

**Town of Dunstable
Select Board Meeting Minutes
June 24, 2026**



In attendance: Select Board Chair Ron Mikol, Select Board Vice Chair Leah Basbanes, Town Administrator Jason Silva, Executive Assistant Sue Fayne, and Police Chief Erik Hoar.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mikol and the agenda for the June 24, 2026 Select Board meeting was reviewed.

Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – May 22, 2026 and June 9, 2026

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes from May 22, 2026 and June 9, 2026 and accepted as written.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Chair Mikol, it was **voted to approve** the meeting minutes from May 22, 2026 and June 9, 2026. **The vote was unanimous.**

Select Board Designee Appointments

The Board reviewed the annual Select Board designee assignments, including representation on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), Affordable Housing-related committees, the Master Plan Committee, and the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO/NEMPOG). The discussion focused on whether assignments should be finalized immediately or deferred until a third Select Board member joins the Board.

Members agreed that because the Board is currently operating with only two members and anticipates the appointment of a third member in the near future, it would be prudent to maintain existing assignments where possible and revisit the full distribution of responsibilities once the Board is fully constituted.

One member agreed to continue serving on the CPC, while current NEMPOG assignments and alternate representation will remain unchanged. Remaining designee appointments will be reconsidered following the seating of a third Board member.

Annual Appointments

Approved July 8, 2026

The Board reviewed a list of proposed appointments to town boards, committees, and commissions. The Town Administrator explained that several vacancies had recently been filled by residents expressing interest in serving, while other appointments represented regular annual reappointments.

Vacancies addressed included positions on:

- Capital Planning Committee
- Commission on Accessibility
- Economic Development Committee
- Additional boards and commissions included on the appointment list

The Board expressed appreciation for residents willing to volunteer their time and service to the Town.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Chair Mikol, it was **voted to appoint** town officials, board and committee members as presented in the document entitled “Appointments – Staff, Committees, Boards, & Commissions” dated June 24, 2026. **The vote was unanimous.**

Compensation and Classification Placement of Part-Time Officers and Police Department Cleaner

The Town Administrator reported that two Police Department positions had not been included in the recent compensation and classification study. As a result, staff reviewed the positions and developed recommendations to incorporate them into the Town's salary schedule.

The positions reviewed included:

- Three part-time police officer positions
- One Police Department cleaner position

After evaluating job descriptions and comparing duties to similar positions already included within the compensation plan, the recommendation was:

- Part-time Police Officers – Grade C
- Police Department Cleaner – Grade E

The Town Administrator explained that employees would be placed at the nearest higher step within the new salary schedule, consistent with the implementation process used for other Town employees. This approach would ensure that affected employees receive increases comparable to those previously approved under the compensation plan.

Board members discussed the placement recommendations and confirmed that the classifications were consistent with the responsibilities associated with each position.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Chair Mikol, it was **voted to classify** the part-time officer positions as Grade C and Police Department Cleaner position as Grade E on the Town's compensation plan and place the affected employees at the closest higher step on the salary schedule, effective at the start of the new fiscal year, FY27. **The vote was unanimous.**

Police Chief Employment Contract

The Board reviewed the proposed employment agreement for Police Chief Erik Hoar. The Town Administrator stated that the contract had undergone several rounds of review. Changes from prior versions were minor in nature and consistent with previous employment agreements. Town Counsel had reviewed the contract and raised no concerns.

Chief Hoar indicated that he was satisfied with the proposed agreement.

Board members expressed support for the contract and appreciation for the Chief's continued leadership of the department.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Chair Mikol, it was **voted to approve** the employment contract between the Town of Dunstable and Police Chief Erik Hoar for the term of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028, as presented. **The vote was unanimous.**

Appointment of Acting Town Administrator

The Town Administrator informed the Board that he would be traveling outside of the country from June 26 through July 3, 2026 and that communication capabilities during that period might be limited.

To ensure continuity of operations, he recommended that the Board appoint an Acting Town Administrator who could respond to any urgent municipal issues that might occur during his absence.

The Town Administrator recommended Police Chief Erik Hoar for the temporary appointment, noting the Chief's familiarity with Town operations and ability to address emergency matters if necessary.

Chief Hoar expressed his willingness to serve in the role.

