MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 6, 2008

At 6:30 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: Valerie Spriggs, Superintendent of Schools; Bob DeFusco, Cable T.V. Advisor; Dave Stapleton, Warrant Committee

PRESS: Adam Conner-Simons, D-S Press

Superintendent of Schools Valerie Spriggs
On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Mrs. Lisbon welcomed Valerie Spriggs, the new Superintendent of Schools, to the Town of Dover. Ms. Spriggs was previously the Superintendent of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District, which is comprised of 5 towns in southwestern Massachusetts, and has a great deal of experience both as a school administrator and classroom teacher.

Ms. Spriggs thanked the citizens, parents and community members for the warm reception she has received since her arrival in July. She spoke very positively about the interactions that she has had with the students, faculty and administrators thus far. She said there are some immediate challenges ahead of her in these early days, including addressing deficiencies in the policy book, and opportunities for the 2 towns she serves to collaborate in becoming more fiscally conservative while maintaining the individuality of each town. Ms. Spriggs expressed her interest in meeting again after she has spent more time in the schools for an update and open dialogue with the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Spriggs thanked Mr. Heinlein for taking the time to meet with her to provide an overview and historical background of Dover. She also thanked Mr. Ramsay for meeting with her early on to discuss the local government operations.

The Board looks forward to working with Ms. Spriggs, and for the schools to benefit from her leadership and experience.

Town Clerk Barrie Clough re: Alternate Voting Site & State Election Warrant
Town Clerk Barrie Clough was present this evening to ask the Board to sign the November 4, 2008 State Election warrant, and to officially designate an alternate voting venue in Town per the Mass. General Laws. Mr. Clough suggested the lower level of the Caryl School in the event that the Dover Town House was not able to be used.

Mr. Heinlein moved to designate the Caryl School as the alternative voting site, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Mr. Clough advised the Board that the turn-out for the upcoming presidential election may break all records according to the Secretary of State. Voting hours at the Town House will be 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on November 4, 2008. Mr. Clough recognized the police department and building maintenance personnel for the support he is receiving in preparation for this event. He asked the Selectmen for their support if called upon, to which they readily agreed.

Per Mrs. Lisbon’s request, Mr. Clough explained the absentee ballot procedure for voters who will be out of town on election day.

**Review Capital Budgets**

Mrs. Lisbon provided a brief summary of the police FY10 capital budget requests which were discussed at length with Chief Griffin at the last board meeting.

Mr. Heinlein moved to approve the capital budget requests for the Police Department for two patrol vehicles in the amount of $62,000, a radio tower - $40,000, and a dispatch console - $35,000, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

The Board considered the revised Selectmen’s FY10 capital budget requests, which includes replacement of the library upper windows for $30,000, and $12,000 for painting the Great Hall ceiling. Mr. Ramsay explained that he has obtained a professional estimate for library window/storm window replacement options which ranges from $88,000 to $157,000. Since this is an energy driven project, he recommended altering the scope of this project to replacement of the storm windows only and sealing up the double-sash windows for a total cost of $30,000.

Mr. Ramsay told Mr. Heinlein that the windows to be sealed have not been opened in many years, so the building’s environment would not be altered.
Mr. Heinlein moved to approve the Board of Selectmen’s capital budget request for $30,000 for replacement of the library upper storm windows and ancillary work to seal the library windows, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Mr. Ramsay said that he has revisited the estimate for painting the Great Hall ceiling in the Town House. He told the Board that while the preliminary figure of $9,000 might be sufficient, he suggests amending the amount requested to $12,000. On a separate note, water damage around two of the window arcs in the Great Hall will be repaired in-house sometime this winter.

Mr. Heinlein moved to approve the capital budget request for the Selectmen for the painting of the Great Hall ceiling in the Town House in the amount of $12,000, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Mrs. Lisbon observed that there are no capital requests for the Water Department this year.

