



BOARD OF SELECTMEN MTG.

Town of Dunstable

MARCH 12, 2024
Dunstable Town Hall
522 Main Street | Dunstable, MA

**OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF DUNSTABLE
511 Main Street Dunstable, MA 01827
(978) 649-4514 | bos@dunstable-ma.gov**



BOARD/COMMITTEE/COMMISSION:
SUBMITTED TO TOWN CLERK:
MEETING DATE:
MEETING TIME:
LOCATION:

**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC
MEETING POSTED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE
PROVISIONS OF MGL 30A
§18 – 25**

Topics the Chair Reasonably Anticipates will or could be Discussed:

Note: All topic placement & times are estimated and may vary <i>tremendously</i> from projections

SCHEDULED AGENDA ITEMS

*Votes likely to be taken

Meeting will be streaming at:

(Note: This listing of matters reflects those reasonably anticipated by the chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.)



MEETING MINUTES

Town of Dunstable

MARCH 12, 2024
Dunstable Town Hall
522 Main Street | Dunstable, MA



Town of Dunstable Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

In attendance: Chairman Ron Mikol, Selectman Kieran Meehan, Town Administrator Jason Silva, Chief of Police Erik Hoar, Exec. Assistant Sue Fayne
Absent: Vice Chair Leah Basbanes

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Mikol.

Public Comment

No Public Comments

Approve Meeting Minutes from 2/6/24*

After review, there were no changes or updates needed to the minutes.

On a **motion** by Selectman Meehan and **seconded** by Chairman Mikol, it was **VOTED** to **approve** the Meeting Minutes dated February 6, 2024. The vote was unanimous.

Request to Present to Board – Erica Flynn

Ms. Flynn brought a presentation to share her thoughts on the FY2025 Budget. She began by sharing that she conducted research related to revenue and expenses for the Town of Dunstable's FY2025 budget. Based on her research, Downtown Andover alone has over 31 restaurants, bringing in \$694,000 in revenues annually. In looking at retail marijuana, she found that towns can only collect up to 3% for taxes on marijuana sales.

With an assumption of annual sales of \$2.5M (\$1M - \$2.5M average annual revenues per dispensary), revenues for the town would be \$75,000 per year. In her opinion, relying on those revenues would not solve the problem. Instead, she suggested raising the commercial tax rate. Her recommendations for revenue are to stop buying land for conservation, attract/build smaller homes for singles, childless couples, and seniors.

Ms. Flynn then spoke of expenses, specifically of the GDRSD School district. She provided a comparison of test scores to costs per student, and she concluded that every state that has a higher average SAT score than MA has a lower cost per student. She also highlighted that over the last 30 years there have been increases in costs for public education, no decreases, both nationally and for Groton-Dunstable School District. She spoke of average reading scores and math scores that have gone down, with the largest drop in recent years between 2020-2022.

Ms. Flynn spoke of the teacher and Administration salaries as compared to workers in the private sector. She quoted from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, at the lowest skill levels—a GS-6 on the federal scale—teachers earn salaries about 26 percent higher than similar white-collar workers. At GS-11, the highest skill level, teaching pays 17 percent less than other white-collar jobs. She also stated that the current Superintendent is making the 2nd highest in the "Market Basket" towns. She shared her opinion that the district is overspending on Guidance Counselors, claiming that removing 9 guidance counselors will still keep the district below the ASCA recommended average and save \$675,000. Ms. Flynn also claims that the district has excess spending in Health Services and could remove 1 nurse, saving \$65,000, and



she believes that the Boutwell School is not mandatory pre-k, so that should not be included in the operating budget.

Ms. Flynn recommends that the district implement transportation and increase athletic fees. She ended her presentation by stating that:

- Spending more money is not having a positive effect on testing
- There is plenty that can be done to increase revenues prior to an override
- There are expenses that can be offset by charging fees per child
- Towns need to push back on the school system to cut out of control spending

Selectman Meehan asked if this presentation was shared with the School District. Ms. Flynn said no, she was planning to share it on social media. He recommended that she reach out to present this to the School Committee and also mentioned that in education today, the validity of test scores being used as a metric to measure a student's success is not as much of a factor anymore. There was also a brief discussion about data positioning. Regarding business in town and taxing them differently, we have very few businesses in town, and shifting the burden of the tax to commercial would impact businesses significantly due to the small amount we have in the town. The overall revenue for the town stays the same, shifting the tax rate shifts the burden, it would result in the businesses paying significantly more and residential marginally less.

