



Town of Dublin
Select Board Meeting
Monday, December 18, 2023

4:30 PM in person and via Zoom

In attendance: Carole Monroe, Susan Peters, Chris Raymond, Blake Minkler, Library Trustees: Chris Sprague and Kathy Nichols, Library Employees: Volkert Volkertz and Karen Madigan, and Police Chief Tim Suokko

Select Board reviewed the correspondence file, payroll and accounts payable

CALL TO ORDER: Carole called the meeting to order at 4:30pm

SELECT BOARD'S BUSINESS:

1. **Library Update-** Chris Sprague introduced the new head librarian, Karen Madigan. Volkert has agreed to remain on staff along with the three newly hired assistants. Chris S. thanked the residents of Dublin, along with several town employees, for their help and assistance in keeping the library open during the transition. He reviewed the Library's achievements and shared their goals. Kathy reviewed the remaining 2023 expenditures and noted that the Library's proposed 2024 budget will need to be revised.
2. **Budget Updates/warrants/Prosecutor-** Chief Suokko informed the Select Board that a new prosecutor has been hired to serve four towns: Dublin, Hancock, New Ipswich and Greenfield. Prosecutor expenses will be divided between the towns based on a formula established from population and case load. The 2024 proposed budget will be revised to reflect Dublin's portion: \$36,072.56.
3. **Acceptance of Highway Safety Grant Agreement-Police Department-** signed by the Board.
4. **Approval of the Minutes of December 4, 2023-** Carole made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Susan seconded. Roll Call Vote: Susan, yes. Carole, yes. Chris, yes.
5. **Approval of the non-public Minutes of December 4, 2023-** Carole made a motion to approve the minutes as written and that they remain sealed. Chris seconded. Roll Call Vote: Susan, abstained. Carole, yes. Chris, yes.

6. **School Reconfiguration/Consolidation for discussion** - Residents of all ConVal School Districts have been very vocal on this issue, especially in view of the fact that by closing several schools, there does not seem to be any reduction in the cost of educating students nor any tax burden relief to the residents. Dublin's Town Lawyer was consulted concerning the School Warrant Article of 2019: "Require that the School Board submit to the ConVal School District voters for their approval a comprehensive analysis and implementation plan detailing the financial, educational and social impacts that any school closure might have on both students and towns prior to proposing to the voters any plan for any school" and states that, in their opinion, the article is advisory. If the School Board votes to accept Prismatic's recommendations, a Warrant Article to close any schools must be approved by December 29, 2023, if it is to be included for the 2024 election.
7. **Building Permit for signature-** signed by the Board
 - Map 7 Lot 22 Sub B – Monument Road
8. **Miscellaneous:**
 - Blake Minkler proposed starting a Dublin Community Round Table for the purpose of encouraging open discussion between residents on current issues. He is fairly certain that the first topic will center around ConVal School District. However, all topics and ideas will be entertained. The open discussion will be held in a public place and Blake would serve as a moderator. He is asking the Board if they would support this idea and invited them to be a part of the discussion. He feels that with the community working together, creative ideas for solutions may be discovered. The Board supports this resident led forum and will provide a meeting place.
 - Discussion ensued concerning the Board submitting a Warrant Article for the potential Fire Department roof solar array. Susan would like to apply for a grant but one would not be awarded unless town funds are in place for the balance of the project. The Board prefers the approach of creating a Capital Reserve Fund for energy projects that could include solar power.
 - Tax Exemption report was received.
 - Susan reported that Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) is looking into surveying the region's capped landfill virtually for solar potential based on south facing land and proximity to the grid. They have invited Dublin to apply for a brownfields assessment of our capped landfill. Chris pointed out that in addition to planning and installation expenses, maintaining a solar installation would involve ongoing oversight and management. Susan will reach out to J.B.Mack at SWRPC to learn more about the process.
 - On the social media website, Next Door, the Waste Reduction and Recycling Committee has posted that there might be a warrant article in support of Pay for Throw Bags. Discussion ensued. Town issued stickers for cars was also discussed as a way to ensure that there is no non-resident usage.
 - The Town Hall's thirteen-year-old copier needs repair and is no longer supported. Funds to replace the machine will be added to the 2024 budget.

- Charter Cable has reached out to the Town about signing a draft Franchise Agreement. Carole had sent them notice that the contract that they are asking Dublin to sign is not the standard one they send to other towns. Carole will follow up.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit language, drawn up and voted on by the Planning Board was in the read file. The Housing Opportunity Committee has been gathering community input on this issue.
- Discussion ensued about the solar exemption tax. Avitar will be consulted.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, Chris made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:00pm. Carole seconded.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Katherine M. Fuller and Pamela J. Celko

Carole Monroe (Chair)

Susan Peters

Chris Raymond