

MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DECEMBER 1, 2008

At 6:32 p.m., Chair Carol Lisbon called the meeting to order with members David W. Heinlein and Joseph M. Melican present. Also present were David W. Ramsay, Town Administrator, and Greer Pugatch, Administrative Assistant.

ATTENDANCE: Bonnie Akins, Charles Long & Bill Baranick, Board of Assessors; Karen MacTavish, Assistant Assessor; Attorney Tom Hunnewell; Dave Stapleton, Warrant Committee

PRESS: Ben Kossak, D-S Press

Tax Classification Hearing – Assessors

Mrs. Lisbon opened the annual public hearing to determine the percentages of the local tax levy for fiscal year 2009 for the Town of Dover. A notice of this hearing was published in the November 27, 2008 edition of the Dover-Sherborn Press. Charles Long, Bonnie Akins and Bill Baranick of the Board of Assessors were present along with Assistant Assessor Karen MacTavish, who spoke on their behalf. Mrs. MacTavish highlighted tax rate options and exemptions, including 1) single-rate versus different residential/commercial rates, 2) open space discount, 3) principal residence exemption, and 4) small commercial exemption. The Board of Assessors recommended continuing with a single tax rate for Dover as the most fair and equitable choice.

Mr. Heinlein moved for the Town to adopt a single tax rate with a factor of one for fiscal year 2009 without any discounts or exemptions, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Resolution in Recognition of Police Officer Colin Wise

Mr. Melican read aloud the Board of Selectmen's resolution in recognition of retiring Officer Colin Wise for his thirty-six years of dedicated service to the Town of Dover and its police department [see attached]. A well-attended luncheon in honor of Officer Wise was held the previous Tuesday. Mrs. Lisbon said that Officer Wise will be missed and wished him well in his retirement.

Attorney Tom Hunnewell re: Dedham Street Conservation Restriction

Attorney Tom Hunnewell represented Helena Swiny this evening with regard to her request for the Selectmen's approval of a conservation restriction administered by the Dover Land Conservation Trust (DLCT) on a parcel of land (approximately 10.9 acres) on Dedham Street. He referenced a plan which showed the portion of Ms. Swiny's property adjacent to Noanet Woodlands that would be retained in perpetuity in its natural, scenic and open condition, excepting two greenhouses which are currently rented to an organic farmer. Ms. Swiny would like that tenancy at will arrangement to continue, and allow for any reasonable reconstruction that might occur using the existing building footprints.

Attorney Hunnewell said that the Conservation Commission approved this conservation restriction at its October 22, 2008 meeting; however, with minor additional restrictions that have since been made following receipt of comments from Town Counsel, the state's Environmental Affairs Secretary, and DLCT, the Conservation Commission will have the opportunity to reaffirm their approval with these changes before it signs a municipal certification. Both the Commission and DLCT are aware that the only remaining provision yet to be approved by the state's Environmental Affairs Secretary is a reserved right to build either a temporary treehouse or playhouse on the premises.

Mr. Heinlein moved to approve the conservation restriction to Dover Land Conservation Trust of 149 Dedham Street subject to further recommendation from the Dover Conservation Commission and approval of the Dover Land Conservation Trust, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Mrs. Lisbon commented that over 100 acres of land in Dover were put under conservation restriction in 2007, and is pleased to see that trend continuing.

Review FY10 Operating Budgets: 122, 129, 135, 145, 151, 152, 155, 171, 178, 192, 195, 199, 291, 294, 295, 411, 422, 423, 424, 425, 428, 439, 450, 710, 751, 759, 912, 914, 916 & 950

The Board gave the proposed FY10 operating budgets under its purview an initial review. Mr. Ramsay answered questions about some of the changes, including exceptions to level-funding, including: 2 additional hours per week to bring the Selectmen's administrative assistant in line with all other salaried positions; a 3% increase in postal rates; \$1,000 increases in the Town Accountant budget for the certification stipend and the annual Town audit; a significant decrease in the new Treasurer/Collector's salary, and increases in that budget to reflect FY08 travel and purchase of services expenditures; a \$1,000 decrease in the telephone line item of the Town House budget and an increase in fuel oil calculated with the FY08 usage

levels multiplied by the Warrant Committee's \$4.00/gallon guideline; a 13% premium increase for Group Health Insurance; a 10% increase in the Town's property/casualty insurance in addition to higher premiums due to higher valuations of Town buildings; a 15% forecasted Workers' Compensation increase over the FY09 premium; and an increase in FICA/Medicare for employee step increases plus the general increase.

Mrs. Lisbon stressed that, especially given the difficult economic climate, the Board should strategize about potential changes to conducting "business as usual" in order to reduce operating expenses where possible. The Board asked for more detail in areas such as: Supplementary professional services, and proactive equipment replacement on a four-year cycle in Data Processing; the ongoing need for trail maintenance funding; future activity by the Tree Committee; detail on Highway services performed at overtime rates; replacement schedule for street lights that are not low sodium; recent Chapter 90/Town paving expenditures and eligibility for a STRAP grant; an itemized bond schedule; and FY09 Workers' Compensation expenditures versus projections.

Mrs. Lisbon asked for a discussion of the Town's current and future data processing plan to be put on an upcoming Selectmen's agenda.

Mr. Ramsay summarized Superintendent of Streets Craig Hughes' memorandum to the Board by explaining that substantial increases in some areas of the FY10 Highway Department budgets reflect more realistically recent expenditures and costs of materials. The error in the diesel line item will be corrected. The Finance Committee on Roads recently discussed how possible cuts in Chapter 90 monies might affect the Town's Tarvia budget and also the 5-year paving plan. Mrs. Lisbon noted that the Solid Waste budget is down, and requested that the Recycling Committee be invited to a meeting to update the Board on its recent activities and new initiatives.

Mr. Heinlein said that monies from the Dover Housing Partnership budget may be used in the upcoming year to reach out to the community through informational articles and/or advertising to re-establish a list of viable candidates for the affordable condominium units at County Court.

Mrs. Lisbon extended the Board's thanks to Mr. Ramsay and all department heads for preparation of the budgets on short notice. The budgets presented this evening will be taken under review.

Set Opening & Closing Dates for 2009 Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Melican moved to approve the opening of the warrant for the 2009 Annual Town Meeting on December 2, 2008 and the closing of the warrant on January 23, 2009, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.

Appointments

Mr. Heinlein moved to appoint Chris Jackman to the Dover Housing Partnership for a period of one year effective July 1, 2008, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Mrs. Lisbon moved to appoint Rich Oasis to the Open Space Committee for a period of one year effective July 1, 2008, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Adjournment

At 7:50 p.m., Mr. Melican moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.

DOVER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

David W. Heinlein, Clerk