

**Dunbarton Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2023**

A meeting of the Dunbarton Board of Selectmen (BoS) was held on Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Dunbarton Town Offices.

**Board members present:**

Mike Kaminski, Chair  
Dave Nault, Selectman  
Justin Nault, Selectman

**Town Officials present:**

Line Comeau, Town Administrator  
Jonathan Wiggin, Fire Chief  
Christopher Remillard, Police Chief  
Patrick “Woody” Bowne, Transfer Station Manager  
Jeff Crosby, Road Agent  
John Trottier, Town Moderator  
Linda Landry, Town Clerk  
Jennifer Cormier, Deputy Town Clerk

**Members of the Public present:**

Bob Leonard of Holiday Shore Drive

Fred Mullen recorded the meeting for the benefit of citizens that were unable to attend (Linda Nickerson uploads the videos to YouTube).

Mike Kaminski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Approve Minutes

**Motion:** by Dave Nault, seconded by Justin Nault to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 2, 2023 as amended.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote: (3-0)**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2023 WARRANT AND BUDGET**

Mike Kaminski opened the public hearing at 7:03.

**Mike Kaminski** gave an overview of the proposed 2023 Warrant:

(Warrants 1-3): standard warrants for Town Officer and Hog Reeves election, and State RSA adoption.

### **4. Budget**

**Mike Kaminski** gave an explanation of the challenges they faced in creating this budget. The bottom line is that taxes are increasing. The majority of that increase is due in part to the road bond that was voted on last year. That first payment is due this year. This road bond was a good bargain for the town for the road repairs that were needed. They were able to get a 2.63% interest rate. The operating budget without the bond only raised the tax rate by 3 cents. They are using lapsing operating funds and unanticipated revenue and returning the majority of it to the taxpayers by lower their tax payment.

Their budget strategy was to maintain level services at a reasonable tax rate despite inflationary pressures. They saw increases in every department between fuel, supplies and employee compensation. He gave an overview of the challenges they faced in putting together this budget in light of inflation.

In response to employee turnover in multiple departments, they conducted a wage study. They reviewed the compensation of all positions in the town, compared them to towns of similar size and adjusted accordingly to reflect prevailing wages. Their goal was to pay the median prevailing wage to avoid being the top or bottom payer. Some positions received more of an increase than others depending on where they were comparatively to other towns. They also included a 4% COLA.

Mike Kaminski gave a brief review of the budget increases in each department:

Budget total is \$3,281,810. Using the anticipated projected revenues, with these lapsing and budget surplus funds will reduce the amount to raise from taxes to \$1,743,988. Total tax rate increase is \$0.47 (\$0.03 from the budget and \$0.44 from the bond).

General discussion occurred regarding the bond payment. Jeff Crosby noted that they essentially had a year off (**in 2022**) from putting \$100,000 toward paving projects like they had been for years. Because **the Town received the bond funding in 2022, and** didn't make a payment **in 2022, we could look at this payment essentially covering two years, which covers** first payment of \$180,000 **in 2023**.

**Jon Wiggin** asked how many years the bond is. **Dave Nault** answered that it is a 10-year bond.

**Mike Kaminski** also gave an overview of anticipated revenue for the year. They do project slight increases in the Town Clerk's office and the Transfer Station, but they tried to be conservative in their projections.

**Mike Kaminski will speak on the operating budget, at Town Meeting.**

5. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fourteen Thousand Dollars (\$14,000) to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund established in 2003 for this purpose, and as summarized in the Capital Improvement Plan. This sum is to come from taxation in 2023.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.03

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Justin Nault will speak on this at Town Meeting**

6. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Transfer Station Vehicle or Equipment Capital Reserve Fund established in 2014 for this purpose, and as summarized in the Capital Improvement Plan. This sum is to come from taxation in 2023.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.01

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Justin Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

7. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$70,000) to be added to the Fire Department Emergency Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund established in 2014 for this purpose, and as summarized in the Capital Improvement Plan. This sum is to come from taxation in 2023.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.17

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Chief Wiggin / Dave Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

8. To see if the Town will vote to appoint the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the existing Fire Department Emergency Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2014. (Majority Vote Required)  
Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.00  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)  
**Chief Wiggin / Dave Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting**
9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand dollars (\$30,000) to purchase a stretcher loading system for the ambulance and to authorize the withdrawal of said funds from the Fire Department Equipment non-lapsing Special Revenue Fund established in 2001 for this purpose. No amount to be raised from taxes in 2023.  
Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.00  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)  
**Chief Wiggin / Dave Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting**
10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Police Vehicle & Equipment Capital Reserve Fund established in 2020 for this purpose. This sum is to come from taxation in 2023.  
Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.02  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)  
**Chris Remillard/Dave Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting.**
11. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$2,925) to be added to the Police Vehicle & Equipment Capital Reserve Fund established in 2020 for this purpose. This sum is to come from the unassigned fund balance and no amount to come from taxation in 2023.  
Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.00  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)  
**Chris Remillard to speak on this at Town Meeting.**
12. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Seventeen Dollars (\$53,717) to purchase a new police cruiser with equipment and installation of equipment, and to fund this appropriation by withdrawing Twelve Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$12,925) from the Police Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund established in 2020, and to further appropriate Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000) from the Police Special Detail Revolving Fund established at a Special Town Meeting on May 9, 2008, with the remaining Twenty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred and Ninety-Two Dollars (\$28,792), to come from taxation in 2023.  
Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.07  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Chris Remillard to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

13. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the Highway Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund established in 2012 for this purpose, and as summarized in the Capital Improvement Plan. This sum is to come from taxation in 2023.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.05

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Jeff Crosby to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

14. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Land Purchase Capital Reserve Fund established in 1997 for this purpose. This sum is to come from taxation in 2023.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.01

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Dave Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$2,720) for the milfoil control at Gorham Pond and to authorize the withdrawal of One Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$1,360) from the Invasive Plant Species Capital Reserve Fund established in 2018, and to authorize the selectmen to accept a grant from the State of New Hampshire DES in the amount of One Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$1,360) known as the Variable Milfoil Control Grant. No amount is to come from taxation in 2023.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Bob Leonard to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

16. To see if the town will vote to close out the Cemetery Fund Maintenance Care Trust Fund established in 1988 and to pay all moneys in such fund to the town treasurer. (Majority Vote Required)

**Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.00**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)**

**Don Larsen/Justin Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

17. To see if the town will vote to establish a Cemetery Monument Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for additional maintenance, and upkeep of the cemetery monuments, benches and cornerstones and to appoint Cemetery Trustees as agents to expend and further to authorize the acceptance of privately donated gifts, legacies, and devises to be deposited into this fund. Said authority will remain until such time as it is rescinded. (Majority Vote Required)

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact: \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Don Larsen/Justin Nault to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

18. Shall the Town of Dunbarton approve the readoption of the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit (RSA 72:28 II) to allow for the expansion of the criteria needed to qualify for the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit of \$500 to now include those service members that are currently serving and have not yet been honorably discharged from the armed services. The readoption of the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit, if approved would continue to offer a \$500 tax credit to all honorably discharged Veterans that qualify under the current requirements but as of April 1, 2023, it would expand the eligibility requirements to now include those individuals that have not yet been discharged from active service.

Estimated 2023 tax rate impact \$0.00

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (Vote 3-0)

**Mike Kaminski to speak on this at Town Meeting.**

19. To hear the reports of agents, auditors, committees, and other officers heretofore chosen and pass any vote relating thereto.
20. To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Warrant Total: \$182,796 (\$0.36 tax rate impact)

**Motion:** by Mike Kaminski seconded by Dave Nault for the BoS to be in favor of all Warrant Articles as just reviewed.

**Discussion:** none.

**Vote: (3-0)**

**Linda Landry** asked about the wording on #19, wondering if the word "hear" should be replaced with 'accept'. **(No action needed; the article stands by itself).**

**John Trottier** noted that some of the Warrant Articles state (majority vote required) and some don't. He feels that it is important that they educate the voters on this.

**Linda Landry** feels that each Warrant Article should have the word 'Article' before each number. Fred Mullen agreed it used to be listed that way.

**Line Comeau** said that it is not finalized for printing, and she will review these suggested revisions, compare them with previous versions of the

Warrant and update accordingly. She noted the language of the Department of Revenue, the word 'Article' is not included.

Jeff Crosby had some questions regarding the **budget** numbers for his department. Line Comeau explained that she **was asked** to separate out all **paid elected officials** salary numbers in order to be transparent. It was set up this way at the request of **previous Select Board's**.

**Mike Kaminski** closed the public hearing at 7:51 p.m.

#### Mailbox Items

**Mike Kaminski** reviewed the items of correspondence received since the last meeting:

- DES had investigated an abutter complaint about the property owned by resident Paul Bruzga, but it was determined that he was not in violation of wetlands regulations and no action was taken.
- Still waiting on a closing date for the land purchase by the Conservation Commission. **Mike Kaminski** signed off on the extension agreement for the closing. **Line Comeau** added that the deed has come in (it is with the Town Attorney for review), and they will be ready to release funds from the bank when the time comes.
- **Mike Kaminski** would like to review the Town Hall second floor usage policy. He asked the Board to review **the draft policy in their handouts so it can be discussed at the next meeting**.
- Capital Improvements Plan: the BoS needs to decide if they want to add anything to this plan. Discussion occurred regarding configuration of the offices at the Town Hall. **Mike Kaminski** noted that closing off the Town Administrator's office from the rest of the room is something that is necessary. Other options would be to switch some offices within the building. This is something that will be reviewed in depth in the near future.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Mullen suggested updating locks on some of the doors for added security in the event they change offices around.

#### BOARD MEMBER ISSUES

**Line Comeau** is finishing up the number for the Town Report. She will be following up with the MS-636 and the actual warrant to be signed by the BoS.

**Dave Nault** gave an update on the Town Hall/Library renovation project:

- The front doors are on, they just need a few mechanical adjustments.
- The electrical panel is hooked up.
- Drywall is hung on the second floor.
- He met with Irish Electric on the panel replacement at the Fire Department, so they are currently assessing that. He also noted the need for better lighting in the basement of the town hall building, and he asked the electrician for a quote on 9 pull-chain fixtures and related wiring. **Line Comeau** noted that they may have money encumbered for the panel at the Fire Department.
- They are working on obtaining painting bids once the drywall work is completed.
- The subcontractors are winding down their work as they near completion.
- **General** discussion occurred regarding electric costs.
- **Mike Kaminski** noted that the Transfer Station crew did a great job of getting things cleaned up and moved into storage.
- **Mike Kaminski** gives kudos to the Transfer Station Manager for assisting the Police Department in clearing snow.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Motion:** by Dave Nault, seconded by Justin Nault to adjourn the meeting.

**Vote: (3-0).**

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Jennifer King, Recording Secretary

Signed:

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Michael Kaminski, Chair

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David Nault, Selectman

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Justin Nault, Selectman