Town of Dunstable Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

In attendance: Chair Leah Basbanes, Vice Chair Kieran Meehan, Select Board Member Ron Mikol, Town Administrator Jason Silva, Exec. Assistant Sue Fayne

The meeting was called to order at 9 am by Selectboard Chair Basbanes.

Public Comments

Vice Chair Meehan had 2 items to follow up on. First, he inquired about the status of moving the Blue Textile Recycling Bins to the Highway Garage from its current location next to the Post Office. The owner of the bins will be moving them. Second, he wanted to follow up about the town adding monuments/memorials from recent conflicts, specifically mentioning Afghanistan and Iraq. The space at the front of Town Hall has been looked at before, but there doesn't seem to be any room, so there would need to be a plan for where they could go. The Memorials/Monuments committee will get engaged; they have had a vacancy on that Committee for well over a year. We will get a post out specific to this committee to see if we can recruit a third member and get some traction.

Joan Simmons wanted to share her displeasure in conducting BOS morning meetings. She prefers evening meetings.

Dunstable PFAS Cost Recovery Program - filing claim and joining litigation*

The Board of Selectmen discussed the need to choose a law firm to represent and file claims on behalf of the Town for the PFAS class action cost recovery program against the manufacturers of PFAS. The Board has two draft agreements from SL Environmental Law Group and Napoli Shkolnik PLLC. The drafts have been reviewed by Town Counsel and Counsel's changes to each agreement were accepted by both firms. TA Silva explained the importance of deciding tonight, as there are deadlines coming up for both 3M and Dupont, and we don't want to miss the opportunity to join in the litigation. He stated that both firms are well represented and experienced in this space and seem capable of doing the work. The Town of Pepperell is using Napoli Shkolnik, the Town of Groton is using a firm out of Texas. Town Counsel's recommendation was SL Environmental.

Chair Basbanes appreciated that Hank Naughton from Napoli Shkolnik came to a previous Board of Selectmen meeting to review the PFAS Cost Recovery Program, with the EPA mandating $14.5 billion be available for water remediation. She appreciated his commitment and personal contact.

Vice Chair Meehan stated that he does not have a preference for either firm, both seem capable, but he leans towards SL Environmental due to Town Counsel's recommendation.

Selectman Mikol shared the observation that if the town moves forward with SL Environmental, the 3 towns of Pepperell, Groton and Dunstable will be using 3 different law firms. He stated that he did research on the 2 firms and with positive references, and extensive municipal client list, and the legislative experience of Napoli Shkolnik, his preference is Napoli Shkolnik.

Resident Joan Simmons suggested the Town have its own law firm independent of the other 2 towns. Selectman Mikol replied that the litigation against the manufacturers is significant and based on what he found out, Napoli Shkolnik come highly recommended.

On a **motion** by Selectman Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **VOTED to enter** a legal services agreement with Napoli Shkolnik for the purpose of investigating and assessing potential claims arising out of the presence of PFAS contaminants in the Town's drinking water and to provide representation of the Town in any civil action that may be filed in one or more state trial courts or the United States District Court. **The vote was unanimous.**

Annual Re-Appointments*

A list of re-appointments was reviewed by the Board of Selectmen. TA Silva was added to the list as the NMCOG Alternate Representative, with a term to expire in 2025.

Appointments – Staff, Committee's, Boards, & Commissions		June 11, 2024	
Committee/Commission/Board/Staff	**Name**	**Term (Years)**	**Term Expiration**
CPC (Affordable Housing Designee)	Jon Hughes	1	2025
CPC (BOS Designee)	Leah Basbanes	1	2025
CPC (Conservation Designee)	Alan Starbird	1	2025
CPC (Historical Designee)	Carol Bacon	1	2025
CPC (Parks Designee)	Tiffany Naughton	1	2025
CPC (Planning Board Designee)	Alan Chaney	1	2025
Economic Development Committee	Linda Scully	1	2025
Economic Development Committee	Daniel Tully	1	2025
NMCOG (Planning Board Designee)	Jim Wilkie	1	2025
Recreation Commissioners	Eddie Hastings	5	2026
Historical Commission	Brian Whetstone	3	2027
Memorials & Monuments	Joe Dean	1	2025
Memorials & Monuments	Kieran Meehan	1	2025
Animal Control Officer/Animal Inspector	John Greenhalgh	1	2025
Conservation Commission	Juan Amodei	5	2029

On a **motion** by Selectman Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **VOTED to appoint** town officials, board and committee members as presented in the document entitled "Appointments – Staff, Committees, Boards, & Commissions" dated June 11, 2024, with the addition of Jason Silva as the Alternate NMCOG Representative. **The vote was unanimous.**

Director of Senior Services w/added Recreation responsibilities*

With the retirement of Anne Fenochetti as the Director of Senior Services, and the request by the Recreation Commission to have additional administrative support, there is an opportunity to add recreation responsibilities to the Senior Services Director position, increasing the overall hours to 17 hours per week.

TA Silva explained that Tiffany Naughton, Chair of the Recreation Commission, had mentioned that they would benefit from administrative support for the Parks/Rec Commissions. With that in mind, and the recommendation by the Economic Development Committee to have an event committee to continue the momentum from the 350th Committee to plan and execute town events, having someone focused on programs in addition to the Senior Services responsibilities, could work well together.

The foundation of the position will remain Senior Services, adding hours to support the Parks/Rec Commission for administrative support, creating some recreational programs, with the hope that some could be revenue generating that would fund the additional hours of the position.

The Parks & Recreation Commissions are meeting the evening of June 11th to review the job description and ensure they are in agreement.

Chair Basbanes thinks it's a great idea, as it will help support and address the Economic Development Committee's recommendation and can also potentially be a link between the other committees that have events and programs to ensure everyone is in sync.

Vice Chair Meehan wondered if 17 hours is enough to cover all these responsibilities. The group discussed the ebb and flow of the recreation-portion of the position, where there could be weeks of low activity/hours needed and then some that may be higher. The right candidate will need to be able to work on creating that balance. In addition, they will need to continue to heavily rely on volunteer efforts.

TA Silva explained that one item he will clarify for the position is the reporting structure, which could be confusing with multiple boards/commissions involved.

On a **motion** by Selectman Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **VOTED to approve** the Senior Services and Recreation Program Director job description, as presented on June 11, 2024. **The vote was unanimous.**

MassDOT Bike Signs

A continuation of the discussion in a previous meeting regarding the Bike Safety signs that were being offered by MassDOT for free to communities. A resident asked if these could be erected in town. The surrounding towns have them displayed as you come into their towns.

The only cost associated with the signs would be the labor to put them up. When asked his opinion, Highway Supervisor Dave Tully shared that the roads are too narrow and there are spots in town that need to have stop signs, that have not been approved. That would be his priority.

Chair Basbanes, Vice Chair Meehan, and Selectman Mikol all agreed that having 2-3 signs placed strategically at entry points into the town for awareness would be a good idea.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

The MUD District was approved so the next step is going to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The town will hopefully be getting assistance from Mass Housing. TA Silva has a meeting with them next week to review the projects with them.

The Attorney General's Office decision on the Town Center District Amendment was returned and they approved the amendment as written except for prohibiting Lottery Ticket sales.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Fayne
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator
and Board of Selectmen