm. Ms. Hutton then turned to a phone inquiry with the Town Clerk regarding a missing town boundary which appears under water. This relates to the Board's perambulation. The Board responded that the post is not missing; it is laying under the surface of the water on a tiny 4 x 4 island that is mostly sand bar in nature. This prompted discussion of issues around the location of this boundary. It was agreed that any inquires relating to that or any of the other boundary markers be sent to Mr. Alterisio.

A few other markers were discussed; these included those that are missing, in need of repair or of an otherwise similar status. The Board faithfully conducts its perambulation as required by MGL and as such is aware of the status of the markers. Ms. Hutton then reported that on June 7th, 2017 the School Committee is holding a meeting to which the Advisory Board and Selectmen have been invited. It is at 7 pm at the High School Library. She then informed the Board regarding a medical matter which will require her to be out of the office. It will require her to use FMLA. She will be out approximately 6 weeks, and may start as early as the middle of June. She will attempt to work as much as she can during that time. Town Counsel has advised that the Board's chair can sign the FMLA paperwork. Ms. Hutton also informed the Board of her acceptance by Northeastern into their doctorate program for Law & Public Policy. Her orientation and classes will start in August. She may need some days off in order to attend. The Board agreed that she should be given paid time as professional development rather than forced to use vacation or personal time. These would be two days in August and one day in December. The program is a two year one. The Board congratulated Ms. Hutton. Ms. Hutton then finished up by reminding the Board of its Executive Session scheduled for June 1st, 2017.

Request Made with Police Department

Chief Dow reported to the Board that he has been approached to use the police departments light tower for controlling traffic for a special event. Chief Dow noted that in the past the light has been loaned to other towns in the area and that he has no objections to its use in this instance. The Board had no concerns with the use of the light since it is attributing to the safety of the event and passing traffic in the area which is in the public interest.

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Building Use Requests

The Board then considered a request for use of the Town Hall which was received from the Dunstable Theater Collaborative for June 1st, June 4th, and June 8th, 2017. Seeing no reason to deny the requests the Board determined to move forward.

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to approve the application of the Dunstable Theater Collaborative to use the Town Hall on June 1st, June 4th, and June 8th, 2017. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed without objection.

Minutes

The Board considered the minutes for the meetings held on May 8th, 2017 and May 17th, 2017. Seeing no necessary changes or modifications the Board determined to proceed with adoption of the minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Basbanes to approve the minutes of May 8th, 2017 as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed without objection.

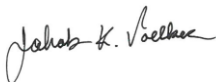
A motion was made by Ms. Basbanes to approve the minutes of May 17th, 2017 as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed without objection.

Warrants & Mail

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

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Basbanes at 8:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by



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

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