Board members agreed that establishing clear authority during the Town Administrator's absence was a prudent measure.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Chair Mikol, it was **voted to appoint** Police Chief Erik Hoar as Acting Town Administrator from Friday, June 26 through Friday, July 3 during the temporary absence of Town Administrator. **The vote was unanimous.**

Early Voting for the July 21, 2026 Special Election

The Town Administrator presented a request from the Town Clerk for the Select Board to formally authorize in-person early voting for the July 21, 2026 Special Election. He explained that Massachusetts law requires municipalities to opt into in-person early voting for special elections, even though vote-by-mail remains available automatically to eligible voters. The Select Board's action was therefore necessary to provide residents with an additional voting option.

The Town Clerk recommended offering in-person early voting at Town Hall from July 13 through July 16, 2026, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each day. The Town Administrator noted that the proposed schedule would allow residents four consecutive weekdays to cast ballots prior to Election Day and would provide a convenient option for voters who may be unavailable on July 21.

Board members discussed the Town's previous experience with early voting. It was noted that Dunstable has historically provided early voting opportunities when available and that participation during Saturday voting periods has generally been very low. Based on that experience, the Town Clerk did not recommend including weekend hours for this special election and instead proposed concentrating resources on weekday voting hours when voter participation has typically been stronger.

The Board also reviewed staffing considerations for the early voting period. The Town Administrator confirmed that the Town Clerk had arranged for sufficient staffing coverage to conduct voting during the proposed hours and that election operations could be accommodated without issue. Discussion further included the fact that the Commonwealth reimburses municipalities for costs associated with providing in-person early voting, helping to offset the administrative expenses incurred by the Town. Board members agreed that offering in-person early voting promotes voter participation and provides residents with additional flexibility to participate in the electoral process. They further noted that the proposal was consistent with the Town's past election practices and represented a reasonable accommodation for voters in a special election cycle.

On a **motion** by Vice Chair Basbanes and **seconded** by Chair Mikol, it was **voted to authorize** in-person early voting for the July 21, 2026 Special Town Election with early voting conducted at Town Hall at the dates and during the hours recommended by the Town Clerk. **The vote was unanimous.**

During the discussion, a Board member also inquired about the hours for Election Day itself. The Town Administrator explained that the voting hours for town elections are established by Town bylaws and therefore are fixed rather than determined separately for each election.

Approved July 8, 2026

Town Administrator's Report

Speed Feedback Sign

The Board discussed a recently installed speed feedback sign provided through a state-supported traffic monitoring effort.

The Town Administrator reported that:

- The sign was supplied by the state at no cost to the Town.
- Data is transmitted remotely through a cloud-based system.
- Staff can access traffic information electronically without visiting the site.
- The device was intentionally inactive for a period as part of the data collection process before becoming operational.

Board members noted that they had received very little public feedback regarding the sign, which was viewed positively. The system was reported to be functioning effectively and providing useful traffic data.

Oak Street/Main Street Intersection Improvement Project

The Board discussed progress on the Oak Street and Main Street intersection study and reviewed feedback received during the recent public meeting.

The Town Administrator reported that:

- A follow-up meeting with MassDOT and project consultants is scheduled.
- Public comments and recommendations are being evaluated for possible incorporation into the conceptual design.
- Residents expressed concerns regarding:
 - Maintenance responsibilities for proposed landscaping and roadway features.
 - Changes to existing driveway configurations.
 - Sight-distance limitations caused by vegetation.
 - Vehicle speeds and overall traffic safety.
 - Design impacts on adjacent properties.

Board members agreed that the public meeting was productive, well attended, and demonstrated strong community interest in improving the intersection. There was consensus that the project addresses a location that residents view as needing attention.

The Town Administrator explained that:

- Current grant funding will advance the project through the conceptual design phase.
- Additional funding will be necessary for final design and construction.
- Preliminary project costs are estimated in the range of approximately \$250,000.
- The project remains eligible for future Complete Streets and other state transportation funding opportunities.

- Road Commissioners have participated in site visits, reviewed concept plans, and will continue to be involved throughout project development.

The Board emphasized the importance of maintaining progress and communication as planning continues. The Town Administrator noted that, despite limited staffing resources, numerous municipal projects remain active and continue moving forward.

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

No additional topics were raised.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Fayne,
Executive Assistant