

**MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 18, 2007**

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

ATTENDANCE: State Representative Lida Harkins; Adam Marx, Legislative Research Assistant; Craig Hughes, Superintendent of Streets; Bob Homer, Town Engineer; Joseph Melican, Warrant Committee

PRESS: Amy Reay, D-S Press

Review Ambulance Rates & Accounts Receivable Write-Offs

Mr. Ramsay said that Karen Jelloe, Treasurer/Collector, has forwarded a proposed ambulance billing rate schedule for calendar year 2007. For each category Mrs. Jelloe is recommending rates of either Medicare allowed + 30% as prepared by COMSTAR (which compensates for underpayment of the New England region in the recent past) or current Dover rates, whichever is higher.

The Board will review the rate schedule and vote at its February 1, 2007 meeting.

Review FY08 Operating Budgets: 122 & 911

Dover's assessed contribution for the pension fund has been received from the Norfolk County Retirement Board.

Mrs. Lisbon moved to approve Budget No. 911 Norfolk County Retirement in the amount of \$628,993, seconded by Mrs. Weld; it was unanimously voted.

Dover Community Center Building & Fundraising Committee Updates

Mr. Heinlein said that the Dover Community Center Building Committee (DCCBC) recently made a fantastic presentation on the proposed community center at the Council on Aging's monthly luncheon. Mrs. Weld commented that an informal survey taken at that time shows a mixed response regarding space needs and concern about the project cost. Presentations were also made for the Dover Foundation and the PTO at the Chickering School.

With the arrival of State Representative Lida Harkins, this discussion was temporarily suspended.

State Representative Lida Harkins

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Mr. Heinlein welcomed State Representative Lida Harkins and legislative researcher Adam Marx to this evening's meeting. Representative Harkins said that in addition to updating the Board and its citizens on current activities in which she is involved, she would like to hear from Dover about its needs and priorities.

Representative Harkins reported that she filed legislation along with 80 co-sponsors to increase the minimum Chapter 70 aid to minimum aid communities. She noted that a number of these wealthier communities have had overrides, some of which have not passed, and the three towns which she represents are at their tax levy limit. The newly-elected governor is also considering ways to take the burden off the property tax. Mr. Heinlein said that property tax relief would benefit some Dover residents, particularly senior citizens, who are "property rich but cash poor". Representative Harkins added that rather than shifting educational and other funds from poor inner city communities, it would be better to enhance the monies going to suburban communities using a different approach. She told the Selectmen that she has gotten assurances that Chapter 766 will be fully funded this year.

Meetings regarding budgets have begun, but substantive hearings will not begin until March due to reorganization. Governor Patrick is interested in pre-conferencing with House and Senate branch members combined to address a core of issues, such as alternative energy. Representative Harkins' priorities include the Teacher's 21 Bill (attracting, mentoring and retaining new teachers). She has been appointed to three commissions related to early childhood education, middle school education and DSS abuse cases. Her office is also coordinating a Council of State Legislators' conference being held next summer in Boston.

In response to questions from the Board about whether there could be a tax abatement for senior citizens, especially considering Dover's small commercial base, Representative Harkins said that bills have been filed and adjustments made several times. She is aware that her communities' senior citizens are facing increased taxes with escalation in property values, but with indicators for only modest economic expansion at this time, the availability of the low reserve funds may be limited. On a larger scale, legislators are focusing on industrial retention and growth by streamlining permitting and offering start-up monies and technical assistance for small companies.

Representative Harkins told Mrs. Lisbon the \$1 billion shortfall reported in the press is based in part on projections, spending of one-time reserve monies, and modest economic growth.

Mr. Heinlein thanked Representative Harkins for coming in this evening and offered the Board's assistance at any time. Both the Board of Selectmen and Representative Harkins encouraged citizens to contact them at any time..

Craig Hughes & Bob Homer re: Haven Street Right of Way

Town Engineer Bob Homer addressed the Haven Street right of way issue, informing the Board that the Town owns the entire strip of land in question (27' wide and 400+' long) from Haven Street to the Town yard. His research of deeds of contiguous properties and accompanying plans as well as Town Meeting records of an eminent domain acquisition also reveals that it has never been accepted as a public way. Three ANR plans related to the Fryer parcel have been approved by the Planning Board, including one dated April 11, 1996 which provided a 40' wide right of way to Haven Street.

