

Board of Selectmen Agenda
Municipal Center Resource Room
Tuesday, August 1, 2023

7:00 PM

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

1. Sign Review for Douglas Orchard & Farm – Possible Votes
2. Review New Legal Services Representation for Cable License Negotiations – Possible Votes
3. Review Solar Bylaw Amendment for Fall Town Meeting – Possible Votes
4. Approve Appointment of Adam Furno as Acting Highway Superintendent – Possible Votes
5. Approve Temporary Rate of Compensation for Adam Furno as a Call Captain – Possible Votes
6. Meeting Minutes – Possible Votes
7. Flag Policy for Town Buildings 1st Reading
8. Discussion on Traffic Control Recommendations for Intersection of North Street and Gilboa Street – Possible Votes
9. Town Administrator's Report
10. Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting
11. Executive Session
 - a. *Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6), To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Interest in Real Property – Highway Facility Options*
 - b. *Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(6), To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Interest in Real Property – Chapter 61 Parcels Orange St. & Southeast Main St.*
 - c. *Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2), To conduct strategy sessions in preparations for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. Contract Negotiations – Fire Chief*
 - d. *Pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(2), To conduct strategy sessions in preparations for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. Contract Negotiations – Town Administrator*
12. Adjournment

Note: Times are estimates unless denoted as a Hearing.

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

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2023
MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: Vice Chair Mike Fitzpatrick, Tim Bonin, Ross Smith, Max Postma, Matthew Wojcik Town Administrator, and Lisa Freeman Executive Assistant

Absent: Chair Kevin Morse

Mike Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

(0:10 TS) Pledge of Allegiance

(0:30 TS) Chairman Announcements: NONE

(0:33 TS) Citizen's Forum: NONE

1. Sign Review for Douglas Orchard & Farm – Possible Votes

Back in April Mr. Fitzpatrick received an email about a resident having a concern about the temporary sandwich board put up on the corner of Southeast Main and Main Street which Mr. Socrat offered to take the sign down. The sign reappeared in another location and the same resident sent another email complaint about the sign which Mr. Fitzpatrick spoke to Mr. Socrat about the other day. Mr. Fitzpatrick read the approved minutes from 2019 when Mr. Socrat asked to have permission for the signs to be put up from April 1st to mid-November for the season. Mr. Socrat is before the board to make an amendment to the sign permit, and to announce particular events and stated that the information is educational, agricultural, and cultural. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that if he wants to amend the sign permit that they should advertise that and have it on the agenda because tonight was for addressing the complaint.

2. (22:25 TS) Review New Legal Services Representation for Cable License Negotiations – Possible Votes

Pat Aldrich the cable coordinator and stated that they are currently in a negotiation with Charter to get a new 10-year license, the current license expires in November of this year and they have decided to go with new legal representation for legal services. TA Wojcik stated that the existing council was not getting them anywhere near an agreement and it is very important the contract does not expire and that is the reason for choosing to go with new legal counsel.

(28:47 TS) Motion to enter into the presented new legal services representation for Cable license negotiations agreement made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Max Postma. The vote passed unanimously.

3. (29:15 TS) Review Solar Bylaw Amendment for Fall Town Meeting – Possible Votes

Matt Benoit Community Development Director last year presented the new bylaw that was approved and the Attorney General has several recommendations for the town to consider at a future fall town meeting. After receiving that in May they sent it off to Town Council for review and presented the recommendations to the planning board at their last meeting. Town Council stated that the recommended changes are too substantial to just make and that it will have to go before town meeting to accept the amendments. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if any of the changes included runoff and Mr. Benoit stated that it does not and it would be for stormwater but under general bylaws and they are currently working on that.

(34:25 TS) Motion to accept the amendments on the solar bylaw for fall town meeting made by Ross Smith, 2nd by Max Postma. The vote passed unanimously.

4. (34:55 TS) Approve Appointment of Adam Furno as Acting Highway Superintendent – Possible Votes

TA Wojcik stated this is in accordance with the town administrator act for the authority to appoint department heads in an acting role for a period not to exceed six months with the approval of the Select Board and to establish the rate of compensation for that employee. Highway Superintendent John Furno is moving over to the Acting Fire Chief role for management purposes. There is a compensation difference between John and Adam due to time in the seat. Adam Furno will be a step 1, but it will be retroactive because he has been serving in that role since May 18th.

(38:45 TS) Motion to approve the appointment of Adam Furno as Acting Highway Superintendent made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Ross Smith. The vote passed unanimously.

5. (39:15 TS) Approve Temporary Rate of Compensation for Adam Furno as a Call Captain – Possible Votes

This is to correct the error that Adam's name was not listed on the town meeting warrant with others that would be affected. Adam needs to be at a step 5 for his hourly compensation to reflect what he was earning before comp reform.

(40:15 TS) Motion to approve the temporary rate of compensation for Adam Furno for call captain made by Max Postma, seconded by Ross Smith. The vote passed unanimously.

