Dunbarton Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2018
7:00 P.M.

A meeting of the Dunbarton Board of Selectmen (BoS) was held on Thursday, May 10, 2018 at 7 p.m. at the Dunbarton Town Offices.

Mike Kaminski called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Board members present:**
Mike Kaminski, Chairman
Dave Nault, Selectman
Robert “Bob” Martel, Selectman

**Town Officials and others present:**
Line Comeau, Town Administrator
Jeff Crosby, Road Agent
Jennifer King, Recording Secretary

**Members of the public present:** Ron Slocum

It was noted for the record that Leo Martel was recording the meeting for the benefit of anyone in town that could not attend.

Approve Minutes from May 3rd, 2018

**Motion:** by Dave Nault, seconded by Bob Martel, to accept meeting minutes from May 3rd, 2018 as amended. **Vote:** (3-0)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** none.

**MAILBOX:**
Mike Kaminski shared that they received an estimate for the Milfoil treatment of Gorham Pond. Projected amounts will be significantly less this year.

Mike Kaminski noted that a Dunbarton resident that was recently arrested is facing additional charges.

Line Comeau mentioned the public library meeting table policy, and the possibility of closing the library if it was a problem for public use of the bathrooms. Mike Kaminski confirmed that the library will be closed this weekend.

Mike Kaminski said that because the Transfer Station Supervisor is on bereavement leave, discussion with him will be tabled until next week.

Mike Kaminski presented the BoS with an FYI regarding an update from their lawyer regarding a lawsuit against the town.
Line Comeau shared that she has created a file for changes to personnel policy. If anyone has anything to add, they can add it to the file, and this info will drive the agenda for the workshop they will have to go over personnel issues.

Line Comeau also said that she has posted the welfare director job, and has gotten one phone inquiry and one application so far.

Line Comeau said that the RFP for painting of the library went out on Monday. She has also contacted the individuals that provided bids before. It is on Hot Topics.

Line Comeau gave an update on the tax deeds they are awaiting payment on. One property has been paid, and the town is anticipating partial payment on the last property prior to June 5th cut off.

Dave Nault said he talked with Jeff Trexler in regard to Score Construction, and the estimate Bauen gave us for the Town Hall/Library. Jeff is willing to look at that structure to make sure the metal is our best option and to see if he is in full agreement with previous engineer’s findings. When told that town would be willing to pay some of his fees, Jeff Trexler refused. Jeff said he reviewed the previous loading, and will look at it again, may be a month to a half before he’s finished.

Line Comeau said that she is in process of finalizing the Warrant for the first half’s taxes. It should be completed by Friday May 18th, and ready for distribution by the Tax Collector by May 31st.

Dave Nault asked if the builders had called in reference to gutters? Line Comeau reported that she had spoken to him on the phone and has sent emails. She will follow up with him. Line Comeau also reported that the Painting RFP is now listed on Hot Topics and with the NHMA. Dave Nault asked the Board when they should start on the painting estimates for the Highway garage building? Mike Kaminski replied that once they find out how much funding is left, they should aggressively go after that.

Dave Nault noted that there have been piles of leaves built up in back of the police and fire departments and the school, but it doesn’t appear that anything has been done yet. Line Comeau said had not communicated that to Mike Underwood yet. Dave Nault suggested holding the check until that gets done. It’s built up pretty good against the building. Bob Martel said that they brought that to his attention last year, and Bob said that Mike Underwood cleaned it out, but leaves blow in from elsewhere.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ROAD PROJECTS FOR 2018:

Mike Kaminski opened the public hearing at 7:15 p.m.

Jeff Crosby was in attendance to provide status updates on town road projects:
Stark Bridge: **Jeff Crosby** said that his understanding in taking with Mike Hansen, they are setting first footings tomorrow morning on the northerly side. Then they will remove steel sheets, back fill, and then move to the southerly side and do the same thing. Then they’ll set the arch bridge section on top. **Dave Nault** asked how far the footings stick up out of the water. **Jeff Crosby** replied that there’s a pedestal on top of that as well. There is a total of 6, plus footings for wingwalls. They dug the hole and have stone in it, and they have the crane all set as well. They’ve been in contact with the town engineer to review the work. **Dave Nault** asked if they are setting the arch as soon as they have those up? **Jeff Crosby** replied that they will get the footings done next week. **Mike Kaminski** asked if he was you pleased with the work so far? **Jeff Crosby** said yes. Not a lot had gotten done yet. We’re starting to pick up speed now.

Grapevine Road: **Jeff Crosby** said that one last section of pavement is left along with minor shoulder work. They are doing shimming in different parts of the town, which involves just putting a layer of pavement over some spots that we keep having to cold patch. They’re just small stretches of the road. Some on Gorham Pond Road as well.