Mr. Ramsay informed the Board that, as requested, he and Superintendent of Streets Craig Hughes reconsidered the Highway Department FY10 capital budget request for an additional $10,000 to cover the cost of two trash containers approved at the 2008 Town Meeting. This purchase was to be combined with two other trash containers requested in FY10 as a cost saving measure. However, upon closer review, Mr. Hughes has determined that purchasing in quantity would not guarantee a savings; therefore, he would like to withdraw the request and use the $33,000 appropriated last year for this purpose to go out to bid at this time for two containers. He estimated that, given the $38,500 current price estimate and the trade-in of the containers being replaced, there will be a shortfall of approximately $4,000 requiring a Reserve Fund Transfer in the unlikely event that it could not be covered by the solid waste budget.

Mr. Heinlein moved to approve capital budget requests for the Highway Department for a 10-wheel dump truck with plow for $165,000 and two trash containers with rams for the Transfer Station for $71,000, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Mr. Ramsay said a Prior Notice for $4,000 will be prepared for the Board’s next meeting as a cautionary measure.

Cable Franchise License Hearing
Mrs. Lisbon welcomed Cable T.V. Advisor Bob DeFusco to this evening’s meeting. She said that while the application process for a cable franchise license agreement commenced two years ago, significantly less time of active negotiation for a contract has occurred due to Verizon’s availability. She asked Mr. DeFusco to give an update on the status of the Town’s negotiations with Verizon.

Mr. DeFusco gave a summary of this process to date: After the Town initially agreed to expedite the application process, Verizon suspended negotiations for close to 1½ years while attempting to pass legislation that would take away local authority. Once this failed, negotiations began in earnest and after a round of productive meetings and conversations in August and September, the Town and Verizon are essentially at an impasse at this time.

Mr. DeFusco said that the most recent offer must be compared with Comcast over a 15-year period. Areas of comparison include free internet service for schools and library, free I-loop connection between municipal offices, technology allowance, technical services, employee benefits, senior citizen discount, expanded basic service, studio operation allowance, the surety bond, etc. Mr. DeFusco told the Board that Verizon has suspended negotiations due to a disagreement over a proposed payment schedule for a $200,000 studio equipment allowance. Mr. DeFusco expressed his disappointment that an agreement has not been reached.

Mrs. Lisbon thanked Mr. DeFusco for providing a comparative chart detailing the above-mentioned terms for Comcast and Verizon. Mr. DeFusco told her that the build-out for the sections of Dover requiring underground fiberoptic cabling would take up to 3 years to complete. Mrs. Lisbon used a present value analysis of the $200,000 Verizon is offering over a 15-year period, ranging from $138,000 to $163,000. The Board asked Mr. DeFusco whether he recommended ending negotiations with Verizon at this time or extending the cable franchise license hearing to a later date to try to reach an agreement, if possible. Mr. DeFusco recommended the latter approach.

Mr. Heinlein moved to continue the hearing to December 4, 2008 at 7:00 p.m., seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

The Board thanked Mr. DeFusco for all of his efforts to date.

Salary Guidelines Discussion
Mrs. Lisbon asked Mr. Ramsay for a status report on the annual salary guidelines process involving the Board of Selectmen, Personnel Board and Warrant Committee with regard to the salary increase for non-union personnel. Mr. Ramsay said that per the protocol, the Personnel Board gathered data on salary trends in the Northeast and nationally which he and Mr. Melican shared with the Warrant Committee’s representative two weeks ago.

Mrs. Lisbon said that all three boards will meet in the near future to establish an FY10 percentage increase that is in keeping with the Town’s philosophy that the compensation package is at the median of comparable area communities.

**Designate a Trench Permitting Authority**

Mrs. Lisbon reminded the Board that the Town approved Article 17 of the 2008 Annual Town Meeting warrant, which authorizes the Board of Selectmen to designate an individual to issue trench permits.

