

**Board of Selectmen Agenda
Municipal Center Resource Room
Tuesday, February 7, 2023**

7:00 PM

- Call to Order
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Chairman Announcements
- Citizen's Forum

1. Public Hearing St. Denis Church Special 1-Day License – Possible Votes
2. Audit Selection Committee – Possible Votes
3. DCR Land Acquisition Notice – Possible Votes
4. Introductory Discussion on Proposed COLA for Worcester Regional Retirement System
5. ARPA Discussion – Possible Votes
6. Meeting Minutes – Possible Votes
7. Town Administrator's Report
8. Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting
9. Executive Session
 - a. Follow-up Discussion of Building Security with the Douglas Fire Department
 - b. Litigation
10. Adjournment

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Note: Times are estimates unless denoted as a Hearing.

The Town of Douglas is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023
MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Chair Kevin Morse, Vice Chair Mike Fitzpatrick, Tim Bonin, Hal Davis, Matthew Wojcik Town Administrator, and Lisa Freeman Executive Assistant

Chair Kevin Morse called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

(0:06 TS) Pledge of Allegiance

(0:25 TS) Chairman Announcements: NONE

(0:30 TS) Citizen's Forum: NONE

1. (0:40 TS) Public Hearing St. Denis Church Special 1-Day License – Possible Votes
(0:50 TS) Motion to open the public hearing made by Hal Davis, seconded by Tim Bonin. All members in favor.
They are looking for a 1-day beer and wine license for a St. Patrick's Day event. All the forms and applications are in and filled out, there are no concerns from the public safety officers.
(2:07 TS) Motion to approve the 1-day beer and wine license for St. Denis Church made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Mike Fitzpatrick. All members in favor.
2. (2:45 TS) Audit Selection Committee – Possible Votes
Dick Vandenberg, Heather Morin and Howard D'Amico from FinCom volunteered to be on the committee and the recommendation is that they have 2 members from the selectboard on the committee as well. TA Wojcik wanted to let the board know that the committee is not just meeting to choose an auditor for the town, but the committee will continue to meet with the auditors and review their draft reports. TA Wojcik discussed what should be involved in the tasks of the committee and what the town should be looking for in an auditor. Tim Bonin and Mike Fitzpatrick have stated that they would like to volunteer for the audit committee.
(11:23 TS) Motion to nominate Tim Bonin and Mike Fitzpatrick to serve as the selectboard members on the audit committee made by Hal Davis, seconded by Tim Bonin. All members in favor. TA Wojcik stated that he would like to use the boilerplate language from the town of Topsfield and the proposal form they have in their package to use for the RFQ for advertising. He will work with Jeanne Lovett to make sure it has all the reports that they expect.
(16:00 TS) Motion to authorize the Town Administrator to advertise for an audit firm for the town made by Hal Davis, seconded by Tim Bonin. All members in favor.
TA Wojcik stated for the record that the town budget includes funds for auditing every year.
3. (18:45 TS) DCR Land Acquisition Notice – Possible Votes
The board discussed a more detailed location of this piece of land before they take a vote.
(22:27 TS) Motion to hold this agenda item off until the next meeting made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Mike Fitzpatrick. All members in favor.
4. (23:10 TS) Introductory Discussion on Proposed COLA for Worcester Regional Retirement System
TA Wojcik stated that the various pension boards around the commonwealth by a vote grant the cost of living adjustments to retirees up to 5% on their own authority. If they seek a COLA of 5% or higher the law requires that they go back to the members of the pension fund and get a two-thirds positive vote to support a COLA. TA Wojcik stated that he is unsatisfied with the way