**Jeff Crosby** said they’re relocating the fire road, and the parking lot behind the police station needed to be redone, so they are doing that in conjunction with the school project.

They won’t be overlaying large sections of road, except on Grapevine road. Still doing brush cutting, some culvert repair. They’re trying to go a bit easy on the budget.

Intersection on Holmes Road: **Jeff Crosby** shared that they are realigning the intersection and changing the grade. The highway department has rebuilt another section of Holms road already. It’s to make the intersection come down to the road in a manageable angle and improve the line of sight distance. It’s always been problematic, but with increased traffic it’s becoming more of an issue. **Mike Kaminski** asked if the DOT on board with that work. **Jeff Crosby** answered that they are.

**Town Dirt road maintenance:** **Mike Kaminski** asked if Jeff if he had found the product recommended from last year’s hearing to keep the dust down? **Ron Slocum** said he found it was quite expensive and is looking to get a better price with other products. Ron stated that he has found there are some more inexpensive products out there. Jeff replied that the town typically use calcium chloride, which is not the best for the environment. **Leo Martel** said the traffic has picked up over the years. Everyone goes about 50 miles an hour. They’re going to be doing a large logging operation up there, as well.

**Email from Judy Stone:** **Jeff Crosby** shared that he has been talking to Judy Stone. Her late husband Jim had put in some drainage. There was a culvert put in by the previous road agent maybe about 15 years ago. She thinks the culvert is causing the issue with the field being wet. The culvert is not high flow.
Mike Kaminski suggested that it might be worthwhile to meet with her. Jeff Crosby said that he is going to meet with her.

Dave Nault asked if there is a chance that they could make it so that the drainage runs down the side of the road instead of through the field? Jeff Crosby replied that yes, it could be done, but doesn’t feel the town needs to do a whole new drainage system.

Ron Slocum, 55 Tenney Hill Road, Dunbarton: Asked if they would be putting more crushed granite on Tenney Hill. He feels it solves a lot of dust issues. Perhaps a hybrid with some of the stone could help the dust? Jeff Crosby responded that the stone doesn’t really grade well when it’s dry and can makes the dust worse. Stones don’t hold up well in the winter, and it all gets plowed to the side of the road. It’s a challenge, Jeff stated that last year they used different gravel, which seemed to be more durable, but didn’t feel it was less dusty. Dave Nault asked about rolling it after they grade it? Jeff Crosby replied that it’s costlier because they have to rent a roller. It does set the stone and pack it a little more. Mike Kaminski is interested to see the alternatives that Ron has found. Ron Slocum said he can try it on the road in front of his house and see how well it works before bringing it before the town. Jeff will work with Ron to seek out additional products to try.

Mike Kaminski asked the Road Agent about striping parking lot. Mike recommended that because of the budget constraints, suggested that they just stripe the handicap area. Jeff Crosby said it’s only about $600 to do the entire parking lot. Dave Nault asked if they are you striping behind the new police department? Jeff Crosby said they are not. Dave Nault said if we do the handicap area near the entrance, it may look better than having to whole thing striped, anyway. Jeff Crosby: they could do that, along with the library handicap parking.

Dave Nault asked if there was any plan to work on Montalona Road. Dave said he has a neighbor on Montalona Road that complains about the problem section that was skim-coated back before Jeff was road agent. It’s on the southerly section of Kimball Pond. Jeff Crosby mentioned that it had quite a wheel rut that they did fill in and skim coat once. Dave Nault noted that there’s another area by Harrington’s that is the same. Jeff Crosby responded that those areas are not included in the projects that they will be working on.

Dave Nault: last year we talked about doing some sections of Montalona Road, but he knows that his budget got a bit jumbled around. Maybe we can look at having it on the budget for next year. He just wanted to have something to tell his neighbor. Jeff Crosby said there’s just not the money for it this year. We can do some skim-coating in certain locations. Last year they replaced culverts on Old Hopkinton Road. Every year they try to do a few of those to stay ahead of it.

Mike Kaminski closed the public hearing at 7:45 p.m.

**Update on School Board Audit Results**
Jeff Trexler, from the Dunbarton School Board told the BoS that the framing on the school is underway, and they are ahead of schedule inside. On their budget they are into their $121,000 contingency portion by only $1,600 so far. That involved things that weren’t on the drawings, and things like replacing the rot. The warm air from the gym was escaping into the eaves and rotting it from the inside. A lot of it was electrical. They did not put in the fire alarm system in the attic but saved $10,000 by going with a different window package. Not quite the quality of others they looked at, but for the price, they seemed like a good value.

