

**TOWN OF DEDHAM
450 WASHINGTON STREET
DEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 22, 2020, 6:00 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

Dennis Teehan	Chair
Dimitria Sullivan	Vice Chair
Kevin R. Coughlin	Member
James A. MacDonald	Member
Sarah MacDonald	Member

TOWN OF DEDHAM STAFF:

Leon Goodwin	Town Manager, Town of Dedham
Bill Eddy	Assistant to Administration, Town of Dedham
Nancy Baker	Assistant Town Manager, Town of Dedham
Dan Driscoll	Town Moderator, Town of Dedham (from 6:20 p.m.)

Minutes prepared by Cassidy Civiero of Minutes Solutions Inc. from an audio recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board recited the pledge of allegiance. Chairman of the Select Board, Dr. Teehan, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. DEDHAM CITIZENS – OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Brian Keaney, 183 Grant Avenue, Dedham, MA, stated that he requested public records regarding an investigation that occurred at the library wherein five library trustees resigned. The Town denied his request; Mr. Keaney is seeking an appeal to obtain those documents.

Mr. Keaney had requested copies of the legal bills to determine how much was spent on the investigation. He received a 15 page document and found the total of \$30,000 going to Town Council to investigate the library matter to be staggering. Mr. Keaney stated that the public has a right to know what occurred during the investigation to require such a high expenditure of tax dollars. Mr. Keaney requested a summary from the Select Board on what occurred.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the investigation pre-dates his time on the Board; however, this is a personnel investigation conducted by a law firm and was deemed exempt from disclosure. There are privacy issues with releasing the documentation. It was an extensive investigation that involved many parties and meetings; therefore, the high costs reflect the months of work from several individuals for meeting, drafting, editing, and finalizing the report.

Mr. Goodwin stated that it is a unique circumstance for the Town of Dedham to spend that much on an investigation. He will work with Town Council to respond to Mr. Keaney's request while adhering to the law.

Ms. MacDonald stated that producing a summary document on steps moving forward would be useful in setting up the incoming library trustees for success. There can be conversations surrounding which details could be released, which would not necessarily include the findings.

Mr. MacDonald stated that the government's responsibility is to be transparent while remaining within the law. The law is specific about what can and cannot be released. Mr. MacDonald agreed that what can be released publicly should be, while protecting the privacy of all involved. Releasing certain details could open the Town to further litigation if names were to be released. Mr. MacDonald stated that a ten day period to respond to FOIAs is standard protocol, involving conversation with the individual making the request to narrow the scope of work.

Dr. Teehan stated that he is not opposed to a summary document; however, it needs to be determined whether it is legal to release a summary document and if the information left after protecting privacy would be enough to form a summary.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the Town is obligated to release records that do not fall under exemptions under law. A summary document is an option if it meets the requirement that Mr. Keaney is making; however, it is not required of the Town and there will be legal costs involved to draft the document.

Dr. Teehan stated that his focus is moving forward and bringing in five new library trustees to re-build a library that can make the Town proud. Voters can decide who is brought into the Board in April 2021. Dr. Teehan stated that a lot of attention and effort was put into the case.

ACTION – Mr. Goodwin will draft a summary of the library investigation with legal counsel.

3. REQUEST FROM TOWN MODERATOR, PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 92 OF THE ACTS OF 2020 TO CONDUCT FALL TOWN MEETING REMOTELY

Mr. Goodwin stated that the laws were amended to allow towns to be able to hold virtual town meetings because of the COVID-19 pandemic; however, this must be at the Town Moderator's request. A letter from the Town Moderator, Mr. Dan Driscoll, requesting that virtual meetings be allowed was circulated to the Board, reviewed by Town Council and is in accordance with the law.

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to call the annual Fall 2020 Town Meeting to be held on November 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. through remote participation, including but not limited to by means of a video or teleconferencing platform, to be conducted using the Zoom platform, and that the moderator has tested the video or teleconferencing platform and the platform satisfactorily enables the Town meeting to be conducted in substantially the same manner as if the meeting occurred in person at a physical location, and this is in accordance with the operational and functional requirements set forth in Section 8 of Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2020. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sullivan. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan:	Yes
Dimitria Sullivan:	Yes
Leon Goodwin:	Yes
James A. MacDonald:	Yes

Sarah MacDonald: Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

4. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

There was no old or new business arising.

5. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sullivan. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan: Yes

Dimitria Sullivan: Yes

Leon Goodwin: Yes

James A. MacDonald: Yes

Sarah MacDonald: Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. The meeting was adjourned.

DISCLAIMER

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

Director

Director

Date

Date