

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2024

A TRUE COPY
ATTEST: Brynn C Durno
Brynn C. Durno, Town Clerk

RETURN OF THE WARRANT

Pursuant to a warrant signed by Select Board Members Ron Mikol, Leah Basbanes and Kiernan Meehan and posted by Constable Steven Tully in five public places as well as attested copies online. We, the inhabitants of the Town of Dunstable whom are qualified to vote in Elections and Town affairs are convening here today at Swallow Union Elementary School on this 26th day of March, A.D. 2024 to act on the following article.

There were – *248 – two hundred and forty-eight registered voters* and *-16- sixteen visitors* in attendance.

The following Election Workers checked in voters for the Special Town Meeting:
Mary Dow, 63 Oak Street Lynn D. Denyse, 436 Forest Street

Moderator Glod opened the Special Town Meeting at 7:24PM. The assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance. He followed with introductions of the Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk as well as the Advisory Board. Rules of order were also explained.

MEETING MINUTES

PRELIMINARY MOTION

Simple Majority required for passage

MOTION: Ron Mikol, Select Board Chair

I move the Moderator allow non-voters or non-residents to speak on issues related to Town Meeting warrant articles where appropriate.

MOTION PASSED BY SIMPLE MAJORITY AS DECLARED BY THE MODERATOR

Presentations were given by the Town Administrator, Jason Silva followed by the School Committee Dunstable Representative, Lacey McCabe and Kristin DeFrancisco from the Groton Dunstable Regional School District.

The assembly of voters were invited to ask questions. Discussions ensued.

ARTICLE 1 - Operating Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, or borrow pursuant to any applicable statute, or any combination thereof, to fund the various departments, boards, committees, commissions, and other operating expenses of the Town for Fiscal Year 2025 beginning July 1, 2024, or take any action in relation thereto.

Sponsored by the Select Board and Advisory Board

MOTION: *I move that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $13,671,027 and transfer from Free Cash the sum of $474,343, for a total of $13,992,812 to fund the various departments, boards, committees, commissions, and other operating expenses of the Town for the Fiscal Year 2025, beginning July 1, 2024, in the sums listed on lines 1 through 71 in the FY25 Budget Worksheet in the printed budget handout made available at*

this Town Meeting, contingent upon the passage of a Proposition 2 ½ General Override ballot question under General Laws Chapter 59, § 21C, in the amount of $2,074,351 to be raised by taxation outside of the Town's current levy limit;

And further, I move that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of $210,755 from Water Enterprise revenues to operate the Water Department for the Fiscal Year 2025, beginning July 1, 2024, in the amounts listed in the FY25 Budget Worksheet in the printed budget handout made available at this Town Meeting;

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	Department/Account	*Voted FY24*	*Department Requests FY25*	*Recommended FY25*	*% Change*	*Special Town Meeting FY25*	*% Change*
	GENERAL GOVERNMENT						
	Town Administrator						
1	SALARIES	175,600	182,696	182,696	4.04%		
2	EXPENSES	3,280	6,280	6,280	91.46%		
	Total	***178,880***	***188,976***	***188,976***	5.64%		
	Selectmen						
3	EXPENSES	10,003	14,230	14,230	42.26%		
	Total	***10,003***	***14,230***	***14,230***	42.26%		
	Fincom						
4	Dues and Memberships	150	150	150	0.00%		
5	Reserve Account	30,000	30,000	30,000	0.00%		
	Total	**30,150**	**30,150**	**30,150**	0.00%		
	Accountant						
6	SALARIES	12,289	28,311	28,311	130.38%		
7	EXPENSES	64,700	59,700	59,700	-7.73%		
	Total	***76,989***	***88,011***	***88,011***	14.32%		
	Assessors						
8	SALARIES	52,690	47,619	47,619	-9.62%		
9	EXPENSES	20,875	18,675	18,675	-10.54%		
	Total	***73,565***	***66,294***	***66,294***	-9.88%		
	Treasurer						
10	SALARIES	65,850	30,999	30,999	-52.92%		
11	EXPENSES	26,090	28,590	28,590	9.58%		
	Total	***91,940***	***59,589***	***59,589***	-35.19%		
	Town Counsel						
12	Professional and Technical	***32,000***	***32,000***	***32,000***	0.00%		
	Dog Program						
13	***Total***	***800***	***800***	***800***	0.00%		
	Town Clerk						
14	SALARIES	51,314	36,504	36,504	-28.86%		
15	EXPENSES	2,100	2,100	2,100	0.00%		
	Total	***53,414***	***38,604***	***38,604***	-27.73%		
	Elections						
16	SALARIES	3,000	3,000	3,000	0.00%		
17	EXPENSES	8,250	8,250	8,250	0.00%		
	Total	***11,250***	***11,250***	***11,250***	0.00%		
	Registrar						
18	SALARIES	***850***	***850***	***850***	***0.00%***		
	Conservation						
19	SALARIES	14,560	14,616	14,616	0.38%		

