Town of Dunstable
Select Board Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2026

Attendees Included: Chair Ron Mikol, Vice Chair Leah Basbanes Member David Tully, Town Administrator Jason Silva, Executive Assistant Sue Fayne, Residents Ron & Maureen Mayer, Jordan Nolan, and Mary & Anastasios Vouthourelis.

Also Present: Advisory Board – Matt Naughton, Clint Keeney, Charlie Lippman, Harold Simmons, and Tim Stewart (remote.)

Call to Order

Chair Ron Mikol called the meeting to order and reviewed the evening's agenda, including public comments, appointments, public hearings, the FY2028 budget discussion with the Advisory Board, and consideration of the Central Cemetery fence restoration contract.

Public Comment

A resident returned to discuss concerns previously raised regarding neighboring properties, including alleged violations of the Town's junk and nuisance bylaws, outdoor storage issues, condition of structures and fencing, uncovered dumpsters, and perceived impacts on nearby properties.

The resident explained that following a previous Select Board discussion, she had contacted the Town Administrator regarding follow-up efforts. She expressed frustration that the issues remained unresolved and stated that neighbors had raised concerns regarding potential rodent activity near one of the properties.

Chair Ron Mikol acknowledged the concerns and emphasized the distinction between personal preferences regarding a property's appearance and actual violations of Town bylaws. He noted that while certain conditions may be viewed as undesirable by neighbors, enforcement actions must be based on specific bylaw violations. The Chair emphasized the Board's desire to pursue a constructive and collaborative resolution whenever possible while ensuring that any enforceable violations are addressed appropriately.

Vice Chair Leah Basbanes supported a formal review process involving Town officials and cautioned against assuming all concerns would ultimately be determined to be bylaw violations. She noted that interpretation of certain bylaw provisions can be subjective and that enforcement decisions must be based upon objective findings.

Member David Tully agreed that a comprehensive review was the appropriate next step and supported efforts to bring all parties together in an attempt to improve communication and neighborhood relations.

Town Administrator Jason Silva reported that he had already initiated a review of the properties with several Town officials, including representatives from the Police Department, Fire Department, Board of Health, and Building Department. He advised that some improvements had already been observed at the properties in question and that additional site reviews were underway. Mr. Silva stated that he would prepare a written report summarizing departmental observations and recommendations for the Board's consideration.

The Board agreed to place the matter on the November 10, 2026 agenda for further discussion after receiving the Town Administrator's findings. The Board also noted that property owners discussed during the review process should be notified before any formal hearing is considered.

Approval of Minutes

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Member Tully, the board **voted to approve** the meeting minutes from September 24, 2026 and October 6, 2026 as submitted. **The vote was unanimous.**

Appointments

Helene Morgan and Alfred Babcock Memorial Scholarship Committee

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Member Tully, the board **voted to to appoint** Mitchell Leestma to the Helene Morgan and Alfred Babcock Memorial Scholarship Committee for a term expiring November 10, 2029. **The vote was unanimous**.

Associate Zoning Board of Appeals

The Board reviewed the application submitted by Olivia Glennon, who currently serves on other the Union School Building Committee and the Economic Development Committee, for an associate Zoning Board of Appeals seat.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Member Tully, the board **voted to to appoint** Olivia Glennon to the Zoning Board of Appeals – Associate Member, for a term expiring in 2029. **The vote was unanimous**.

Advisory Board Vacancy

The Board discussed candidates interviewed during the previous meeting and considered qualifications related to municipal finance and community involvement.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Member Tully, it was **voted to appoint** Sarah McInnis to fill the vacant Advisory Board seat for the remainder of the term expiring May 18, 2027. **The vote was unanimous**.

The Chair noted that this appointment fills only the remainder of a vacated seat and that the position will be subject to election during the next Town election cycle.

National Grid Pole Petition Hearing

The Board opened the public hearing regarding a National Grid petition to install a utility pole on Pleasant Street Extension associated with electrical infrastructure improvements at the new substation.

James Kanceruk, Distribution Engineer for National Grid, explained that the proposed installation would add a mid-span utility pole supporting a load-break switch. The equipment is intended to improve system reliability and reduce service interruptions during future maintenance activities at the substation.

Board members questioned Mr. Kanceruk regarding the operation of the switch, possible noise impacts, and installation activities. Mr. Kanceruk explained that the switch would operate quietly and would primarily be used to facilitate reliable service during substation work. He stated that installation would require only temporary road closures and all associated work would be performed overhead, with no roadway excavation required.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Member Tully, it was **voted to approve** National Grid's petition to install one JO pole on Pleasant Street Extension and associated equipment necessary to support substation improvements, subject to the rules and regulations of the Dunstable Road Commission. The vote was unanimous.