Jeff Trexler reported that the School Board met last night, and one of the things discussed is their million-dollar problem. They are still waiting for forensic auditor to give them the final report. At issue is their unencumbered fund balance. There is $1,059,803 on our books that they did not know was there. He is still looking back at tuition payments to see if there are adjustments going back to 2007. They are not yet sure if they have over, or underpaid. Dave Nault said that at the school meeting, he was thinking they overpaid. Jeff Trexler replied that the indication is that they overpaid, but they aren’t sure. School turns unencumbered money back to offset taxes. Each year, the balance amount reported was too low. The money has accumulated unbeknownst to them.

Jeff Trexler said they have been looking at their options for what to do with this money. The default option is that it would be returned as unencumbered funds this fall and our tax rate will fall $3.50. They asked their attorney if the voters were to choose to do so, could they put some into a reserve fund for the town and withdraw amounts from that to make bond payments. In order to appropriate this money into any use, they would have to have a special School District meeting. Their attorney said the court would have no problem approving this, but said they cannot set up a reserve fund to pay specifically for the item in a warrant article. They are not allowed a sinking fund or debt repayment fund. The School Board would be looking to do something the opposite of a sinking fund, but the attorney said if they tried to do that, they could be challenged. He said the state law does allow them to set up other funds if the purpose is geared toward what their mission is. For example, they could set up a fund to pay for tuition. If it happens to be the same amount as a bond payment, that’s fine. The attorney said they could, instead of submitting final paperwork for the bond, they could hold off, take out a bond anticipation note to fund the project, hold a special meeting to see if the voters want to use money to apply to the bond. They felt they would have to go back to the voters to get a mandate to move in that direction.

Dave Nault asked what is the harm in just giving it all back to the voters? Jeff Trexler replied that there was no harm at all. But the town would not get to weigh in and make that decision for themselves if they want to invest in a more gentle reduction in taxes or if they want it all back now. They didn’t feel it think it was right for the School Board to make that decision.

Mike Kaminski noted that when the BoS had excess funds, they put some into emergency reserve, but Dave Nault suggested the voters get some back too. Jeff Trexler
said that they had looked at this. They looked at school and town expenditures. School expenditures have gone up. They could use some of this money to create a flat tax rate. The difference could go into a fund they could use to pay tuition, etc. There’s no real wrong answer here.

**Bob Martel** said that in his opinion, having a meeting would be the most proper thing to do. People can weigh in and the School Board can go with the consensus.

**Mike Kaminski** asked when this money would be returned. **Jeff Trexler** said it would be this year. As of July 1, it will be in the unencumbered fund balance.

**Jeff Trexler** explained their thinking was that the community has been very good to the school district. So, the School Board thought they would ask if the town has some pressing capital needs, that the money be used for the town? **Mike Kaminski** said he has thought about that, but to not give it back to the taxpayers, he doesn’t feel comfortable with that.

There was some further discussion on the needs of the town and what the best option would be as far as handling the extra money.

**Mike Kaminski** said there is nothing wrong with the default option. Keeping taxes level will help the people on fixed incomes in this town. **Bob Martel** noted that when we received our unencumbered funds, we tried to address the needs of the town. You have a windfall and can address the needs of the school. Yes, it is town money, but it was appropriated to the school. Leveling off tuition payments has an effect on everyone’s taxes. **Jeff Trexler** said they’re looking at both the town and the school, to see where the needs are greatest. If they happen to be on the town side, they have no problem with letting the town use the money. **Line Comeau** cautioned that if it’s looking like we just want to increase our capital reserves on the town level, the courts may not really approve that. **Jeff Trexler** said that the explanation to the court would be that the community has discovered over a million dollars we didn’t know we had, so the townspeople need to decide where to apply that money. At their June 12 forum, they will be talking about it and hearing from people. There are some folks that may want to put money toward different things. There are lots of ideas, and they want to hear them all. The School District would write the warrant, so that there would not be the opportunity for challenging warrant articles.

**Line Comeau** asked Jeff Trexler for clarification on the schools operating budget, that earlier, he reported that there was an impact of $1.36. At the March meeting, you had said it was going to be $1.24. **Jeff Trexler** replied that they had an adjustment in revenues. **Line Comeau** noted that at the School meeting, they also passed the warrant article to put money in the capital reserves, which was $.79 cents.

**Jeff Trexler**: they were trying to show the change from year to year. It’s a change of $0.45 increase for the operating budget, and $0.79 for warrant article impact, which is a total of $1.36. **Line Comeau** pointed out for clarification, that this windfall is going to offset the current year’s budget increase of $1.36, so people aren’t going to see as much
of a tax decrease as they would think. She added that on her side of the town reporting, she provides an estimated worksheet for expenses and revenues, but then includes the MS form from the DRA in the Annual report. The matching number serves as a check and balance.

