

**MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
JANUARY 4, 2007**

At 6:30 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: Carol Jackman, Jonathan Wolff & Bill Herd, Cemetery Commissioners; Carol Gregory & Dick Malcom, Dover Community Center Building Committee; Don Mills, Mills Whitaker Architects; Robyn Hunter, Joseph Melican, Allen Goldberg & Scott Seidman, Warrant Committee; David Stapleton; Michele Sullivan; Karen McKoy; Kenneth King

Cemetery Commissioners re: Fees

At the Cemetery Commissioners' request, the Board of Selectmen has invited them to this evening's meeting to discuss proposed cemetery fee increases. Jonathan Wolff told the Board that his commission has conducted regional research on fees charged for various services comparable to those available to Dover residents to determine fair and reasonable increases for the Highland Cemetery. Findings shared with the Board indicate that Dover's rates are significantly below market rate at present. Mr. Wolff also went over a spreadsheet of current Dover rates grown at several percentage rates since they were last changed in January 2003, and then compounding 3 years into the future.

The Cemetery Commissioners are recommending keeping lot prices at \$200 per grave and raising the perpetual care from \$450 to \$800 for maintenance of the cemetery. Overall, the majority of cemetery fees would increase 7% over a 7-year period (January 2003 - January 2010), in line with surrounding community averages, effective January 31, 2007. The Commissioners also propose a \$175 surcharge for services after 3:00 p.m. and no charge for veterans' foot markers.

Mrs. Lisbon asked Mr. Wolff to consider increasing rates higher than they are proposing. Mr. Heinlein said that this decision is at the Cemetery Commissioners' discretion, adding that the Selectmen appreciate their setting a precedent for other Town organizations to also consider raising fees. The Commissioners agreed to set new fees at the 10% growth rates.

Dover Community Center Building Committee

Mr. Heinlein opened this evening's discussion by thanking interested citizens for their recent feedback on the proposed community center project, and emphasized the importance of continued input from the community going forward. Mrs. Weld said that the Dover Community Center Building Committee (DCCBC) is also listening, and described some of the issues being addressed such as management and maintenance of the proposed community center under the care and custody of the Selectmen; operating cost scenarios and usage fees; and financing options to substantially reduce the estimated tax burden. She said the DCCBC understands that citizens are experiencing "sticker shock" at the cost of new construction. The DCCBC is considering whether there are other viable fallback options for the Caryl School site that could

also be presented at Town Meeting, and seeks guidance from the Board on how to proceed at this time.

Mrs. Lisbon and Mr. Heinlein spoke of the need to provide several options, whether in May 2007 or at a subsequent Town Meeting. Mr. Heinlein itemized potential alternatives for consideration, including no action at this time, new construction, planned renovation, tear down/leave lot vacant or create parkland, and moving to the next phase of the design process for new construction. Mr. Heinlein reiterated that any course of action will be a significant expenditure for the Town. The Selectmen encouraged those present and interested citizens to give their input.

Architect Don Mills elaborated on the last option, which would entail having an architect perform design work and a construction manager plan the project through preparation of construction documents, and together defining the scope of the project and associated costs. Project scheduling, budgeting and bidding of the trades would also be done during this pre-construction phase.

Mr. Mills told the Board that if the project was phased in terms of building a community center in segments, costs would be significantly higher as the above steps would be performed several times and construction costs would continue to escalate, user groups would have to be prioritized, and ongoing construction would be disruptive to users. Mr. Mills said that if the scope of the project was reduced by cutting programs and eliminating associated portions of the building, the overall cost of the new construction could be lowered.

DCCBC Co-Chairman Carol Gregory reminded everyone that after careful review her committee has concluded that it would not be fiscally prudent to spend a large amount of money repairing/renovating the Caryl School due to its age and condition. Co-Chairman Dick Malcom added that the DCCBC has deliberated thoroughly on several choices, and new construction is economically and spatially the best option.

Mrs. Gregory commented that if the building was scaled down by cutting, for example, the Park & Recreation Department and other municipal office space, those activities would still need to be housed elsewhere, potentially requiring renovation or additions at other Town building locations. Mrs. Lisbon asked those present to consider creative options such as moving the Park & Recreation Department to the Whiting Road property, using the back garage at the Highway Department for storage space, and using the Fireside Room in the Town House for municipal office expansion if the Council on Aging moved across the street. Mr. Mills estimated that the project cost would be reduced by 35% if the physical size of the community center was halved. He added that if the fully outfitted gym was removed from the design, that would lower the cost by \$1.5 million.