Chairman Mikol thanked Ms. Flynn for all of the data she presented and the analysis she performed. He said there have been recent discussions about some of the suggestions brought up in the presentation. He suggests that this is sent to the School Committee and the district, digest it, and put it back on the agenda with a reply from the School Committee. He then opened it up for questions:

- A resident inquired why the extra money and support that the district has received hasn't impacted student performance and testing.
- Brian Flynn made the comment that SAT score correlation seems to be based on the people in the town, the parents, the community. He also shared that he's unhappy with the continued increase in taxes.
- Joan Simmons shared her opinion that a commercial tax rate isn't a good idea, as it will push small businesses out of town when we are trying to attract them.
- Alan Chaney inquired if anyone has asked the small businesses in town what they would think of a commercial tax rate. Chairman Mikol stated that no, we haven't because collectively as a town we're concerned about the impacts to our businesses.
- Brian Lacapo had some questions regarding the Boutwell School. Why do we have that building? Move the school to another building. It's an \$875,000 expense.
- Sara Axon shared feedback regarding her experience with the school district, and she has concerns about using ARPA money for permanent positions and presenting it as "level services" in the budget.

FY25 Town Operating Budget*



On a **motion** by Selectman Meehan and **seconded** by Chairman Mikol, it was **voted to recommend** the Town's FY2025 Operating Budget with total expenditures of \$13,992,812 requiring an additional \$763,266 in property taxes contingent upon passage of an override ballot question and, further recommend a 3-year general override to cover the operating expenses of the Town and Groton Dunstable Regional School District assessment in the amount of \$2,074,351 to be presented to the residents of the Town of Dunstable at the Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 and at a Special Town Election on Tuesday, April 2, 2024. **The vote was unanimous.**

Brattle Group LIP Proposal – 41 Lowell Street*

Without Vice Chair Basbanes in attendance, Chairman Mikol recommended that they defer this topic to the next meeting. TA Silva and Jim Tully will work on an agreement that outlines the conditions and benefits to the Town, before we convene for the next meeting.

Ballot Questions and Warrant for Special Town Election on April 2, 2024*

On a **motion** by Selectman Meehan and **seconded** by Chairman Mikol, it was voted to approve the following questions for the ballot at the 2024 Special Town Election and to provide written notice of such questions to the Town Clerk in accordance with M.G.L. c. 54, Sec. 42C:

QUESTION 1:

Shall the town of Dunstable be allowed to assess an additional \$2,074,351 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding the operating budget of the town and the assessment of the Groton-Dunstable Regional School District for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024?

Yes _____ No _____

The vote was unanimous.

Appointment to the Master Plan Implementation Committee – Select Board Representative*

Chairman Meehan will represent the Board of Selectmen on the Master Plan Implementation Committee.

On a motion by Chairman Mikol and seconded by Selectman Meehan, it was voted to appoint Kieran Meehan to the Master Plan Implementation Committee. The vote was unanimous.

ARPA Reallocation Request – newsletter mailing*

On a **motion** by Selectman Meehan and **seconded** by Chairman Mikol, it was **voted to approve** the use of remaining ARPA funds, up to \$1,000, for the mailing of the Selectman newsletters to all households, to include printing and postage. **The vote was unanimous.**

Town Administrator's Report

There wasn't a review of the TA Report since most topics were covered.

Items not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair

Selectman Meehan suggested that the Historical Commission and Conservation Commission look into the Malancin property on High Street, which is for sale, due to the historical designation.



The Board of Selectmen will be meeting on Tuesday, 2/27 at 6:30pm before the Budget Forums, to approve the STM Warrant and open the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Fayne
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator
and Board of Selectmen

DRAFT

Town of Dunstable Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes



Tuesday, February 27, 2024

In attendance: Chairman Ron Mikol, Selectman Kieran Meehan, Town Administrator Jason Silva

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairman Mikol.

Approve Special Town Meeting Warrant*

On a **motion** by Selectman Meehan and **seconded** by Vice Chair Basbanes, it was **voted to approve** the Special Town Meeting Warrant and to sponsor all articles on the warrant to be presented to the residents of the Town of Dunstable at the Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 26.

ARTICLE 1 - Operating Budget

Sponsored by the Select Board and Advisory Board

ARTICLE 2 - Free Cash Transfer for FY25

Sponsored by the Select Board and Advisory Board

The vote was unanimous.

