

**TOWN OF DEDHAM
DEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING
HELD AT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER, 1100 HIGH STREET, DEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS
SEPTEMBER 14, 2023, 6:30 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

James A. MacDonald	Chair
Dr. Dennis Teehan	Vice-Chair
Dimitria Sullivan	Member
Erin Boles Welsh	Member
Josh Donati	Member

TOWN STAFF:

Leon Goodwin	Town Manager
Nancy Baker	Assistant Town Manager
Doreen LaBrecque	Assistant to Administration

Minutes prepared by Lorena Araujo of Minutes Solutions Inc. from a video recording.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance and observed a moment of silence for Mr. Bob Hanson, who passed away on September 2, 2023. Mr. Hanson served as Town Executive Secretary, Town Manager of Pepperell and Ashby, President of the Dedham Historical Society, and Treasurer of the Allin Congregational Church, and was a member of the National Lancers, the Massachusetts Municipal Association, and the Sons of Norway.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. DEDHAM CITIZENS OPEN DISCUSSION

Ms. Butler, 60 Clark Street, thanked the Select Board for engaging citizens and spoke about the town's appearance. The curb appeal has decreased due to the lack of cleanliness, landscaping, seasonal flowers, grass-cutting, mulch placement, and general maintenance. These issues affect the quality of life of tax-paying residents. East Dedham's new planters were offered as an example of beautifying items that could be installed. Ms. Butler requested that the Town Manager and Select Board inspect the town once a week. Mr. MacDonald responded that the Select Board would collaborate with Management to address the concerns.

Edward Dockham, 75 Westchester Circle advised that he is pleased to see the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and emergency housing on the agenda. However, he noted that it is very challenging for residents to draft public comments as written reports on issues to be addressed are not provided before meetings. If a written report is not provided, residents should be permitted to make public comments after Board meetings.

Regarding emergency housing, Edward has been in contact with Senator Rush and Representative McMurtry, who advised that a plan is not yet available. The meeting with the Town of Dedham to discuss the next steps should be publicized as an open forum.

3. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

3.1 Emergency Housing

ACTION – Management will contact the State of Massachusetts regarding emergency housing.

Management advised that he has been in conversations with the State since May 2023, regarding families being placed in two Dedham hotels, which currently house 39 and 50 families. The state retained two agencies on the Commonwealth’s behalf to manage the sites. Meetings have been held with schools, which have enrolled more than 60 new students. The State will provide \$18,000 annually in reimbursement, at \$104 per day per student, to support their education. A significant impact on Dedham’s school system has not been observed.

Ms. Sullivan noted that the \$104 per day per student does not cover Dedham’s education costs and requested a report on other state-level available supports and resources.

Mr. Donati noted that many students require additional support, such as special education and English as a second language (ESL) and asked if neighboring towns are housing families.

Management responded that several Commonwealth communities have emergency housing sites. Towns are selected for their amenities and hotel availability.

Mr. MacDonald advised that \$250 million was assigned in the supplemental budget for emergency housing on September 14, 2023. Once additional information is available, an open forum will be held.

3.2 ARPA Strategy

Management advised that categories and possible projects to be covered by the funding were identified, including a \$120,000 Westfield Street project. The aim is to fund initiatives otherwise covered by taxpayers’ monies. An additional \$1.7 million must be spent by December 2026.

3.3 Public Safety Building

ACTION – Management will investigate veteran parking options.

Phase 3 of the project is in progress, including the landscaping and parking lot. The fence will be removed by September 22, 2023. The rain garden is functional. There will be 39 resident parking spots, nine accessible spots, and some additional for town staff.

The Board requested that veteran parking spots be added where public parking is available, which is standard in other communities.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion made by Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Ms. Boles Welsh, it was resolved to approve adding two items to the consent agenda: a sign in support of the food pantry by the Rotary Club of Dedham and a wine vendor at the farmer’s market. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Dr. Teehan, it was resolved to approve the consent agenda items, as amended. Motion carried.

The consent items were:

- Block parties at Wentworth Street (10/1/23, 2:00 to 8:00 p.m.), Spruce and Dwight Streets (10/21/23, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.), and Manor (10/14/23, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
- DEF Dash 5k (10/1/23, 11:00 a.m.)
- Drainlayers (Galway Excavation & Mennino Construction)
- Dedham Square Circle (Trunk or treat, 10/28/23, 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.)
- Food pantry signage by the Rotary Club of Dedham from September 15 to October 2, 2023.
- Wine vendor at the farmer's market on September 20 and 27 and October 4, 11, and 25, 2023.

5. **RECOGNITION OF CHARLIE KANELOS**

The Select Board provided a certificate of appreciation for Mr. Kanelos' contributions to town events through his music and singing and expressed appreciation for his involvement in many significant events, including Mr. Blaney's tribute. Mr. Kanelos can be found on Facebook and YouTube.

Mr. Kanelos thanked the Select Board and noted he enjoys contributing.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT DISCUSSION**

Ms. Murphy, School Superintendent, advised that she is proud of the school community for their dedication and that she visited all schools in the first week in her role. Many discussions with children were held and she was interviewed by a group of journalism students. A meeting with the leadership team and principals will be held on September 15, 2023.

Mr. Teehan asked Ms. Murphy what she most hopes to accomplish and recommended that as a public servant, the community be listened to.

Ms. Murphy responded that the entry plan will be presented the week of September 18, 2023, and that she will focus on a communication plan alignment for the district.

Ms. Boles Welsh welcomed Ms. Murphy and noted that she has noticed a communication improvement already and asked how the Select Board can provide support.

Ms. Murphy responded that she is in discussions with Management and that open communication is appreciated.