20		EXPENSES	2,000	2,000	2,000	0.00%		
		Total	***16,560***	***16,616***	***16,616***	0.34%		
		Planning Board						
21		SALARIES	14,560	14,616	14,616	0.38%		
22		EXPENSES	1,400	1,400	1,400	0.00%		
		Total	***15,960***	***16,016***	***16,016***	0.35%		
		Zoning Board						
23		SALARIES	-	-	-			
24		EXPENSES	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.00%		
		Total	***1,500***	***1,500***	***1,500***	0.00%		
		Town Hall						
25		SALARIES	5,267	5,394	5,394	2.42%		
26		EXPENSES	47,950	50,450	50,450	5.21%		
		Total	***53,217***	***55,844***	***55,844***	4.94%		
		Town Reports						
27		***Total***	***3,025***	***3,025***	***3,025***	0.00%		
		Town Engineer						
28		Engineering Services	10,000	10,000	10,000	0.00%		
		Total	***10,000***	***10,000***	***10,000***	0.00%		

TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	***660,101.80***	***633,755.00***	***633,755.00***	-3.99%		
SALARIES	395,978.80	364,605.00	364,605.00	-7.92%		
EXPENSES	264,123.00	269,150.00	269,150.00	1.90%		
	660,101.80	633,755.00	633,755.00	-3.99%		

PUBLIC SAFETY

		Police Department						
29		SALARIES	1,024,151	1,128,811	1,128,811	10.22%		
30		EXPENSES	239,150	266,910	182,415	-23.72%		
		Total	***1,263,301***	***1,395,721***	***1,311,226***	3.79%		
		Fire Department						
31		SALARIES	220,718	368,772	271,013	22.79%		
32		EXPENSES	87,950	105,100	92,450	5.12%		
		Total	***308,668***	***473,872***	***363,463***	17.75%		
		Inspectors						
33		SALARIES	62,843	63,380	63,380	0.85%		
34		EXPENSES	3,500	3,500	3,500	0.00%		
		Total	***66,343***	***66,880***	***66,880***	0.81%		
		Emergency Management						
35		***Total***	***2,900***	***2,900***	***2,900***	0.00%		
		Tree Warden						
36		***Total***	***24,435***	***24,435***	***24,435***	0.00%		

			1,665,647	1,963,808	1,768,904	6.20%		
		TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	*1,665,647*	*1,963,808*	*1,768,904*	6.20%		
		SALARIES	1,307,712	1,560,963	1,463,204	11.89%		
		EXPENSES	357,935	402,845	305,700	-14.59%		
	SCHOOLS							
	GDRSD	*(GDRSD Operating + Capital)*	*8,061,150*	*9,181,618*	*8,797,685*	9.14%		
37	Operating		**7,742,721**	**8,864,641**	**8,582,256**	10.84%		
38	Capital		188,281	188,281	86,733	-53.93%		
39	Debt		130,148	128,696	128,696	-1.12%		
	GLRVTS							
40	Operating		199,740	199,740	199,740	0.00%		
41	Debt		31,883	31,883	31,883	0.00%		
		TOTAL SCHOOLS	***8,292,773***	***9,413,241***	***9,029,308***	8.88%		
			8,292,773	***9,413,241***	***9,029,308***	8.88%		
	PUBLIC WORKS							
	Highway Department							
42		SALARIES	322,695	388,588	331,479	2.72%		
43		EXPENSES	245,296	248,847	245,847	0.22%		
		Total	***567,991***	***637,435***	***577,326***	1.64%		
	Snow Removal							
44		SALARIES	56,175	57,300	56,175	0.00%		
45		EXPENSES	229,710	234,404	229,710	0.00%		
		Total	***285,885***	***291,704***	***285,885***	0.00%		
	Street Lights							
46	Energy		***10,000***	***12,000***	***11,000***	10.00%		
	Transfer Station							
47		SALARIES	-	-	-			
48		EXPENSES	22,500	22,500	22,500	0.00%		
		Total	***22,500***	***22,500***	***22,500***	0.00%		
	Cemetery							
49		SALARIES	15,000	15,000	15,000	0.00%		
50		EXPENSES	10,600	10,600	10,600	0.00%		
		Total	***25,600***	***25,600***	***25,600***	0.00%		
			911,976	989,239	922,311	1.13%		
		TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	***911,976***	***989,239***	***922,311***	1.13%		
		SALARIES	393,870	460,888	402,654	2.23%		
		EXPENSES	518,106	528,351	519,657	0.30%		
	HUMAN SERVICES							
	Board of Health							