Worcester Regional conducts itself and their lack of transparency in the way they fail to honestly disclose exactly what is going on in a way that people can easily understand. The pension board will assess the town an additional \$16k in the first year if the pension COLA is approved based on 2%. Then that figure would go up by 4% a year, every year compounded so the grand total in almost 12 years will cost the town an additional assessment above and beyond the town's pension fund assessment which is already growing at 9.95% a year. The decision that the board is faced with is whether or not they are comfortable accepting additional assessment from now through 2036 given its rate of growth and the performance of this fund in order to give retirees the boost to their benefit. TA Wojcik recommends that the board ask as many questions as they would like so they can reach out and see if they can get answers before they vote. Ms. Lovett stated that the chairman Mike Sacco from Worcester Regional has offered to come out and speak with the board if they would like him to. Mr. Bonin stated that he is very unhappy with the fact that Worcester Regional will not provide what the other towns are deciding on and voting. TA Wojcik responded that there is nothing stopping the board members from reaching out to other communities to find out what they are thinking. The board discussed having them come out to the first or second meeting in May.

5. (44:33 TS) ARPA Discussion – Possible Votes
The unincumbered balance as of the January 31st was \$1,671,416.40. The board discussed the projects on the ARPA list, the highway barn and the water/sewer projects specifically. The Depot Street project is about a 2 million dollar project, the sewer line project is about 1.5 million. The board would like to talk to Bob Sullivan one more time before they decide. The board would like to have Bob Sullivan and Bob Minarik attend the next meeting.
6. (57:33 TS) Meeting Minutes: December 6, 2022 & December 20, 2022 – Possible Votes
(58:20 TS) Motion to approve the December 6, 2022, meeting minutes as written made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Mike Fitzpatrick. All members in favor.
(59:15 TS) Motion to approve the December 20, 2022, meeting minutes as written made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Hal Davis. All members in favor.
7. (59:33 TS) Town Administrator's Report
 - The public safety radio project is very nearly finished and today's electrical work revealed the very old wiring system used to wire the buildings generator which is a short term issue. Once we have the generator which is the only thing holding up the electrical project in this building that will be taken care of. There will be a new 911 console in the police department and all the equipment is up and running. TA Wojcik would like to have example audios of radio transmissions with the old system and the new system for the next meeting.
 - Almost all of TA Wojcik's time is being spent on compensation reform, he has promised the finance committee a briefing on this program by next week. The internal committee that was put together for this project consists of TA Matt Wojcik, Jeanne Lovett Finance Director, Cheryl Vaidya Treasurer, Holly Cotnoir, and Lisa Freeman. The team has been meeting to rate the various positions, and they will use benchmarks to determine where those rates of compensation are set. TA Wojcik is trying to save the town \$35-\$40k dollars in a compensation study because he doesn't think that the town's payroll is big enough to justify that kind of study.
 - There are three quotes for the senior bus. The lowest bid was the amount that was approved at town meeting. We are going to accept that quote and get in line for this bus. The timeline for the bus to be ready is December or early January 2024.
 - Progress on construction for Gilboa Street has been delayed, but that doesn't change what is going to happen. Natural gas lines installed by Eversource have been able to install pipe past the Gilboa Street construction area. Towards the end of the month there will be signs and jersey barriers going up Gilboa Street to do the bridge installation, then the new sewer

pump station will be installed, and finally the road will be repaved when everything is complete.

8. (1:15:00 TS) Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

The free cash updated balance is \$2,255,175.

9. Executive Session

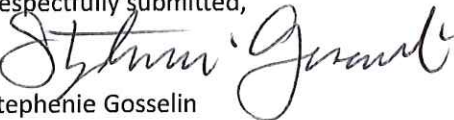
- a. Follow-up Discussion of Building Security with the Douglas Fire Department
- b. Litigation

(1:20:00 TS) Motion to move into executive session to follow up on the discussion of building security with the Douglas Fire Department and litigation and leave that meeting for the purpose of adjournment made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Hal Davis. Roll call vote – Tim Bonin, Mike Fitzpatrick, Kevin Morse, Hal Davis all in favor.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Bonin made a motion at 9:00pm to leave Executive Session and return to regular session for the purpose of adjournment. Mr. Morse seconded the motion. All in favor. Roll call vote: Tim Bonin - aye, Hal Davis - aye, Mike Fitzpatrick - aye, Kevin Morse - aye.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephenie Gosselin
Recording Secretary