

**Dunbarton Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2020**

A meeting of the Dunbarton Board of Selectmen (BoS) was held on Thursday, September 17, 2020 at the Dunbarton Town Offices.

Board members present:

Dave Nault, Chair
Mike Kaminski, Selectman
Bob Martel, Selectman

Town Officials and others present:

Line Comeau, Town Administrator
Dan Sklut, Police Chief
Linda Landry, Town Clerk
Don Larsen, Cemetery Trustee
Rene Ouellet, Town Moderator

Members of the public present:

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

Dave Nault called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Approve Minutes

Motion: by Mike Kaminski, seconded by Bob Martel to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 3, 2020 as amended.

Discussion: none.

Vote: (3-0).

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

AGENDA ITEMS

Election Complaint

Shelley Lanphear was called to speak before the BoS regarding the election, but she was outside because she refused to wear a mask inside the building. The police chief went outside in an effort to locate her to see if she would like to voice her complaint through the window but determined that she had left.

Election Update

Town Moderator Rene Ouellet gave a recap of the recent election. Things went smoothly with no long lines, and absentee ballots were successfully processed during the day. The AG's office conducted their inspection with no issues. **Mike Kaminski** noted there was one person that showed up to vote but left because they refused to wear a mask. They would not stay long enough to listen to the alternatives. **Rene Ouellet** also noted a couple of voters that arrived to the polls shortly after they had closed at 7 pm.

Rene Ouellet said that they had enough coverage for this election. He expects to have double the turnout for both in person and absentee voting, meaning they will need to have many more people assisting at the polls. He is making an effort to locate some more people to serve as ballot clerks. He asked the BoS to make suggestions of people that could possibly help as well. **Linda Landry** cautioned that they will need to alter their set up plans to main social distancing guidelines to accommodate the additional people.

Mike Kaminski suggested using more brightly colored tape on the floor to delineate proper spacing. Discussion occurred on the best way to direct traffic through the polling process. It was determined that they need additional stanchions and tape to adequately form lines throughout the site. **Dave Nault** would really like to see them get rid of the old plastic chain and posts that they have stored for years and invest in something they can really use for things like this. **Line Comeau** suggested that they use the COVID money that they have received for this purpose.

Motion: by Dave Nault, seconded by Mike Kaminski, that they use some of the COVID money they have already received to purchase 14 new stations with 13' belts. They will seek reimbursement from the COVID grant for this expense.

Discussion: none.

Vote: (3-0).

Don Larsen asked how their display tables could be involved in the new layout being discussed. Rene Ouellet mentioned that they can be used to help direct traffic toward the exits.

Line Comeau stated that she is now a resident of Dunbarton and has offered her services for this election.

Dave Nault reflected that this election had a steady flow of people all day. There weren't any backups or lines, but there was never really a lull at any point during the day. **Rene Ouellet** stated that they had a 41% turnout, compared with similar towns that reported around 30% turnout.

Mike Kaminski reported former state representative JR Holt complimented the town on how they handled voters that did not want to wear a mask to vote. He felt that the alternatives were well laid out and presented courteously. **Bob Martel** said that anyone that wanted to vote was given the opportunity to vote. They could vote absentee, wear a mask and vote in-person, and have the ballot delivered by the Town Moderator, or they could choose to step aside to vote in the private room set aside for that purpose. Anyone that left without voting chose not to vote.

Mike Kaminski said that one resident expressed concern regarding the cameras in the gymnasium and the lack of signage alerting people to the fact that they may be under surveillance. He does not know if they were on at the time or not, but it is a question being

posed to the school board. Bob Martel noted that there are stipulations in how video surveillance can be used in a workplace but added that the purpose in the school is to monitor all people in the interest of safety, not only employees. **Mike Kaminski** stated that concern is that they are in a polling place and how that affects the anonymous nature of the voting process.

Rene Ouellet noted that he would prefer not to steer people toward the private room voting option except as a last resort sort of option. It is still a valid option, but it is time-consuming and disruptive to the process.

Dave Nault offered the thanks of the BoS to the many volunteers that helped on Election Day. They helped make everything run smoothly. He also thanked Linda Landry for coordinating the box lunches ordered for the election staff.

Linda Landry stated that the box lunches seemed to work better all-around and is likely how they will handle supplying food for the staff going forward. She also noted that they have so far received 348 requests for absentee ballots for the election in November. She will offer an option for people to pick them up in person when they are available, though she noted she can't hold onto them for too long and will have to mail those that aren't picked up by a certain date to be determined.

Linda Landry stated that the Goffstown Postmaster told her that the Goffstown Town Clerk is going to have a police officer pick up any late-arriving ballots from the post office at 5 pm to transport to the polling place. She asked if it was something that Dunbarton would be interested in doing. Linda doesn't know if they have the manpower for that to be an option, so she is offering it as an option for the BoS to decide. **Mike Kaminski** asked how many voters were disenfranchised in the last election because of late ballots. **Ms. Landry** stated that there were none, so it may be a non-issue for them. **Rene Ouellet** noted that there was a ballot dropped off at the Concord Post Office on election day, and a postal employee drove it to Dunbarton, so he noted that there could be some merit to sparing a person for an hour to ensure there are no late ballots.