Mr. Ramsay said that the state now requires municipalities to regulate the opening of trenches deeper than 3 feet or 15 feet in length in the Commonwealth effective January 1, 2009. He recommended that Superintendent of Streets Craig Hughes be designated as Dover’s trench permitting authority.

Mr. Heinlein moved to appoint the Superintendent of Streets as the local representative for issuing permits for the excavation of trenches on privately-owned land and for the excavation of public ways in the Town, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

**Francis Street Acceptance**

Mrs. Lisbon reminded the Board that, also at last Town Meeting, the Town voted to accept Francis Street as a public way (Article 20). The Record of Vote by the Dover Board of Selectmen which was executed by all three Board members is worded as follows:

“At a duly called public meeting of the Town of Dover Board of Selectmen on October 6, 2008, the Board voted affirmatively as follows with respect to the Town’s acceptance of Francis Street (the “Property”) as an accepted public way as laid out by the Board, as shown on plans in the Office of the Town Clerk and on a plan of land entitled “Subdivision Plan of Land in Dover” MacCarthy and Sullivan Engineering, Inc., Surveyors, dated December 8, 1988 and filed on December 5, 1994 with the Norfolk Registry District of the Land Court as Plan No. 33050D:

(a) To approve the form of and to accept quitclaim deed for the Property in order to effectuate the transfer of the Property to the Town for acceptance as a public way, which transfer was approved by Article 20 of the 2008 Annual Town Meeting held on May 5, 2008.

(b) To authorize the Town Administrator of the Town of Dover to take all actions on behalf of the Town that are reasonably necessary, in the judgment of the Town Administrator, to complete the transfer of the Property to
the Town from Jonathan Fryer, Trustee of the Charset Farm Realty Trust, in accordance with applicable Town Meeting Vote.”

Mass. Municipal Association Annual Meeting
The Mass. Municipal Association annual meeting will be held January 23 & 24, 2009 at the Hynes Auditorium in Boston. The Dover Board of Selectmen and Mr. Ramsay will attend the trade show and workshops along with numerous other officials from all over the Commonwealth.

Appointments
COA Chair Betty Hagan has sent the Board a letter recommending two senior citizens to fill the existing vacancies on that committee.

Mrs. Lisbon moved to appoint Paul Campanis and Lou Theodos to the Council on Aging for a period of three years effective July 1, 2008, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.

Mr. Heinlein is still looking for a volunteer to serve on the Tree Committee. Interested citizens should contact the Selectmen’s office (785-0032 ext. 221).

Mrs. Lisbon moved to appoint David Ramsay and Greer Pugatch as Personnel Rules Ombudsmen for a period of one year effective July 1, 2008, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.

Mrs. Lisbon moved to appoint Davis Ramsay as Affirmative Action Officer for a period of one year effective July 1, 2008, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.

Tax Work-Off Program Change in Hours
The Board considered the COA’s recommendation to decrease the number of hours tax work-off program participants are required to work in order to earn their full abatement amount of $750 from 100 hours to 93.75 hours due to the January 1, 2008 minimum wage increase. Mrs. Lisbon announced that of the 10 current program participants, at least two are not expected to return next year. COA Director Janet Claypoole is currently accepting applications for the work-off program, which are due back in her office on October 17, 2008.

Mr. Melican moved to change the hours [for the tax work-off program] to 93.75 as the maximum number of hours, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.
Other Business:

Approve Holiday Calendar
Mr. Heinlein moved to accept the 2009 holiday calendar, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Special License
Mrs. Lisbon moved to approve a special license for Pepper’s Fine Foods Catering for a wedding at Elm Bank this Saturday, October 1, 2008, seconded by Mr. Heinlein; it was unanimously voted.

Approve September 18, 2008 Meeting Minutes
Mr. Heinlein moved to accept the meeting minutes of September 18, 2008 as presented, seconded by Mr. Melican; it was unanimously voted.

Adjournment
At 8:02 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