Ms. Sullivan asked if staffing issues are anticipated due to the emergency situation.

Ms. Murphy responded that she registered 20 new students in one day, many with ESL requirements. Two new instructors will be retained, although more will be required, and a social worker was provided by the State, which has been responsive.

Mr. Donati expressed satisfaction with the new website and asked how many meets and greets were attended and what issues the new families in town encountered.

Ms. Murphy responded that she has attended five events. Parent coffee chats will be held once a week at schools, and a parent forum will be held in October 2023. New families require a place to play. Chaperones for play gyms and the YMCA are required.

7. **VIOLATION HEARING FOR REBEL RESTAURANTS**
On a motion made by Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Teehan, it was resolved to close the public hearing portion of the meeting. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Ms. Sullivan, seconded by Mr. Donati, it was resolved to approve confirming that a liquor violation occurred at Temazcal Tequila Cantina. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Ms. Boles Welsh, seconded by Ms. Sullivan, it was resolved to approve issuing a warning to Temazcal Tequila Cantina for the liquor violation on May 4, 2023. Motion carried.

Sergeant Feeley presented the Massachusetts vertical license for drivers under 21 years of age and advised that on May 4, 2023, at 5:04 p.m., they conducted an alcohol inspection at Temazcal Tequila Cantina. A person under 21 years of age was served after their license was inspected. The restaurant employees were very cooperative.

Mr. Cloutier advised that his client has accepted responsibility for the incident and that Rebel Restaurants provides the infrastructure to support its venues. Employees are provided with handbooks that highlight liquor compliance, and bartenders are trained. The bartender involved has been an employee for just three months. Human error can occur.

Mr. Ferland advised that weekly meetings are held to address issues and prep. Signage is available throughout the restaurant and a phone application to scan identifications was adopted. No other violations have been reported.

The public hearing portion of the meeting was closed.

8. **ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS INTER-MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT**
On a motion made by Ms. Boles Welsh, seconded by Ms. Sullivan, it was resolved to approve the animal control inter-municipal agreement with Westwood Town, with potential future revisions. Motion carried.

Westwood Town representatives terminated their animal control services. Management presented an inter-municipality agreement for one year that can be terminated with 60 days' notice. Westwood experiences 30 to 40 calls per year, compared to Dedham, which has approximately 400.

Ms. Boles Welsh requested that moving forward, contracts consider overhead and administrative costs.

Management advised that the \$4,000 would recover salary costs, that administrative expenses are not expected, and that the arrangement can be revised at any time.

9. **SELECT BOARD POLICIES**
On a motion made by Ms. Boles Welsh, seconded by Mr. Teehan, it was resolved to approve the Select Board Goals and Standards policy, as amended. Motion carried.

On a motion made by Ms. Boles Welsh, seconded by Mr. Teehan, it was resolved to approve the Public Sessions policy, as presented. Motion carried.

ACTION – Management will correct the Town Manager title to ‘Town Administrative Officer’ in the Select Board Goals and Standards policy and invite legal counsel to the next Select Board meeting to address policy questions.

Ms. Sullivan presented the Select Board Goals and Standards and the Public Sessions policies. The latter stems from the Barron v. Kolenda ruling concerning the constitutionality of Select Board policies addressing public comment periods. The Court concluded that the policies violated Articles 19 and 16 of the Massachusetts Declaration of Rights, which reference that assembling in an orderly and peaceful manner, is not the equivalent of polite discourse and that free speech should be protected. Three types of comments are permitted: General public comments (when the public is invited to speak), limited public comments (when the public is invited to talk about a particular matter), and when it is pursuant to the Statutes’ requirements.

Although State law does not require municipalities to add public sessions, a town bylaw mandates them. The bylaw aims to protect individuals, the Board, and freedom of speech.

The Select Board Goals and Standards policy was revised.

Mr. Donati asked if the public comment sections permit responses.

Ms. Sullivan responded that she was unsure, but the lawyer could clarify. The policy applies to all groups, including committees.

Ms. Boles Welsh requested clarification on what constitutes a group, as the bylaw states that no more than two speakers from a group may speak.

Mr. MacDonald requested patience. The Board encourages public comments but there is a time and place for public hearings.

10. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

10.1 Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)

ACTION – Management will arrange a meeting with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority regarding the drainage plan.

Ms. Boles Welsh requested a meeting with the MBTA in lieu of their response.

10.2 Grants

ACTION – Management will update the Select Board on the housing grants at the next meeting.

10.3 School Zones

ACTION – Management will provide the school zone plan at the next Select Board meeting.

10.4 Bridge Street Group

The meeting will be held in October 2023.

10.5 Crashes Working Group

The town appointed \$207,000 to enhance the local road safety plan, over the next 18 months.

10.6 Greenlodge Elementary School

Mr. Teehan offered to facilitate meaningful discussions between opposing parties to reach a compromise.

10.7 Water Study

Citizens were encouraged to learn about water issues.

10.8 Justice System

ACTION — Management will provide the Select Board with a report on the findings of the assault that occurred outside of the courthouse on September 13, 2023.

10.9 Fundraisers

Dedham Day will be held on September 24, 2023. The community was thanked for their participation in the Run for the Fallen.

10.10 Financial Policy Sub Committee

Ms. Boles Welsh and Mr. MacDonald are involved in the process.

10.11 Food Clinics

Pre-registration is required for the food clinics commencing on October 5, 2023. The senior clinic will be held on October 10, 2023.

10.12 Next Meeting

The next Select Board meeting will be held on September 29, 2023, at the town hall.

11. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made and carried unanimously, it was resolved that there was no further business of the Select Board to transact; the meeting was closed at 8:12 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Chair, Select Board

June 13, 2024
Date Approved