Open Annual Town Meeting Warrant*

On a **motion** by Selectman Meehan and **seconded** by Vice Chair Basbanes, it was **voted to open** the Warrant for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 13, 2024, and to close the Warrant on Monday, March 25, 2024, at 4 PM. **The vote was unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,

**Sue Fayne
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator
and Board of Selectmen**

Town of Dunstable Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, March 6, 2024

In attendance: Chairman Ron Mikol, Selectman Kieran Meehan, Vice Chair Leah Basbanes, Advisory Chair Jake Lewon, Town Administrator Jason Silva, Executive Assistant Sue Fayne

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chairman Mikol.

The Board of Selectmen attended the Groton Dunstable Budget Forum at The Groton Center, along with the Groton Selectboard and GDRSD School Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Sue Fayne
Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator
and Board of Selectmen**



APPOINTMENTS

Town of Dunstable

MARCH 12, 2024
Dunstable Town Hall
522 Main Street | Dunstable, MA

From: [Jon Hughes](#)
To: [Sue Fayne](#); [Kelly Escalada](#)
Subject: Fwd: [External] Affordable Housing Committee
Date: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:56:40 PM

Hello Sue,

(Copying Kelley)

Kelley has been voted in to become a member of the Affordable Housing Committee. What steps are needed to 'make it official' from the town hall perspective?

Thanks,

- Jon

[Jon Hughes](#)

jon.hughes480@gmail.com

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kelley Escalada** <kelley@escalada.us>
Date: Sun, Feb 25, 2024 at 9:35 AM
Subject: Re: Affordable Housing Committee
To: Jon Hughes <jon.hughes480@gmail.com>

Hi Jon,

Yes, I did speak with Jason and meant to send you a message. I would be happy to join!

Please let me know if there's anything else I need to do. Otherwise I'll just keep an eye out for future meetings.

Thanks,
Kelley

On Sun, Feb 25, 2024, 9:03 AM Jon Hughes <jon.hughes480@gmail.com> wrote:

Hello Kelly,

I'm not sure if Jason reached out to you yet or not regarding this, so I apologize if it is repetitive.

He'd mentioned your interest in joining the AHC. The AHC met a few weeks ago, and this was one of our topics. We had a unanimous vote to invite you to join our committee. Let me know if you'd like to accept, and we'll include you in future communications and meetings.

As you are probably aware, we are in a fairly 'quiet time' at the moment; both of our large

objectives that we'd been working on for the last few years are complete. We don't have any scheduled meetings in the near future.

- Jon

Jon Hughes

jon.hughes480@gmail.com

Appointments – Staff, Committee’s, Boards, & Commissions

March 5, 2024

Committee/Commission/Board/Staff	Name	Term (Years)	Term Expiration
Affordable Housing Committee	Kelly Escalada	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Leo Tomitech	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Catherine Irzyk	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	John O'Brien	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Joe Vlcek	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Alan Chase	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Anne Davis	1	2024
Master Plan Implementation Committee	Mike Martin	1	2024



POLL PADS - ARPA REALLOCATION

Town of Dunstable

MARCH 12, 2024
Dunstable Town Hall
522 Main Street | Dunstable, MA

LHS ASSOCIATES

8A INDUSTRIAL WAY
 UNIT 100
 SALEM, NH 03079
 USA

Voice: 978-683-0777
 Fax: 603-212-0028

INVOICE

Invoice Number: 79922
 Invoice Date: Mar 4, 2024
 Page: 1

Bill To:
DUNSTABLE TOWN OF 511 MAIN STREET DUNSTABLE, MA 01827

Ship to:
DUNSTABLE TOWN OF 511 MAIN STREET DUNSTABLE, MA 01827

Customer ID	Customer PO	Payment Terms	
100810		Net 30 Days	
Sales Rep ID	Shipping Method	Ship Date	Due Date
	Courier		4/3/24

Quantity	Item	Description	Unit Price	Amount
2.00	PP-001	POLL PAD BUNDLE	1,275.00	2,550.00
2.00	PP-004	POLL PAD STAR MICRONICS RECEIPT	300.00	600.00
1.00	E99-99	THERMAL PRINTER - MONOCHROME SHIPPING AND HANDLING	50.00	50.00
Subtotal				3,200.00
Sales Tax				
Total Invoice Amount				3,200.00
Payment/Credit Applied				
TOTAL				3,200.00

Check/Credit Memo No:



PROPOSED MOU WITH GDRSD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Town of Dunstable

MARCH 12, 2024
Dunstable Town Hall
522 Main Street | Dunstable, MA

Memorandum of Understanding

This is a memorandum of understanding dated January 31, 2024 between the Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee, the Groton Select Board, the Groton Finance Committee, the Dunstable Select Board, and the Dunstable Advisory Committee.

