

**Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard  
Meeting Minutes  
June 11, 2018  
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827**

**Convened:** 7:05 pm

**Present:** Leah D. Basbanes, chair, Ronald J. Mikol, vice chair, James E. Tully, member; Tracey Hutton

**Information session for the Special Election at the Town Hall in Dunstable**

Board opened the meeting at 7:05 pm and stated that this information session is to answer questions regarding the June 26<sup>th</sup> Special Election ballot items that residents may have, but it is not a forum to debate or reconsider these issues. The Board gave a brief synopsis on each of the 3 items, the purchase of a fire truck, the purchase of Dumont Land and the Marijuana Bylaw. The Board then opened the meeting to the public to ask questions. The visual presentation that was shown at the Annual Town Meeting was presented on these three items.

Ballot question 1: Purchase of the Engine 2 Fire Truck. The Fire Chief explained the purpose of the truck and the need. The old truck is 30 years and difficult and expensive to repair. The new pumper truck would be compatible with the existing trucks, have a foam component which is more effective in putting out fires. It would allow the Fire Department to provide assistance to other towns who currently assist us. The truck it is replacing would be used for forest fires. One question concerning the fire truck was will it fit in the fire station garage doors. The Fire Chief confirmed that the truck was designed to fit in the garage doors.

The Fire Chief explained that the debt would be for 5 years. It would be approx. \$84 first year per household and then decrease. This will likely not be added to the tax rate until FY20 or FY21 depending on how long it takes to build the truck. Payment would not be due until delivery of the truck.

**With no further questions regarding the fire truck, the next ballot question was discussed**

Ballot question 2: The Selectboard gave a brief overview of the property and potential future uses of the Dumont property on Lowell St. The slide presentation shown at Town Meeting was presented. It is a 73.8 acre parcel with a 10,200 square foot garage. The garage and immediate surrounding area would be used for the highway department and all of its vehicles, equipment, materials and salt shed, storage of fire truck and equipment, municipal offices (Veterans, Parks, Water, and others). Agricultural field would remain as such to keep in line with the Scenic Gateway. The property could also have near-future use as a solar field, as well as future use for “beginners” and “enders” housing, cemetery expansion in the more distant future. The Board stated that these are not definitive plans, but are seriously considered future use as this parcel has a lot of potential to meet some needs of the town. The Boards are trying plan long term. A resident asked the question if an appraisal had been done on the property. It was answered that an appraisal had not been done. An appraisal is not required unless State funds are being used to purchase. Another resident further explained that many of properties the town has purchased have not had appraisals done. One example is the Town Common parcel. It is believed that there is sufficient information available to understand the value of this property and the garage on it. Knowing what it would cost just to build a new garage like this, the asking price of \$2.6 million for the land and the garage seems reasonable. A question was asked as to how suited is the site for residential development. The property is open, flat, and soil test pits where dug throughout. The soil is sand and gravel and no water was observed in any hole. They were dug to at least at 8’ feet in depth. It is very likely residential buildings could be constructed here.

A question about zoning was posed about any need for rezoning. There was concern that the property is residential but has been used commercially. It is currently residential but would become municipal if purchased. It was thought that if residential units are to be put in, residential zoning would need to be re-established for that. An abutter asked how long the current owners had been operating the trucking business there. It was replied that it has been at least 30 years. The abutter expressed concern that having the Highway Department would have trucks going in and out at all hours especially during storm events and the noise and

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activity would be overbearing to the abutters. The abutter felt that the Board is not considering that impact and his property value would be decreased. The Board thanked him for making them aware of his concerns and responded that they would try to accommodate him to reduce truck noise if possible perhaps. Another resident expressed that this abutter has for many years been living next to a trucking company which likely had more traffic than the highway department would generate. The Board was asked if this is a onetime offer to the town and what will happen if the town votes no. It was stated that this is in fact a onetime offer. This was confirmed by one of the owners present. If the town votes no, the owner will sell the property. It would be put on the market in the fall of this year. The property has been considered for sale as a residential subdivision of up to 14 lots as shown on a draft preliminary subdivision plan the owners provided. The question of what the debt would be per household was asked. It was stated the bond would be 20 years. The cost per household would be \$206 the first year and would decrease each year. It is still planned to sell the current Highway Department property on Pleasant Street with proceeds put to this, and to apply most of the funds from the sale of a portion of the 91 River St parcel.

**The Board asked if there were any more questions regarding this ballot question. Being none, discussion moved onto the Marijuana bylaw question.**

Ballot question 3: Planning Board representative explained the purpose of the bylaw is to regulate Marijuana Establishments for public health and safety purposes, and to minimize adverse impacts on the town character. He then gave a brief narrative of the by-law and why the Planning Board crafted the by-law this way. Because Dunstable was a “Yes” town, the majority of the Board felt that while there is some business opportunity for this product, it also needed strict regulation. There could be some income to the town from the required community compact agreement. The town would receive up to 3% of business profits. The by-law also defines marijuana as not being an agricultural product and not subject to the Right to Farm By-Law, therefore allowing regulation of it. The question of what would happen if the Town votes “No” on this ballot? The reply was that the town would be open for business under the State Marijuana Law and the Cannabis Control Commission regulations. All establishments including retail could be opened here. As a “Yes” town, a zoning bylaw is required to regulate marijuana establishments. Under this bylaw, no retail establishment is allowed, but all other establishments would be. Tier 1 (5000 square feet canopy) establishments would be permitted by Special Permit in zoning districts. There are strict guidelines and regulations. An establishment building cannot be closer than 200’ from a residential dwelling or 500’ from a school, playground, daycare, church, park, playing field, place where children congregate, etc. Tier 2 (5001 square feet – 10,000 square feet canopy) allowed by Special Permit in B3 zoning district only. The entire by-law is written on the ballot.

A question about whether the special permit can be transferred from one person to the next. The by-law states that the special permit is non-transferrable to another owner or operator without an amendment to the special permit with all application information required and a noticed public hearing. A resident then asked if there has been anyone interested in growing in town. The Board answered that there is active interest on a property on Valley St.

With no further questions on this ballot question, there was a motion made by Ms. Basbanes, seconded by Mr. Tully, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm.

Submitted by,



Leah D. Basbanes  
Chair, Dunstable Selectboard

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