

**Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**July 10, 2017**  
**Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827**

**Convened:** 8:00 pm

**Present:** Walter F. Alterisio, chair, Leah D. Basbanes, vice chair, Ronald J. Mikol, member; Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator; Jennifer McKenzie, Ryan McLane, GDRSD School Committee

Mr. Alterisio formally opened the meeting. From there the Board began the discussion by clarifying that the purpose of the meeting is to establish where the Selectmen are vis-à-vis the relationship between the School Committee and the Towns.

There needs to be respect and an agreement or understanding between the parties to do what is in the best interest of the whole community. The relationship between the town and school committee and their roles has been changing over the years. There have been a couple of “town wide” overrides that have benefited the schools, most recently for FY2017. In the past it was a common opinion, often from Groton residents, that Dunstable was not willing to pay their fair share, which is not currently fair or accurate.

In order to continue to have an excellent school system, there has to be a good working relationship between the school committee and town officials. There has been, in the last budget cycle, recognition that if the budget for GDRSD was based solely on what Groton has the ability to pay; it would be financially disastrous for Dunstable. The budget process has to start with the two towns and the GDRSD administration coming together to see what the ability to pay is from all sides, as it was this past year.

Only a decade ago the relationship between the towns was acrimonious. The towns needed to, and have begun to, come together on a path towards collaboration because currently there is not a financially bright future ahead. Nonetheless, Dunstable remains committed to always meeting its obligation to GDRSD.

Those present felt that this was a good diagnostic discussion. The focus of discussion then briefly shifted to the values of Dunstable’s residents. It was emphasized that it is through understanding these values that the Board of Selectmen and School Committee can work to focus efforts on providing services that fit them. It was then agreed that there needs to be greater collaboration between the various partners and stakeholders in the discussion to move forward successfully.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm

Respectfully Submitted by

*Tracey Hutton*  
Town Administrator

*Approved and adopted on 7/26/17*