Rene Ouellet said that they could use some more people to help count absentee ballots prior to the election. The state has not yet announced when they can begin counting, but it is typically between the Thursday through Monday prior to the election. Suggested 2 teams of 3 to process the anticipated additional volume. He noted that observers are needed as well.

Election setup will occur on the evening of November 2nd.

Accept Unanticipated Revenue

Motion: by Mike Kaminski, seconded by Bob Martel, to accept per RSA 31:95-b III (b) unanticipated revenue from fundraising for cemetery bench engraving in the amount of (\$1,000).

Discussion: Don Larsen said that 4 out of the 5 benches have been sold. This money is going toward bench engraving.

Vote: (3-0)

Motion: by Mike Kaminski, seconded by Bob Martel, to accept per RSA 31:95-b III (b) unanticipated revenue from fundraising for Wreaths Across Dunbarton in the amount of (\$53.00).

Discussion: Don Larsen said they will be continuing their fundraising efforts from now into December. He has ordered face masks with the logo on them for staff to wear. Social distancing guidelines will be maintained, and mask-wearing will be required.

Vote: (3-0).

Request to Sell Old Town Signs

Don Larsen found some old signs in the basement of the library. He would like permission to have a raffle at Town Meeting to raffle them off. Proceeds would go toward the computerized cemetery mapping project.

- The BoS were in consensus to approve the sign raffle.

NH DOT 10-year plan

Sgt. Chris Remillard reported that the application and supporting documentation has been submitted to Central NH Regional Planning. He is making information available online for the public to view the data they are using and where they are at in the process. There appears to be a perception in the public that nothing is being done to address the dangers of that intersection, and that is not the case. It is a state road, and it is ultimately up to the state to decide what the solution will be. **Dave Nault** suggested that it be mentioned at Town Meeting. **Sgt. Remillard** added that they will be looking into including information on it in their section of the Town Report.

Email Regarding Solar Taxing

An email was received from a concerned resident that they are being taxed on the solar panel project. After some research by the current and previous Town Administrators, it was determined that there was a measure voted upon in 1978 to prevent residents from being taxed on anything related to solar panels. The Assessing office is working to make sure the exemption process is implemented.

Review of Revenues and Estimated Taxes

The BoS needs to determine if they need to make any changes to their anticipated revenues to report to the DRA. **Line Comeau** reviewed the tax rate, the impact of the recent revaluation, and the overlay. They still have yet to collect 35% of the revenues they had anticipated for the year. She is still waiting to hear on the Meals and Rooms tax from the state. She feels they are on the mark as far as their revenues are concerned at this point. She recommends that they put \$60,000 into their overlay to cover any abatement **to avoid** impacting the surplus. The **Board** put \$50,000 in Overlay last year to cover any possible abatement by Eversource, **but** ended up using \$16,000 of it for the golf course abatement.

Dave Nault advised that he was served in regard to a suit by Eversource against the town pertaining to taxation on property they own in Dunbarton. **Line Comeau** confirmed that this is part of their abatement process.

- The BoS was in consensus to put \$60,000 into the overlay.

Review of Covid-19 Illness Policy

Dave Nault asked Line Comeau to reword their Covid-19 illness policy to make it inclusive of part-time employees for the BoS to review for the next meeting. **Mike Kaminski** asked that the changes be italicized.

TOWN BUSINESS

Mailbox Items

Dave Nault reviewed the following correspondence received by the BoS since the last meeting:

- The BoS signed off on a pay rate for the newly hired accounting help in the office.
- Saturday, October 31 will be Household Hazardous Waste Day at 12 Robinson Road in Bow, NH.
- The Dunbarton Library will be moving into Phase 3 of their reopening plan on Tuesday, September 22nd.
- Email from **NH DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau** advising that 72% of the state is in a severe drought.
- Planning Board update: Approvals on a 3-lot subdivision and a lot line adjustment. A site plan review on Twist Hill Road that was tabled until the next meeting. New application formats were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Don Larsen said that the Garden Club's annual mum sale for the garden club earned \$13,851 for all three days. \$7,000+ will be placed into their fund for more community events. Their next meeting is this Saturday at 9 am in the lower parking lot of the school.

Dave Nault said that the school board has worked with the neighbor that had their property affected.

BOARD MEMBER ISSUES

Mike Kaminski was asked by a resident if the Town Clerk will be opening up for evening hours.

Linda Landry said there is no current plan to return to evening hours. She added that they do offer alternatives for people that can't make it in during the day. If a resident calls and at least leaves a message or sends an email, she can talk with them and discuss what options are available.

Mike Kaminski told Linda Landry that she has the support of the BoS when it comes to enforcing mask usage when conducting business inside the town office.

Bob Martel is getting an estimate from the last person he met with for the library step repair. He is working to determine what sort of supports are in the ground underneath.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: by Mike Kaminski seconded by Bob Martel to adjourn the meeting.
Meeting adjourned at 8:31pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer King, Recording Secretary

David Nault, Chair

Michael Kaminski, Selectman

Robert Martel, Selectman