

Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2018
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827

Convened: 8:30 am

Present: Leah D. Basbanes, chair, Ronald J. Mikol, vice chair, James E. Tully, James W. Dow, Chief of Police; Brian Rich, Fire Chief; Mike Martin, Tree Warden

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Quit Claim Deed for Donation of 108 & 114 Pleasant Street

Organization of Municipal Bodies, Employee Job Descriptions, Town Administrator & Administrative Assistant

Due to Mr. Haddad's illness, the Board decided to postpone discussion of these agenda items until the September 11th, 2018. The Board has received some communication from Mr. Haddad regarding changes to the Board's Administrative Assistants job description and job title, but the Board felt that it would be best to discuss the topic more in depth with Mr. Haddad present. The Board was also interested in seeing more information on the Town Administrators position and job description.

Vote to Authorize the Chair to Accept a Deed and Execute any Closing Documents Necessary to Accept the Gift to Land, as Subject to an Agreement on the Donation – 108 & 114 Pleasant Street

The Board reviewed the documents provided by Town Counsel and determined that given the time sensitivity of this matter, that it needed to be done sooner rather than later. As a result the Board determined to approve and sign the documents. After having reviewing both the Donation Agreement and the deed, the Board felt comfortable with signing. There were two questions from Town Counsel; one pertained to whether or not the town should procure a Municipal Lien Certificate and the other to whether or not the town should procure title insurance. In Town Counsel's experience most towns eschew both as the town is already aware of any outstanding taxes that might be due on a property and the town has legal remedies available to it for any title issues that might arise which are not ordinarily available to private purchasers. The Board determined that an MLC would not need to be applied for having been advised by the Treasurer/Collector that there were no outstanding taxes due on the property. The Board also felt that title insurance was not necessary noting that Town Counsel is correct inasmuch as municipalities due indeed have a broad base of tools available to them to settle any title disputes. Mr. Voelker then asked if the Board could make the a formal motion, which was recommended by Town Counsel, to empower the Chair to sign documents relating to this matter just in case for some reason Counsel needs to make a correction or modification that might necessitate resigning. The Board agreed that this action would be prudent.

A motion was made by Mr. Mikol to authorize the Chair to accept the deed from Mr. Simmons on behalf of the Board of Selectmen and the Town of Dunstable, and execute any closing documents necessary to complete the acceptance of this gift of land, subject to the restrictions stipulated in the Donation Agreement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tully and passed unanimously.

Fire Grant from FEMA

Chief Rich spoke briefly to the Board about a recruit and retention grant from FEMA. It's for a \$150,000 over four years and will pay for gear, pay for firefighter's physicals and training at the Fire Academy as well as signage and other information. The Board had some questions about new volunteers, how the training works, and the average retention. Chief Rich spoke briefly about how long firefighters stay, noting its usually at least four years.

Injury on Duty

Chief Dow reported to the Board that one of his part time officers was injured on duty. Some paperwork will have to be filled out with the town's insurer. This prompted the Board to ask the Chief about where things stand in relation to his plan to get a waiver to bring one of the part time officers on as a full time officer for this year. Chief Dow explained that he is still working on the subject, but noted some of the challenges. This prompted some light

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discussion regarding the Union contract and the salary rates for police officers. Chief Dow noted the overall compensation, in particular the schedule, can be challenging to find the right fit. It's not necessarily an issue with pay as it is other things. The Board recalled some of the negotiations with the Union and the challenges for both sides. Chief Dow felt that ultimately he has the right tools to hire, it's just going to take some time to find the right fit because part of retention is an officer liking the town and who wants to work in the kind of community that Dunstable is. Right now the department is just in a perfect storm with two officers out, one on military training and another on 111F, and one out on arbitration. So things are a bit short right now, but that should change in the next few months as the officer on military training will return and the officer out on 111F is also expected back. Meanwhile the department is busy, with arrests and other calls increasing. The department had 4 arrests just last week. This has involved chases, and other situations. Thankfully the department has been able to transfer some of these arrests to the county jail since some have bench warrants. The Board asked how many are arrests on warrants. Chief Dow responded that the rate is about 20 percent for warrant arrests. In the meantime, Chief Dow is continuing to work on the part timer to temporary full time plan. He hopes to have a decision for the Board by its next meeting.

Trees at 91 River Street

Mr. Martin requested that when trees are cut they be put on the town's property at 91 River Street. The goal is to avoid the situation that occurred last time, which resulted in the town having to pay for the removal. The Board wanted to ensure that the matter is managed to ensure that trees that go in go out. Mr. Martin said the cost really is with moving machinery. There was a question of whether Nichols is still bringing in things to that property. Mr. Martin said no, the only thing he's done is some wood chipping which was at Mr. Martin's request. What he tries to do is see to it being chipped. 91 River Street is simply a holding area with the trees to be disposed elsewhere. Part of the confusion in the past was whether the trees being held there were town trees or not. Mr. Martin assured the Board that they would be town trees and they would only be held temporarily. His Tree Warden budget would pay for the costs associated with disposal.

Rt. 113 Project

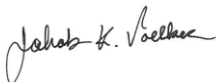
Mr. Martin gave a brief update on the project reporting that we may be able to get some Commonwealth funding for work relating to the water line under the road. It is not set in stone or in writing, but there is a test that the town can do that might help make the Commonwealth more amenable. The Board felt that finding the \$2,000 cost would be findable within the budget. Mr. Martin promised to look into the matter further.

Next Personnel Board Meeting

The last meeting was held on July 25th, 2018. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 30th, 2018 at 4:00 pm. The agenda for the upcoming meeting will be focused on the Highway Department employees from Laborers, the Administrative Assistant, the Highway Superintendent and the Police Departments Administrative Assistant. This prompted some discussion regarding notice of meetings and the Boards conclusion that more notification to various interested town parties needs to occur. The Board noted that some of these conversations may be becoming circular. To help avoid this, Advisory Board should be included as part of these kinds of questions.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Mikol at 9:07 am. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tully and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by



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

Approved and adopted on 9/4/18