51		SALARIES	14,373	14,717	14,717	2.39%		
52		EXPENSES	21,325	22,420	22,420	5.14%		
	Total		***35,698***	***37,137***	***37,137***	4.03%		
	Council on Aging							
53		SALARIES	9,171	9,557	9,557	4.20%		
54		EXPENSES	8,000	7,000	7,000	-12.50%		
	Total		***17,171***	***16,557***	***16,557***	-3.58%		
	Veterans Affairs							
55		SALARIES	6,041	6,162	6,162	2.00%		
56		EXPENSES	19,472	19,472	19,472	0.00%		
	Total		***25,513***	***25,634***	***25,634***	0.47%		
			78,382	79,328	79,328	1.21%		
	TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES		***78,382***	***79,328***	***79,328***	1.21%		
		SALARIES	29,585	30,436	30,436	2.88%		
		EXPENSES	48,797	48,892	48,892	0.20%		
	LIBRARY, PARKS & RECREATION							
	Library Operations							
57		SALARIES	122,908	116,664	116,664	-5.08%		
58		EXPENSES	65,913	75,932	75,932	15.20%		
	Total		***188,821***	***192,596***	***192,596***	2.00%		
	Library Consortium							
59	M.V.L. Consortium Dues		***13,500***	***13,500***	***13,500***	0.00%		
	Technical Expenses							
60	***Total***		***30,250***	***37,546***	***37,546***	24.12%		
	Recreation Department							
61	Rec. Other Purchased Service		***11,400***	***11,400***	***11,400***	0.00%		
	Parks Department							
62	***Total***		***62,500***	***71,500***	***62,500***	0.00%		
	Memorial Day Committee							
63	Expenses		***700***	***700***	***700***	0.00%		
			307,170.72	327,242.00	318,242.00	3.60%		
	TOTAL LIBRARY & RECREATION		***307,170.72***	***327,242.00***	***318,242.00***	3.60%		
		SALARIES	122,907.72	116,664.00	116,664.00	-5.08%		
		EXPENSES	184,263.00	210,578.00	201,578.00	9.40%		
	DEBT & INTEREST							
	Long Term Principal							
64	Long Term Principal		139,744	137,878	137,878	-1.34%		

	Long Term Interest							
65	Long Term Interest	44,175	37,975	37,975	-14.04%		
	Temporary Loan Interest							
66	Temporary Loan Interest	3,774	3,774	3,774.00	0.00%		
	TOTAL DEBT & INTEREST	***187,693***	***179,627***	***179,627***	-4.30%		
	INSURANCE & ASSESSMENTS							
	County Retirement							
67	County Retirement System	365,094	386,855	386,855	5.96%		
	Group Health Insurance - 914							
68	Group Health Insurance	386,428	426,428	405,749	5.00%		
	Unemployment Account							
69	Unemployment	20,000						
	FICA Town Share							
70	Medicare Town Share	36,720	37,638	37,638	2.50%		
	Bldg./Vehicle Liab. Ins/Workers Compensation, Etc							
71	Bldg./Vehicle Liab. Ins.	147,644	162,408	162,408	10.00%		
	TOTAL INSURANCE & ASSESSMENTS	***955,886***	***1,013,329***	***992,650***	3.85%		
	Total Budget	**13,059,629**	**14,599,569**	**13,924,125**	**6.62%**		
		13,059,629	14,599,569	13,924,125	6.62%		
	Municipal Salaries	2,250,054	2,533,556	2,377,563	5.67%		
	Municipal Operations	1,373,224	1,459,816	1,344,977	-2.06%		
	Insurance & Assessments	955,886	1,013,329	992,650	3.85%		
	Municipal Operations - TOTAL	4,579,163	5,006,701	4,715,190	2.97%		
	Municipal Debt & Interest	187,693	179,627	179,627	-4.30%		
	Town Operations & Debt - TOTAL	4,766,856	5,186,328	4,894,817	2.68%		
	Schools - Operations	8,130,742	9,252,662	8,868,729	9.08%		
	Schools - Debt & Interest	162,031	160,579	160,579	-0.90%		
	Schools Operations & Debt - TOTAL	8,292,773	9,413,241	9,029,308	8.88%		
	Total Budget for the Fiscal Year	13,059,629	14,599,569	13,924,125	6.62%		

Presentations were given by the Town Administrator, Jason Silva followed by Kristen DeFrancisco, Sherry Kersey and Lacy McCabe who gave the presentation. Superintendent Chesson was also there but had arrived late after Groton's meeting was rescheduled.

The assembly of voters were invited to ask questions. Discussions ensued.

Motion to move the question, requiring a 2/3 vote. Motion passes as declared by the Moderator.

Main motion was then voted on, requiring a majority vote. Motion passes as declared by the Moderator.

All Business on the Warrant having been acted upon, a motion was made and seconded to dissolve said Town Meeting at 9:29PM.