Jeff Trexler explained that their capital budget is separate from the operating budget. If you’re adding capital expenses you inflate the operating budget. So, by separating them, they see what the operating budget does each year. Line Comeau recommended that they look at what they use as their final report, and that they look into doing something similar to what the town does. Mike Kaminski noted that the school’s operating budget is going to go through the roof because of the bond payment. Jeff Trexler replied that they’re trying to break that out.

Mike Kaminski said that the BoS will support their meeting in June.

Line Comeau asked if a postcard is going to be sent for both the forum and the meeting?

Jeff Trexler replied that yes, it will.

Jeff Trexler asked if the town has ever considered going to a July to June fiscal year.

Line Comeau said that they’ve talked about it, but the DRA and our auditors have advised against it.

Mike Kaminski said that he really likes the idea of a public forum.

Jeff Trexler shared their timeline: the DRA will begin tax rate setting when they get the forms in. They try to set their rate in October. They have to have a public hearing 25 days prior to the special meeting. They would like to hold that meeting at the school. They are looking at August 30 for their public hearing, which is the second day of school. Looking at Sept. 24 or 25 have the special meeting. Then they will be prepared to submit all the paperwork to the DRA by October 1 for the tax rate setting.

Bob Martel offered his thanks to the School Board for wanting to help solve some of the town’s problems. We’ve never had that sort of relationship before. Jeff Trexler asked if the town would like to cohost the public forum. Mike Kaminski said it wasn’t necessary, but they have the support of the BoS.

The public forum will be on June 12th at 6 p.m.

Dave Nault noted that the Town’s capital improvement is underfunded. There are some serious needs coming down the road quickly for this town. Jeff Trexler commented, sometimes it’s hard to get the voters to look down the road.

Jeff Trexler out the state legislature has set another 10 million dollars aside for school improvements related to security. Jeff stated he had a discussion with the police chief about cameras at the school (the state will cover 80%). The voters did not approve funding for card reader access. They also need additional exterior lighting. The fire alarm is an upgrade, rather than an improvement. They are going to find what they can and shoot for another round of funding.

Mike Kaminski said that their building inspector is giving them reports to keep them on top of what is going on at the school, which has been working well.
PUBLIC COMMENTS:
Leo Martel mentioned that everyone calls it school money, but it’s taxpayer money raised to operate the school. It’s the taxpayer money. Mike Kaminski said that they do acknowledge that. The school board isn’t making decisions about that money without taxpayer input. Bob Martel added that we’ve had this talk, and we’re in consensus that it’s going to be the taxpayers that decide where that money is going. You need the hearing and special meeting so the taxpayers can decide. Line Comeau said she doesn’t think the courts would approve our use of the money. Bob Martel: we now have a plan to attack the buildings in town. It may require us to look for a bond for that building, but it is up for us to look at. Mike Kaminski added that it is nice that they offered. Bob Martel agreed that it was nice that they thought of the town. Line Comeau said that the people running Arts on the Common are concerned about having no real bathroom for their vendors. They have always been able to offer them the use of a real bathroom because of the length of time that they are on the common. In the past on Old Home Day we’re opened up our handicap public restroom here. In order to support the group and their effort, she said she would ask the selectmen about doing so again. Dave Nault said it appears the concern is more for the vendors. If both doors going into other parts of the building are locked, he doesn’t have a problem allowing them to use the restroom here. Line Comeau said that Margaret was agreeable to that. Dave Nault noted that the funding from this comes back to the town. Mike Kaminski said that he wished there were more planning. It isn’t right to tell a townsperson that they can’t use a restroom in a town building. Anyone that needs to use a bathroom should be able to use it. To tell a resident that he is spending money here but can’t use a bathroom is wrong. Bob Martel: he agrees with Mike on one position, they don’t get to us soon enough. They also didn’t get a handicapped portable toilet like they were supposed to. Line Comeau said she notified them that the portable toilets they have for their event need to be located in a certain spot. Mike Kaminski said that in the future, we need better communication and coordination. Dave Nault suggested that they notify them in writing that next year, they need to make sure they have a handicapped portable toilet available. Mike Kaminski added that they support them now, but they need to do a better job next year. Leo Martel said that regarding the excess money, his thought is that it looks like they’re trying to find a place to spend this money, but this Board has made tremendous advances in what they’re putting away for rainy day fund, and fixing the buildings. Now you’re basically caught up. The rainy-day fund is back to the level it should be. You’re going to be getting caught up to a point that we can increase our funding to other things. Dave Nault feels that this board has the confidence of the voters in that they are going to make the right choices with their money. Motion: by Bob Martel, seconded by Dave Nault to adjourn meeting. Vote: (3-0)
BoS adjourned at 8:52 p.m.
Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer King
Recording Secretary

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Mike Kaminski, Chair

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Dave Nault, Selectman

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Bob Martel, Selectman