Town of Dunstable Select Board
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

In attendance: Chair Leah Basbanes, Vice Chair Kieran Meehan, Select Board Member Ron Mikol, Town Administrator Jason Silva; Executive Assistant Sue Fayne, Board of Health Chair Maria Amodei

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

Public Comment

Vice Chair Meehan raised a question about the PFAS mitigation waterline construction process. He mentioned that a resident had inquired about assistance with water filtration. The board discussed that residents should reach out to the school system for information, as the DEP and schools were continuing to provide bottled water and some residences had on-site filtration and mediation systems based on contamination levels.

TA Jason Silva clarified that it was an ongoing process. Chair Leah Basbanes emphasized that this issue would be ongoing and options should be available for residents.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 3, 2025*

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to approve** the meeting minutes from December 3, 2024 as submitted. **The vote was unanimous.**

Appointment: Amy Watson to the Board of Library Trustees*

Amy Watson introduced herself as a new resident who moved to Dunstable in November of the previous year. She highlighted her qualifications, including a master's degree in library science from Simmons University, work experience in a law library, and previous experience as a trustee for the Lowell Public Library. Watson expressed her interest in contributing to the Dunstable library and her perspective as a multi-generational library user.

Library Director Maureen Strauss expressed support for Watson's appointment, noting that the community would be lucky to have her on the board. Maureen & the Select Board also acknowledged John Callahan's long service of 20 years on the Library Board of Trustees.

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to** appoint Amy Watson to the Board of Library Trustees, with a term to expire on May 20, 2025. **The vote was unanimous.**

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Resolution and Adoption*

TA Jason Silva explained that the Hazard Mitigation Plan had been finalized after an extensive process, alongside the MVP plan. He noted that the plan had gone through reviews with MEMA and FEMA, and was now ready for adoption pending the Select Board's approval.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40 Section 4, on a **motion** made by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to approve** the resolution as presented adopting the Town of Dunstable 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. **The vote was unanimous.**

The board discussed making the plan available online for public access. Jason Silva mentioned that the document was approximately 160 pages long and that he would send a redline version to show the updates made to Joan Simmons, per her request.

Updated Liquor License Application*

Sue Fayne presented an updated liquor license application form. She explained that the new form included processes for transfers, changes of location, and other standard occurrences related to liquor licenses. The board discussed the approval process, noting that all relevant departments (police, fire, health, building) should have the opportunity to review and sign off on changes.

The board members debated the necessity of full sign off for minor changes like business name updates. They concluded that having all departments review changes was important, as each might have different concerns or insights.

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to approve** the updated Town of Dunstable Liquor License application, dated November 21, 2024. **The vote was unanimous.**

Banner Policy Update*

Sue Fayne presented an updated Banner policy, which had been simplified to focus solely on banners, removing references to temporary signs at town hall. The board discussed liability concerns related to banner installation and removal. Ron Mikol suggested obtaining proper liability waivers from the town's insurer.

The board also discussed the current practices for installing banners, noting that various local companies and volunteers have been involved in the process. They acknowledged the need for proper safety measures and insurance coverage.

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to approve** the updated Town of Dunstable Banner Policy, dated November 19, 2024. **The vote was unanimous.**

Textile Blue Bins Location*

Joined by Maria Amodei, Chair of the Board of Health, the Board discussed ongoing issues with the current textile blue bins location. They noted that there had been vandalism and threats to

the vendor, requiring police escorts for bin emptying. Various alternative locations were considered, including:

- The old salt/sand shed on Groton Street
- The Library
- A triangular area across from the post office
- Town land past the cemetery on Main Street

The board debated the pros and cons of each location, considering factors such as visibility, potential for dumping, and community impact. They ultimately decided to explore two options:

- Working with the MUD district developer to place the bins on the side of the road near the post office entrance
- Returning the bins to their previous location if the first option is not feasible

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to** allow the bin relocation to be negotiated by the Town Administrator with the present developer of the MUD district for a permanent or semi-permanent location for the bins. **The vote was unanimous.**

Mural for Town Hall*

TA Jason Silva introduced the idea of creating a mural for the empty space in the town hall where the bulletin board for meeting postings were previously located. The board discussed various options, including:

- Holding a contest for high school students to submit proposals
- Working with the cultural council to select an artist
- Commissioning a local artist

The board members expressed interest in the idea but requested to see examples of similar projects from other towns before deciding. They also discussed the possibility of making the mural a rotating art display or considering a digital display for town announcements and meeting information.

No formal decision was made, and the board agreed to revisit the topic after gathering more information and examples.

2024 Annual Report

TA Jason Silva presented ideas for refreshing the town's annual report. He mentioned looking at examples from other communities and considering ways to make the report more engaging and visually appealing. Suggestions included:

- Hosting a photo contest for residents to submit images for the report's cover
- Exploring different formats and designs used by other towns
- Making the report more accessible online with improved navigation

The board discussed the current printing practices, noting that they printed about 250 copies last year and had about 30 left. They debated the merits of maintaining the current format versus updating it, considering both tradition and the potential for improved engagement.

The board requested to see examples of other towns' reports before making a decision. They also expressed interest in improving the online version of the report to make it more user-friendly and searchable.

No formal decision was made, and the board agreed to review options at a future meeting.

Town Administrator's Report

This agenda item was not discussed

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Fayne
Executive Assistant