

**Town of *Dunstable* Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2018
Town Hall, Dunstable, MA 01827**

Convened: 8:00 am

Present: Leah D. Basbanes, chair, James E. Tully, member; Mark Haddad, Interim Town Administrator; James W. Dow, Chief of Police;

Update on Town Governance Committee

Mr. Haddad started off by reporting where things stand. So far all the boards, committees, and commissions that have been requested for designees have put forward candidates with the lone exception of the Library Trustees. Two Department Heads have been selected, and have accepted placement on the committee. These are the Town Accountant and the Chief of Police. Notices have been put forward in the *Neighbor to Neighbor* and the *Groton Herald* for 3 at large members from the community. To date no one has come forward. There was then discussion of who to have on the committee including whether a Library Trustee should be on it or not. Mr. Haddad suggested that someone should be on the committee from Library given the uniqueness of how that particular department works. It was suggested then that the Library Director be asked instead of the Trustees. It was further decided that Mr. Nelson on the Advisory Board would be asked to serve on this committee as well. The Board then turned to discussion of who should be the Board's representative to the committee. It was proposed that Mr. McLane would make a good candidate given his unique perspective as member of both the Cemetery Commission and the School Committee as well as his work as a Town Administrator in the Town of Hubbardston. Mr. Voelker and Mr. Haddad agreed to work jointly to contact the Library Director along with Mr. McLane and Mr. Nelson to determine their willingness to serve.

Approval of Water Operator Requests For Proposals

The town is currently under a 90-day contract with SWSS thanks to the 90-Day Declaration by Mr. Haddad pursuant to his authority as acting Chief Procurement Officer under the provisions of MGL Chap. 30B, Section 8. Mr. Haddad reported on where things stand with the RFP noting that he has drafted it and it is now with Town Counsel for review. So far Town Counsel has made recommendations and changes which are being worked on. Advertising will start at the end of the month with bids due in early November. The Board was pleased with where things stand and asked about where the Water Commission stands with things. Mr. Haddad responded that SWSS is working well as the water operator.

Town Administrator Search Committee

Mr. Haddad reported that resumes are due on October 26th, 2018. He has asked the Groton HR Director if they are willing to help with the process. The idea is to not have the Board involved in the first step apart from the member of the Board that will sit on the screening committee. The resumes will still be sent to the Board to look at each as part of the process. There was some discussion of how the last search committee for the position worked and who was on it. Mr. Haddad turned discussion back to the current committee and process. He noted that he is still working on the budget. On the meantime, he is wary of hiring the wrong person and it may be necessary to repeat this process if the candidates are satisfactory. Chief Dow agreed noting that years back his department made the mistake of hiring when not happy with the crop of candidates and it didn't turn out well. It was determined that Mr. Nelson, Mr. McLane, and the Town Accountant and Library Director would be asked to serve on this committee as well as the Governance Committee. It was further determined that Mr. Murphy, the Personnel Board chair, should be asked as well.

Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen & Town Administrator's Reclassification, Job Description, Hours, Title, and Scope of Office

Mr. Haddad went over his prior recommendations regarding the changes to title and wages for this position. He stated that he would like these changes to be effective November 1st, 2018. The funding component for this fiscal year would be to take it out of the Town Administrators line. He asked if he must go to the Advisory Board or the Personnel Board first. Chief Dow noted that it may require discussion with Personnel Board. Mr. Haddad then went over the Personnel By-Law and Policy with the Board. It was decided a joint meeting should be scheduled with Personnel Board as part of the Board's next regularly scheduled evening meeting which would be on October 30th, 2018. In the meantime it was agreed that Mr. Haddad will ensure the funding is in the budget and identify all sources of it.

Approved and adopted on 10/30/18

Town Building(s) Maintenance

Mr. Haddad started off by noting that it appears that there may be some need to seek clarification regarding officials responsible for the maintenance of town owned buildings. Ordinarily buildings are maintained by the departments which use them and their elected appointed authorities. This would mean the Highway Superintendent would be responsible for the Highway Garage under the oversight of the Roads Commission. Similarly the Library Director would be responsible for the Library subject to the oversight of the Library Trustees. Fire and Police would manage their respective stations under the authority of the Board and the Town Hall would usually be managed by the Town Administrator also subject to the authority of the Board. Mr. Haddad stressed that there should be procedures in place. There was then some discussion of whether it had been settled that Mr. Mikol would be handling building maintenance in the absence of a permanent Town Administrator. It was advised that it is important that those in the Town Hall be informed prior to work being done so that there is no surprise. Mr. Haddad felt that the maintenance should be handled by the Town Administrator and would be willing to see to it being done as part of his work as the Interim Town Administrator. He then suggested that Mr. Mikol be the Board's liaison for the matter and promised he would work with Mr. Mikol to that end. The Board agreed that Department Heads should generally be in charge of buildings when those buildings fall under their departments care, i.e. the Fire Station under the Fire Chief and the Police Station under the Police Chief, and the rest should fall under the Town Administrator's office. It also being understood that the Library Trustees are responsible for the Library and the Roads Commissioners are responsible for the Highway Garage.

Police Administrative Assistant & Part Time Police Officer

With sadness, Chief Dow informed the Board that Ms. Georges has put in her notice. She has taken a position in private industry. Despite attempts to change her position and raise her pay, the town has been unable to retain her. He also announced that a Part Time Police Officer has also put in notice. There was then discussion of how to handle the hiring process. Chief Dow asked for permission to advertise in the meantime. The Board had no issue with that suggesting he begin the process. Mr. Haddad and Mr. Voelker both agreed to assist. Chief Dow noted that the biggest part of the issue is the Administrative Assistant position. There are a lot of details that go into that job and while there is no assistant he will have to pick up the slack. Mr. Haddad noted some worry about seeing off duty details tracked and continued to be paid properly. This prompted discussion of the requirements of the position. This led into discussion of how the department is structured with low personnel. Chief Dow suggested he might be able to pay Ms. Georges to work on Saturdays for a few weeks to keep things going for now. The position is 32 hours a week and pays around \$38,000 a year with benefits such as vacation, sick, and personal time.

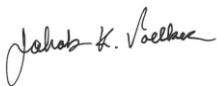
James E. Tully made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purposes of a discussing Real Estate in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A §21(a)6, and with the intention not to return to ordinary session afterwards. The motion was seconded by Leah D. Basbanes. The motion was adopted without objection by Leah D. Basbanes and James E. Tully.

James E. Tully made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purposes of a conducting strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A §21(a)2, and with the intention not to return to ordinary session afterwards. The motion was seconded by Leah D. Basbanes. The motion was adopted by majority vote by Leah D. Basbanes and James E. Tully.

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:50 am

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Tully at 9:15 am. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mikol and passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted by



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