Town of Dunstable Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 16, 2024

In attendance: Chair Leah Basbanes, Vice Chair Kieran Meehan, Select Board Member Ron Mikol, Town Administrator Jason Silva

The meeting was called to order at 5 PM by Chair Basbanes.

2. **Public Comments**

There were no public comments offered.

3. **Approval of Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes – June 25, 2024***

On a **motion** made by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan, it was **VOTED to approve** the meeting minutes of June 25, 2024.

4. **Election Worker Appointments and Master Plan Implementation Committee Alternate***

Election workers for the upcoming elections were presented to the Board of Selectmen along with an appointment of an alternate member to the Master Plan Implementation Committee.

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 54, Section 12, it was **VOTED to approve** the appointment of the following election workers with a term to expire August 31, 2025:

Mary Dow
Linda Cutler
Brian Cutler
Lynn Denyse
Anne Fenochetti
Holly Woods
Ann-Marie Wright
Delaney Auger

And also **VOTED to appoint** John O'Brien an alternate member of the Master Plan Implementation Committee. **The vote was unanimous.**

5. **Appointment of Advisory Representative to Affordable Housing Committee***

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan it was **VOTED to approve** Matt Naughton as the Advisory Board representative on the Affordable Housing Committee. **The vote was unanimous.**

6. **Appointment of Senior Services and Recreation Program Director – Chuck Raffoni**

Ms. Basbanes discussed the redefined position now including recreation programming combined with senior services. She introduced Chuck Raffoni, the interview team's recommendation for the position, and asked him to introduce himself.

Mr. Raffoni provided an overview of his background as a yoga instructor and business owner and expressed his excited to have an impact in the community serving in this new role.

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan it was **VOTED to approve** the hiring of Charles-Anthony Raffoni to serve as the Town's Senior Services and Recreation Program Director.

7. **PermitLink Administrative Fee Increase**

Mr. Silva explained that PermitLink, the Town's permitting software, has increased their transaction fee charged to the Town from $10 to $12. The recommendation presented to the Board was for the Town to increase its fee by the same amount to cover the increased cost.

Mr. Mikol asked a question about the functionality of PermitLink and the permitting process in Town. He asked if there were still people who come in to Town Hall for permits rather than use the online system. It was explained that there are still some people who come to Town Hall to pull permits. Because the Town currently doesn't allow payments to be made through PermitLink, there are times when it causes confusion for applicants so they come in to make payments. Not accepting payments through PermitLink and, instead taking online payments through UniPay, a separate system, also caused increased administrative staff time.

The Town has been working with PermitLink to transition to taking payments directly through the system. It was explained that Sue Fayne has been working to make this happen for months and we hope to roll it out very soon which is expected to improve user experience, reduce applicants pulling permits in-person, and reduce administrative staff time.

Mr. Meehan suggested we revisit this issue when considering future fee adjustments.

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan it was **VOTED to** approve an increase of the processing fee for permit applicants using PermitLink from $10 to $12 to cover the increase in the transactional fee assessed to the Town by PermitLink. **The vote was unanimous.**

8. **Designer Selection Standards***

It was explained to the Board that the Town needs to adopt Designer Selection Procedures in order to select a designer/architect to advance the exterior restoration of the Union Building. While architectural services are exempt from Chapter 30B, for projects over $300,000 with design fees over $30,000, municipalities are required to follow the Designer Selection Law. The first step, is for the Select Board to adopt these designer selection procedures. The process was reviewed with the Board, explaining that with the designer selection law process, the Town will need to issue a Request for Qualifications and then, after ranking responses, the Town will then negotiate a price.

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan it was **VOTED to** adopt the Designer Selection Procedures as presented and dated July 16, 2024.**The vote was unanimous.**

9. **Town Financial Policies**

Mr. Silva presented to the Board that over two meetings, the Advisory Board reviewed and discussed the financial policies for the Town, and approved them at their meeting on July 10. The policies are meant to set standards for how the Town conducts business and set budgetary best practices.

Mr. Mikol asked what the process was and who prepared the policies. Mr. Silva answered that provided a draft to the Advisory Board, they reviewed and discussed them, made changes, and then approved. Mr. Meehan asked if the language should provide more flexibility in the case we are unable to comply with the policies. It was discussed that there is flexibility built into the policies to allow for some discretion but also set budgeting parameters so that decisions are based on best practices.

Mr. Meehan also asked if Town Meeting should have an opportunity to discuss the policies since the charter was not supported by Town Meeting. Ms. Basbanes mentioned that all the meetings to review the policies were open to the public and the charter is a different process.

Mr. Mikol requested that approval dates were included in the final document and that page numbers were added.

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan it was **VOTED** to adopt Financial Policies as presented and adopted by the Advisory Board. T**he vote was unanimous.**

10. Appointment: Field Driver

There was a brief discussion about the need for a Field Driver in the case there is a loose animal or livestock and the Town incurs costs to capture the animal. Having an appointed Field Driver allows the Town to charge the owner any costs incurred to capture the animal. The recent situation with "Silk" the cow was discussed as it relates to this appointment.

On a **motion** by Mr. Mikol and **seconded** by Mr. Meehan it was **VOTED** to appoint John Greenhalgh as Field Driver for a term to expire June 30, 2025. T**he vote was unanimous.**

11. Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Silva reviewed a few items contained in the Town Administrator's Report including draft FY25 Goals and Objectives and also FY24 accomplishments.

There was a question about the water main/PFAS Mitigation project and the start date from the audience, Harold Simmons. It was explained that there was a recent public information session at the middle school, that the project design is 90% complete, and the start of the project is anticipated to be in the fall. They are still going through the permitting process, which requires an inter-basin transfer.

There was some discussion about the high school recently approving a cell tower on their property and the possibility of that affecting the Town's ability to secure interest in installing a cell tower on the water tank.

12. Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

No other items were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jason Silva
Town Administrator

Approved by Selectboard 8/13/24