Former Childhood Development Center Director Michele Sullivan asked the Board to reconsider repairing the existing Caryl School. Mr. Mills gave a deferred maintenance estimate, including roof replacement and an updated sprinkler system, of \$300,000 - \$350,000 per year for ten years.

Warrant Committee Chairman Robyn Hunter suggested presenting several design scenarios of increasing sizes (a "menu" approach) with an associated cost for each option. She felt this would

help citizens to understand how construction costs are tied to programs. Mr. Mills responded that costs could be approximated for various square footages, but program cuts would be difficult to prioritize and would narrow the constituent groups being served. Mr. Heinlein added that additional time and expense would be required in order to prepare comprehensive incremental scenarios.

Other topics discussed this evening included: Selling the property, entering into a long-term commercial lease with a developer, the "bandaid" approach, continued exploration of creative financing options, and considering this project in the context of the Town's long range needs for any kind of Town building construction.

Mrs. Weld told the Board that the DCCBC will make public presentations in the near future to known users on the proposed community center, post additional information on the Town website and prepare press releases. The Board of Selectmen will ascertain costs of developing some of these options for use in determining which options to present at Town Meeting this May or in the future. The Board thanked the DCCBC and other interested citizens for their input this evening.

Review Board of Selectmen's Fee Schedules

Mr. Ramsay observed that the majority of fees under the jurisdiction of the Selectmen are adjusted regularly or are dictated by legal contract. He added that the Board of Fire Engineers is proposing fee increases based on a survey of other communities. Mrs. Lisbon felt the Board should adopt a consistent philosophy when determining increases (e.g., top quartile, midpoint or base point of surrounding towns). Mr. Heinlein suggested also setting policy on re-evaluation of fees on a regular basis.

The Board instructed Mr. Ramsay to gather data on Fire and Building Department fees for four comparable communities for comparison. This matter will be taken up again at the January 18, 2007 meeting with that data in hand.

Review FY08 Operating Budgets: 122 & 176

Budget No. 122 Selectmen was incomplete at this time, so this item was deferred to the next Selectmen's meeting.

Mr. Heinlein moved to approve Budget No. 176 Board of Appeals in the amount of \$3,932, seconded by Mrs. Weld; it was unanimously voted.

Warrant Committee Budget Review Calendar

Mr. Ramsay will accompany Mr. Heinlein to the Warrant Committee's January 17, 2007 meeting for the review of all but two of the Selectmen's budgets. Mrs. Hunter agreed to try to reschedule the review of those two budgets.

Review Draft Town Report

The Board will review the draft Selectmen's report for the 2006 Town Report at its next meeting.

Other Business:

MIIA Nominations/Voting Delegate

Mr. Heinlein will serve as Dover's voting delegate at the upcoming annual Massachusetts Municipal Association business meeting on January 13, 2007.

Norfolk County Commissioners Engineering Request

Town Engineer Robert Homer is seeking the Board's approval to have the Norfolk County Commissioners prepare an easement plan for the sidewalk extension in the area of 9 Walpole Street.

Mrs. Lisbon moved to approve this engineering request, seconded by Mrs. Weld; it was unanimously voted.

Tax Work-Off Program Change in Hours

COA Director Karen Tegelaar has sent a memorandum to the Board informing them that, due to the minimum wage increase from \$6.75 to \$7.50 per hour effective January 1, 2007, the Council on Aging is recommending a decrease in the number of hours tax work-off participants must work from 111 to 100 hours to earn their full \$750 abatement.

Mrs. Lisbon suggested bringing the Council on Aging members to a Selectmen's meeting to discuss whether there is a need by more senior citizens than the annual limit of ten to participate in the tax work-off program and, if so, whether there are enough Town offices needing the additional help to accommodate a larger number of participants. An invitation will be sent to the Council on Aging.

Mrs. Weld moved that effective January 1, 2007 tax work-off participants must work 100 hours to earn their full abatement rather than 110 [hours], seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Approve December 13, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Weld moved to approve the meeting minutes of December 13, 2006 as presented, seconded by Mrs. Lisbon; it was unanimously voted.

Adjournment

At 8:32 p.m., Mrs. Lisbon moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Weld; it was unanimously voted.

DOVER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Kathleen W. Weld, Clerk