The purpose of this MOU is to clearly identify the future use of one time funds to fund the GDRSD operating budget, the future fees for full day kindergarten in the GDRSD, and the budget projections provided by the GDRSD to the two member towns.

The GDRSD has been using the excess and deficiency account (one time funds) as a revenue source for operating expenses since FY18. This is not the practice of the Town of Groton and it is not the approved policy of the GDRSC (policy DBF, see references). The GDRSC adopted budget guidance in September 2023 to eliminate E&D as a revenue source for FY25 and eliminate the full day kindergarten fee. The elimination of the full day kindergarten fee aligns the district with 98% of the state of Massachusetts.

The GDRSD received a request for a compromise to reduce the impact to the FY25 town budgets and the required increase to taxpayers. The Groton Dunstable Regional School Committee wishes to be a good partner with the towns and voted on 12/13/23 unanimously to adjust its FY25-FY27 budget guidance to the school administration to the following:

Fiscal Year	E&D Used as Revenue Source to Fund Operating Expense	Full Day Kindergarten Expenses Added to General Fund
2025	\$500,000	\$100,000
2026	\$250,000	\$150,000
2027	\$0	\$100,000

Note: it is anticipated that the kindergarten fee will be \$0 in fiscal year 2027. The fee for 2025 and 2026 will be determined during those budget planning processes based on the revolving account balance.

This decision was made in the anticipation that it will help the select boards gain the support of the taxpayers of the FY25 budget and any associated proposition 2 ½ overrides. **The vote to adjust the budget guidance by the school committee was also contingent on the completion of this memorandum of understanding.**

The GDRSC will be following its adopted fiscal policies much more strictly in the future and will not be using E&D as a revenue source for recurring expenses except in the outlined circumstances in policy DBF. The GDRSC has directed the administration to update the five-year budget projections provided to the town managers to include the above revenue decisions.

All parties hereby agree that revenue decisions made in 2024 to fund the FY25 budget and future budgets by the towns will include the above budget decisions made by the GDRSC. The GDRSC requests that each member board vote to recognize this memorandum of understanding and have the respective committee chairs sign the document following a majority vote of approval.

_____ Date: _____

Fay Raynor, GDRSC Chair

_____ Date: _____

Peter Cunningham, Groton Select Board Chair

_____ Date: _____

Bud Robertson, Groton Finance Committee Chair

_____ Date: _____

Ronald Mikol, Dunstable Select Board Chair

_____ Date: _____

Jacob Lewon, Dunstable Advisory Chair

References:

Policy DBF:

<https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/grotondunstableset/grotondunstable/DBF>

APPROVED BY B&F ON 1/10/24

The GDRSC supports the Town of Dunstable's efforts to reduce its reliance on free cash (one time revenues) to balance its operating budget by \$100,000 each of the next 3 fiscal years. Similar to the Groton Dunstable Regional School District, the Town of Dunstable has been using Free Cash to support ongoing operating costs which is an unsustainable practice.

Both Towns of Dunstable and Groton are seeking 3-year overrides to fund the Towns' operating expenses and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District assessment. Over this 3-year period, from FY25 to FY27, if the override is successful, the Towns of Dunstable and Groton, and the Groton Dunstable Regional School District expenses will not exceed the revenues raised by the General Fund Override.

Furthermore, if the override effort is successful, beginning in FY28, operating expenses of the Towns of Dunstable and Groton will increase no more than the revenue increases in each community year over year, respectively. Beginning in FY28, the Groton Dunstable Regional School District will increase its assessments to both Towns no more than the revenue increases in each community, year over year. If the override is unsuccessful, this practice will begin in FY25 in keeping with our collective efforts to maintain financial stability and sustainability.

As the GDRSC reduces its reliance on E&D funds to support operational expenses, GDRSC commits to utilizing no less than 50% of its certified excess and deficiency funds annually to subsidize the capital expenditure assessments to both Towns of Groton and Dunstable beginning in FY28.

Any of these clauses contained in this MOU can be waived if a majority of the parties agree.



