Town of Dunstable Select Board
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 26, 2025
5:00PM

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM by Chair Basbanes.

Public Comment

There were no public comments on items that were not on the agenda.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 29, 2025*

The board reviewed the minutes and accepted them as submitted.

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, it was **voted to approve** the meeting minutes from January 29, 2025 as submitted. **The vote was unanimous.**

86 Century Way – Consideration of Disposition

TA Silva presented information about an undeveloped parcel at 86 Century Way that was taken by the town for tax purposes. He explained that it was a two-acre lot with frontage on Century Way and a long strip connecting to property owned by the land trust. The lot was taken through a tax title process, which started in 1996 and was secured by the town in 1999.

David Tully, representing the Land Use Committee, explained their recommendation to consider selling the property. He stated that the committee would like to retain as much land as possible, but this parcel didn't seem to have typical conservation value. The committee saw it as a way to potentially boost the capital budget or facilitate additional leases on other properties, as well as generate some tax revenue for the town.

The board discussed the potential buildability of the lot, noting that there might be some ledge on the property that could require blasting. They also considered the current real estate market and the possibility of interest from neighboring property owners.

Vice Chair Meehan expressed support for selling the property, citing potential financial benefits for the town. The board also discussed the process for disposing of tax title properties, which typically involves an auction.

Joan Simmons inquired about considering the lot for affordable housing. The board discussed this option but concluded that the site might be challenging and costly to develop for affordable housing due to potential ledge issues.

TA Silva agreed to gather more information about the property and the auction process, including reaching out to legal counsel and firms experienced in handling such transactions. He will report back to the board with his findings.

Dunstable Conservation Commission Use of Wetland Protection Act Funds*

Chair Basbanes explained that the Dunstable Conservation Commission was requesting the use of $2,000 from the Wetland Protection Act funds for title searches on two parcels: the Kennedy conservation restriction on High Street and a 1.3-acre lot on Lower Massapoag Pond that the Commission is considering purchasing.

Chair Basbanes clarified that the funds come from filing fees associated with applications to the Conservation Commission and not from the town's general budget. She also provided details about the 1.3-acre lot on Lower Massapoag Pond, explaining that it was surrounded by land already owned by the Conservation Commission and part of the Parkhurst subdivision open space area.

Joan Simmons asked about access to the area, and Chair Basbanes explained that while this purchase wouldn't increase access, there was already a way to reach the area through existing open space land.

On a **motion** by Select Board Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan, In accordance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 131, Section 40, the Wetlands Protection Act, to was **voted to approve** the Conservation Commission to spend $2,000 from the Wetlands Protection Act Fund for legal fee expenses associated with certification of title searches required for acquisition of the Kennedy Conservation Restriction on High Street, and a 1.3-acre lot on Lower Massapoag. **The vote was unanimous.**

Opening of Warrant for Annual Town Meeting May 12, 2025*

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan it was **voted to open** the Warrant for the 2025 Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 12, 2025, and to close the Warrant on Friday, March 28, 2025, at 4 PM. **The vote was unanimous.**

Opt in for Early Voting for Annual Town Election May 20, 2025*

The board discussed the schedule for early voting for the annual town election on May 20, 2025. The proposed dates were Saturday, May 10, and May 12-15, with voting hours from 9 AM to 12 PM on May 10 and 9 AM to 1 PM for the remaining days. The board noted that early voting was successful last year and seemed to have good participation.

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan it was **voted to approve** the Town Clerk's request to offer Early Voting for all local elections in 2025. The vote was unanimous.

Town Administrator Report

TA Silva informed the Select Board of the latest Town Administrator report available in their packets. There was no further discussion.

Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

There were no additional topics raised.

Executive Session: Executive Session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, section 21(a) pursuant to Purpose 2 to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, Jason Silva, Town Administrator and William Farrell, Fire Chief, and Dunstable Police Union, NEPBA, Local 7, and conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, Jason Silva, Town Administrator.*

On a **motion** by Member Ron Mikol and **seconded** by Vice Chair Meehan it was **voted to enter** into Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Purpose 2, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, specifically Jason Silva, the Town Administrator, William Farrell, Fire Chief, and Dunstable Police Union, NEPBA, Local 7, and to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, Jason Silva, the Town Administrator. The Board will not reconvene in open session following Executive Session.
Leah Basbanes, aye; Ronald Mikol, aye; Kieran Meehan aye.
The vote was unanimous.

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 5:34PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Fayne
Executive Assistant