6. (40:47 TS) Meeting Minutes – Possible Votes

The Board is calling Rich Bowen to get some clarification on the release of the executive minutes. Attorney Bowen stated that they do not want to release any minutes regarding matters that are still ongoing. Attorney Bowen stated for Mr. Fitzpatrick's question about the releasing of personnel matters or health matters that they would not be released because it contains sensitive personal information and violates HIPPA laws. Personnel and disciplinary matters would be a case-by-case decision for the Select Board, and to reach out to Town Council for direction and opinion for a recommendation.

(53:45 TS) Motion to accept the meeting minutes of July 5, 2023, as presented made by Ross Smith, seconded by Max Postma. The vote passed unanimously.

(55:15 TS) Motion to approve the meeting minutes of July 18, 2023, as presented made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Max Postma. The vote passed unanimously.

(55:50 TS) Motion to approve the executive session meeting minutes of May 16, 2023 as presented retaining all made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Ross Smith. The vote passed unanimously.

(55:13 TS) Motion to table the executive session meeting minutes of May 31, 2023 for further discussion in executive session made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Max Postma. The vote passed unanimously.

7. (57:15 TS) Flag Policy for Town Buildings 1st reading

Attorney Bowen sent them a policy which he thought was acceptable under the laws of the country and used by the Town of Dedham. TA Wojcik wanted to point out a change or addition flags to the United States flag, Commonwealth of Massachusetts flag, Town of Douglas flag, and the POW MIA that is standard in most government facilities. TA Wojcik went over some other changes made to this so there were no open doors to controversy. The Select Board has decided to eliminate section B for ceremonial flags in its entirety.

(1:04:25 TS) Motion to eliminate section B ceremonial flags in its entirety made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Max Postma. The vote passed unanimously.

8. (1:04:50 TS) Discussion on Traffic Control Recommendations for Intersection of North Street and Gilboa Street – Possible Votes

TA Wojcik stated that this is a CMRPC funded study of this intersection and the town had asked CMRPC about two years ago to determine if the Town of Douglas and this intersection qualified for a signalized intersection. The town did not meet the standard so there is no requirement but there are still some concerns. There are a number of recommendations by the traffic engineer in the report on what the town might do to improve the safety of the intersection in its current

state. The recommendation that seems to best suit the town would be to make line striping enhancements, to call attention to stop signs ahead for the three stops signs and to shave a little

bit off of the corner. They don't think that making it a 4-way stop intersection would be beneficial because it will cause too much back up on Gilboa Street towards route 146 at certain times of the day.

9. (1:11:40 TS) Town Administrator's Report

- The town received notice that the senior bus is done and will be delivered to the town in the very near future.
- On June 30th the books were closed on the towns self-insured health insurance group. TA Wojcik is pleased to report that the town's loss ratio was tiny and as result the working rate the town paid into the group significantly exceeded the amount paid out in claims, but there also may be some trailing claims so the number might change a little. As of right now the town's one-year surplus is \$938,378. The trust fund surplus is significantly high as well which means that the town will be able to take some of the surplus and will need to draft a policy for the Select Board to consider what to do with those funds when they come back to the town. Some options for the Board to explore would be the town's OPEB trust fund because it is critically underfunded and in order to improve the town's bond rating, they need to put money into it. Another is for the employees and the town paying more than 50% of health benefits for a year because the employees pay into this. The other option is to give an incentive for opting out and choosing to leave having the benefits and that be the same for both situations.
- Work is beginning on Northeast Main Street, which is the final part of the EDA project to bring water up Northeast Main Street to the Cubes at Gilboa warehouse.
- The town has received some attention for the extension of the natural gas franchise which was approved by the DPU (Division of Public Utilities). The process for this has been very transparent with public hearings, and the testimony is open so anyone interested can submit comments to the docket. TA Wojcik wanted to make clear that the application is not filed by the town of Douglas, the town doesn't management the document or own the document, it is Eversource's document and this is not just the town of Douglas, but also includes Uxbridge and Sutton. Any work that was done was because it could be done, and nothing in the town of Douglas was done before anything was approved.

10. (1:26:30 TS) Open Session for Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting: NONE

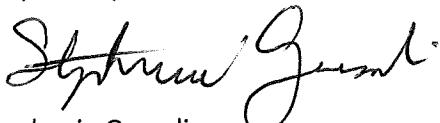
11. (1:26:45 TS) Executive Session

Motion to move into executive session for the purposes of discussing interest in real property for highway facility options and Chapter 61 parcels for Orange St, & Southeast Main St., contract negotiations for the fire chief, and the town administrator and to leave executive session for the sole purpose of adjournment made by Tim Bonin, seconded by Ross Smith. Roll call vote – Max Postma, Ross Smith, Mike Fitzpatrick, & Tim Bonin all in favor.

12. Adjournment

Mr. Bonin made a motion at 9:34 pm to leave executive session and return to regular session for the sole purpose of adjournment, Mr. Smith seconded the motion. All in favor. Roll call vote: Bonin – aye, Smith – aye, Postma – aye, Fitzpatrick – aye.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephenie Gosselin
Recording Secretary