

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
November 7, 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; Brian Falk, Town Counsel

Discussion of Town Meeting Procedures

The Board started off by determining who would make each motion for the articles, and light discussion over the presentation. Mr. Meehan of Advisory Board will make the motion for Article 1. Christine Muir of the Advisory Board will make the motion for Article 2. Article 3's motion will be done by Ms. Basbanes. Article 4 motion will be made by Mr. Alterisio. Article 5's motion will be made by Mr. Mikol. Article 6's motion will be made by Mr. McLane of the School Committee. In this case, the motion will be made, the Board will set out its position and then Advisory Board its. Ms. Hutton reported that there is a division on whether to support this article. The Board is not in favor with the article as written while the Advisory Board has just voted in favor of it. There was a question as to changing the article on the floor. Mr. Falk advised against this, but noted the motion can differ on the floor from what is prepared assuming it is in the four corners of the article on the warrant and the Town Moderator agrees. The Board went over some of the concerns it has with Article 6 and the confusion that there is between the town and the School Committee on what MGL allows for the funding of the Capital Stabilization funds. Mr. Falk elaborated further on those differences under MGL.

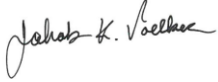
The Board then discussed how the proposed stabilization fund would be funded and what options the town would have in response to the school districts requests. Mr. Falk went into some of the options for the town including what DOR and DLS have said in their guidance on such funds. One option is a general override for the school budget as a single number with a portion going into that stabilization fund. One of the Boards concern about loss of control over the fund is the fact that although a two thirds majority is required of the School Committee to expend funds, the Dunstable only controls about 28 percent of the voting power on the committee, so if the Groton members are unified, once the money is in the fund Dunstable loses influence over the money. That coupled with possible creativity by the committee on what constitutes a capital need, is disconcerting. Although, the Board conceptually supports the notion of capital stabilization for the school district, the how part of the way it is funded and handled concerns the Board significantly. From there discussion shifted back to the motions. Article 7's motion will be made by Mr. Mikol. Article 8's motion will be made by Mr. Alterisio. Article 9's motion will be made by Ms. Basbanes. Article 10's motion will be made by Mr. Alterisio. A member of the Recreation Commission will do the motion for Article 11. Article 12's motion will be made by Ms. Basbanes. Mr. Falk agreed to explain and elaborated what Article 12 is about since the Town Clerk, who requested the article, is not be present at this town meeting.

Mr. Falk briefly elaborated on the purpose of the article, went over a few scenarios he can give, and generally explained the whole process. The Board had some questions about accommodations for people to register to vote on Saturdays. Mr. Falk explained that this article would preclude this. Every deadline that falls on a Saturday would have to fall on Mondays and not Saturdays. The Board inquired about implications outside of voter registration for this. Mr. Falk went into a little bit more detail. Ms. Hutton noted that anything that falls under calendar days could conceivably fall on a Saturday and this will avoid that. From there the Board turned towards inquiring with Town Counsel about how to elect a temporary Town Clerk for the meeting. Mr. Falk detailed how the nomination process works, and how the vote will occur. The Board asked if there is only one nominee if ballots still have to occur. Mr. Falk explained that the statute requires there to be a ballot, since it clearly states: "elected by ballot." And, he noted, it is the Board that counts the ballots. Not every voter must cast a ballot, so long as there is quorum and enough voters do. The Board then clarified on more details on how the ballots are to be collected and who the nominee should be. Ms. Hutton noted that John Callahan has agreed to be the nominee; once elected he is sworn in by the Moderator and then he swears in the tellers and reads the warrant. Mr. Callahan has been prepared already by the Town Clerk for this situation. He should be ready. The Board decided to end discussion there.

Approved and adopted on 12/18/17

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Alterisio at 6:45 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Basbanes and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jakob K. Voelker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

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

Approved and adopted on 12/18/17