PAVING DONATION FUND

Town of Dunstable

MARCH 12, 2024
Dunstable Town Hall
522 Main Street | Dunstable, MA



BOARD OF ROAD COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF DUNSTABLE
TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313
(978) 649-4514 X227
FAX (978) 649-8893
roads@dunstable-ma.gov

November 14, 2023

Invoice: National Grid
Attn: Courtney Donaher

Due upon receipt

DESCRIPTION

Invoice request for \$70,204.00 for Kemp St paving costs WO# 1181260

Thank you

Please remit to Town of Dunstable
511 Main Street
Dunstable, MA 01827
Attn: Highway Department

Kristina Hooper

From: Eric Kinsherf <eric@erickinsherfcpa.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 15, 2024 2:55 PM
To: Kristina Hooper
Subject: Re: [External] Dunstable-Account number

Hi Kristina,

The account to post the revenue is the following.

Account Number: 2669-04-422-4830-2024-000

Description: Revenue-National Grid Paving Gift

Inactive:

This is the account to post any expenses.

Account Number: 2669-04-422-5800-2024-000

Description: National Grid paving gift expense (Kemp Street)

Inactive:

Thank you for the coffee today!

Eric

Eric A. Kinsherf, CPA LLC
116 State Road #8
P.O. Box 791
Sagamore Beach, MA 02562

www.erickinsherfcpa.com
eric@erickinsherfcpa.com

To upload or download files securely please use our [Secure File Transfer](#) platform powered by LeapFile

Town OF Dunstable

SCHEDULE OF DEPARTMENTAL PAYMENTS TO TREASURER

No. 2 Dep't. 2669-04-422-4830-2024-000 Date February 22 20.24.

Table with 4 columns: FROM WHOM, SOURCE, AMOUNT, TOTAL. Row 1: National Grid, Payment in lieu of paving, 70,204.00

DOCUMENT IS PRINTED ON CHEMICALLY REACTIVE PAPER - THE BACK OF THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES A CHEMICAL WASH WARNING BOX

National Grid
300 Erie Boulevard West
Syracuse, NY 13202-4250

Citibank, NA
One Penn's Way
New Castle, DE 19720

62-20/311

7002575483

Date 01/19/2024

Check Amount \$70,204.00****

Pay **** SEVENTY THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FOUR AND 00/100 DOLLARS ****

To THE OFFICE OF TOWN CLERK
511 MAIN ST
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313

Handwritten signature: D.H. Spill

Authorized Signature
Void after 120 Days

11 700 257 548 3 11 1:03 1 100 209 1:

3886064711

Empty table grid with 5 columns and 2 rows.

No. 2

Mass., 02.122. 20.24.

To the Officer making the Payment:

Received of Kristina Hooper, the sum of

Seventy thousand two hundred four 00 Dollars,

for the period ending February 22, 2024, for

collections as per schedule of this date, filed in my office.

TOWN TREASURER

Check Date: **01/19/2024**

nationalgrid

Check Number: **7002575483**

Vendor ID: 1000013424	Amount of Invoices: \$70,204.00
Vendor Name: TOWN OF DUNSTABLE	Discounts Taken: \$0.00
Value Date: 01/19/2024	Amount of Payment: \$70,204.00

Please be advised that **NATIONAL GRID USA SERVICE COMPANY, INC** has generated a payment on behalf of **BOSTON GAS COMPANY - COLONIAL DIVISION**. The invoice payment details are as follows:

Origin	Invoice Number	Invoice Date	Invoice Received Date	Gross Amount	Discount Taken	Paid Amount	PO ID	Payment Message
ZARBA	1181260 - 1123	11/14/2023	01/19/2024	\$70,204.00	\$0.00	\$70,204.00		Payment in lieu of paving
				\$70,204.00	\$0.00	\$70,204.00		

Contact the Accounts Payable Department at **1-888-483-2123** to receive payments electronically, update account information or make inquiries.

National Grid USA - Accounts Payable Department - 300 Erie Blvd West, Syracuse, NY 13202

1-888-483-2123

DOCUMENT IS PRINTED ON CHEMICALLY REACTIVE PAPER - THE BACK OF THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES A CHEMICAL WASH WARNING BOX

National Grid
300 Erie Boulevard West
Syracuse, NY 13202-4250

Citibank, NA
One Penn's Way
New Castle, DE 19720

62-20/311

7002575483

Date 01/19/2024

Check Amount \$70,204.00****

Pay ** SEVENTY THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED FOUR AND 00/100 DOLLARS ******

To The Order Of TOWN OF DUNSTABLE
THE OFFICE OF TOWN CLERK
511 MAIN ST
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313

COPY

D.H. Gpball

Authorized Signature

Void after 120 Days

⑈ 700 257 5483 ⑈ ⑆031100209⑆

38860647⑈