Hearing no additional public comment, the Board closed the hearing.

Common Victualler License Hearing – Dunstable Pizza

The Board opened the public hearing on the application for a Common Victualler License for Dunstable Pizza, located at 207 Pleasant Street.

The applicant described plans to open a pizza restaurant offering pizza, calzones, sandwiches, salads, fried foods, and related menu items. The proposed establishment will seat approximately twenty customers and operate from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Executive Assistant Sue Fayne confirmed that the application materials were complete. The Board discussed ongoing permitting processes related to septic upgrades and grease separator installation currently under review by the Conservation Commission and Board of Health.

A member of the public raised questions regarding wastewater capacity, septic requirements, and seating limitations associated with serving alcohol. The Board explained that those issues were being addressed through the appropriate permitting process.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Member Tully, it was **voted to approve** the Common Victualler License for Dunstable Pizza, 207 Pleasant St., through December 31, 2026. **The vote was unanimous.**

On-Premises Malt & Wine License Hearing – Dunstable Pizza

The Board opened the continued public hearing regarding Dunstable Pizza's application for an on-premises Section 15 malt and wine license.

Staff confirmed that all required advertisements, filings, and application materials had been submitted.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes, and **seconded** by Member Tully, it was **voted to approve** the application submitted by Dunstable Pizza, Inc., for a Section 15 On-Premises Malt and Wine License at 207 Pleasant Street, with Anastasios Vouthourelis serving as manager, operating Monday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., subject to ABCC approval, receipt of all required permits and sign-offs, fee payment, and CORI approval. **The vote was unanimous.**

The Board welcomed the new business to Dunstable and expressed support for its opening.

Central Cemetery Fence Repair and Repainting Project

Town Administrator Silva reported that the Community Preservation Committee had appropriated funding for restoration of the Central Cemetery fence. Following a procurement process, four bids were received.

The Cemetery Commission and Cemetery Superintendent reviewed the proposals and conducted reference checks. F&F Pro Painting Corp. submitted the lowest responsive bid in the amount of $37,900. References were reported as positive and the company demonstrated experience with similar projects.

Board members discussed the significant difference between the low bid and the next highest proposals. Mr. Silva indicated that he had personally spoken with the contractor and verified the firm's understanding of the project requirements.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes, and **seconded** by Member Tully, it was **voted to award** the Central Cemetery Fence Repair and Repainting Project to F&F Pro Painting Corp. in the amount of $37,900 and authorize the Chair to execute the contract. The vote was unanimous.

FY2028 Budget and Swallow Union Roof Replacement Discussion with Advisory Board

The Select Board conducted a joint discussion with the Advisory Board regarding FY2028 budget planning and the Swallow Union Elementary School roof replacement project.

Town Administrator Silva reported that budget worksheets and capital request forms had been distributed to departments with a November 6 submission deadline. Departments were also asked to identify potential investment requests, staffing needs, and ongoing operating impacts.

Discussion focused heavily on the deteriorating condition of the Swallow Union School roof. Members reviewed recent reports showing significant water infiltration during heavy rain events, including water entering hallways and the gymnasium and causing damage to ceiling materials. Concerns were raised regarding ongoing water damage and potential mold development if repairs are delayed.

The Board reviewed information regarding the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) process. Preliminary project costs are estimated at approximately $2 million. The MSBA reimbursement rate is expected to be approximately 51%, with additional reimbursement available for ADA-compliance improvements associated with the project.

Mr. Silva reported that the Town's share is currently estimated at roughly $1 million. Preliminary calculations indicate the debt exclusion could increase the average residential tax bill by approximately $120 annually over a ten-year borrowing period.

Board members expressed support for developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Select Board, Advisory Board, and School Committee to establish expectations regarding future school spending, long-term planning, and use of any additional funding sources that may become available.

The Board also discussed various override strategies, including:

- One-year versus multi-year override options;
- Level-service and investment-budget scenarios;

- Coordination with override planning in Groton;
- Public education efforts to explain ballot questions and budget impacts;
- Potential Town-side investments in public safety and other municipal services.

Advisory Board members generally expressed support for continuing evaluation of a one-year override strategy while maintaining flexibility to respond to future school district funding decisions. No formal action was taken. The discussion served as guidance for continued budget development.

Items Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

No items were discussed.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:18 p.m.

Approved November 10, 2026