The Board of Selectmen will not take any action on this matter at this time; it is currently being handled by the Planning Board.

Public Hearing re: Cable Franchise License

Mr. Heinlein moved to continue the public hearing concerning the cable franchise license agreement to [its] February 7, 2007 [meeting] at 7:00 p.m. [at Verizon's request], seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Dover Community Center Building & Fundraising Committee Updates Continued

Mrs. Weld resumed her summary of feedback from recent DCCBC presentations, indicating that the majority of attendees have liked the program and design of the proposed community center, but they are unable to separate that from the cost, which many feel is too high. The DCCBC will also reach out to other constituents in the near future such as the Dover Mother's Association, the scouts, mens' groups, garden clubs and the Open Fields theater group.

The Town's financial advisor has provided a debt service schedule for \$18.5 million borrowed over 30 years instead of 20 years, and with equal total payments (level debt structure) as opposed to declining total payments (equal principal, standard issue). The Board of Selectmen has asked the Assessor's Department for the tax impact on the median assessed value property based on this debt schedule. According to Assistant Assessor Karen MacTavish the average first annual tax bill would increase \$750 under a 20-year borrowing scenario, and \$450 for the same period under a 30-year borrowing scenario with equal principal payments over the life of the bond. With regard to the required special legislative approval of 30-year financing, Mr. Heinlein felt if this project was approved at Town Meeting, a compelling argument for this building with 50 to 100 years longevity could be made to the legislature. Mrs. Weld reports that foundation and energy grants are also being explored. Mr. Heinlein said that the project budget has been very conservatively prepared and will not exceed the \$18.5 million estimate with the large contingencies that are built in. Mrs. Lisbon added that if the project was approved at Town Meeting in its full amount, the DCCBC would "sharpen its pencil" in the next design phase, further reducing total cost.

With the support of the Warrant Committee, the Board agreed that Architect Don Mills should assess the Caryl School to determine what repairs are necessary over the next two years to prevent immediate and long-term damage to the building due to deterioration as well as to address any immediate safety issues. This could be a potential alternative for Town Meeting vote.

The Board will also continue to consider smaller or different building options. Mrs. Lisbon asked the DCCBC to look more closely at the need for gym space in Town.

Mr. Heinlein reported that in an effort to reduce the tax burden on the community, the 1999 general purpose and 2001 Wylde property borrowings have now been refinanced at a savings to the Town of \$160,000 over the course of the loans.

Water Department Capital Budget Request

Karl Warnick has received price quotes for work needed at the Caryl Park wellfield, and has incorporated them into the FY08 Water Department capital budget request.

Mrs. Weld moved to approve this capital budget request from the Water Department for the cleaning and redevelopment of the Caryl Park wellfield, seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Mrs. Lisbon informed the Board that FY08 capital budget requests total approximately \$1.1 - 1.3 million (without the community center) due to several large capital expenditures being sought by Town departments, including replacement of fire engine #4 and the ambulance. She itemized and detailed other capital requests for the Board.

Review Current List of Warrant Articles

The Board briefly reviewed Annual Town Meeting 2007 warrant articles that have been submitted to date. The warrant closes on January 26, 2007. The Board will make a recommendation on the community center by the end of March.

Other Business:

Review Draft Town Report

Mrs. Lisbon moved to approve the [Board of Selectmen] submission for the Town Report, seconded by Mrs. Weld; it was unanimously voted.

Prior Notice - Building Maintenance

Mr. Ramsay told the Board that Karl Warnick is requesting monies for rug replacement and mold remediation in the Town library meeting room. Mrs. Lisbon elaborated that this was originally a capital budget request for fiscal year 2008; however, a consultant has recommended taking these actions without delay.

Mrs. Weld moved to approve a Prior Notice for \$7,500 for rug replacement at the library by the Building Maintenance Department, seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Appointment

Mrs. Weld moved to appoint John Rosetti as an associate member of the Conservation Commission to June of 2007, seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Approve January 4, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Weld moved to approve the meeting minutes of January 4, 2007 as presented, seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Before adjourning, Mrs. Lisbon reminded citizens that there is a fuel assistance gift fund set up to help those Dover residents in need, and thanked the Dover Church for its contribution.

Adjournment

At 8:12 p.m., Mrs. Weld moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

DOVER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Kathleen W. Weld, Clerk