

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

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING
VIA TELECONFERENCE
MARCH 4, 2021, 7:00 P.M.**

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

TOWN OF DEDHAM STAFF:

Leon Goodwin	Town Manager
Nancy Baker	Assistant Town Manager

Minutes prepared by Mary-Margaret Scrimger of Minutes Solutions inc. via an audio recording.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board spoke recited the pledge of allegiance. Chair of the Select Board, Dr. Teehan, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Before proceeding, Dr. Teehan wanted to address last week's call to the Board from Dedham citizens to address racism and affirm values. It is important to create a statement and it will occur soon. He noted that this is the right thing to do. Every Board member has publicly condemned racism. With the continued inflammatory statements occurring in the community, the statement will be drafted and presented in the open meeting. Dedham aspires to be an inclusive community.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were on the consent agenda: approval of drain layers by Susi and DiMascio Co Inc., gift acceptance from Ripples of Hope for Dedham Youth Commission, constable reappointment of Patrick Lennox, change of the Rebel Restaurants Inc. manager from Mr. Doyle to Mr. Bainton. Ms. Sullivan thanked Ripples of Hope for their donation.

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to approve the drain layers by Susi and DiMascio Co Inc. The motion was seconded by Ms. MacDonald. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan	Yes
Dimitria Sullivan	Yes
James A. MacDonald	Yes

Sarah MacDonald Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to approve accepting the donation from Ripples of Hope for the Dedham Youth Commission. The motion was seconded by Ms. MacDonald. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan Yes
Dimitria Sullivan Yes
James A. MacDonald Yes
Sarah MacDonald Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to approve the reappointment of Patrick Lennox as constable. The motion was seconded by Ms. MacDonald. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan Yes
Dimitria Sullivan Yes
James A. MacDonald Yes
Sarah MacDonald Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to approve the change of managers at Rebel Restaurants Inc from Mr. David Doyle to Mr. Michael T. Bainton. The motion was seconded by Ms. MacDonald. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan Yes
Dimitria Sullivan Yes
James A. MacDonald Yes
Sarah MacDonald Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

3. DISCUSSION AND VOTE

Letter of Support fo the William Gould Statue: Mr. Goodwin stated that a group, headed by Mr. Keaney, is working to raise funds to create a memorial to William Gould. The group is looking for letters of support. Mr. Goodwin has provided a letter outside of the Board. This is the first grant that the committee is applying for but is likely the first of many.

A motion was made by Ms. MacDonald to support the letter of support for the William Gould statue with Board signatures included. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sullivan. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan	Yes
Dimitria Sullivan	Yes
James A. MacDonald	Yes
Sarah MacDonald	Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin	Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Trash and Recycling: This presentation is a first step for the Board to address where the expenses and inefficiencies lie. This is the third year of the waste management contract and the town can continue into year three and four. There are various contracts, including collection, which has options to be renewed for years four and five; recycling processing; and disposal. Services provided are curbside trash pickup, curbside single stream recycling every other week, and bulk and white good pickups. Additional services include yellow bags, which are zero waste overflow, yard waste, and hazardous waste.

Waste removal is expensive with a total budget of \$2,925,150.32. These costs are driven higher by contamination waste; 16.4% in 2019 and 18.5% in 2020. This is due to citizens incorrectly sorting waste. Contaminated bags become trash rather than recycling. China is no longer buying recycling which was offsetting some of the cost. Bulk and white items are increasing costs, comprising of approximately \$300,000 of the waste removal budget.

Ms. MacDonald recommended creative solutions such as composting and education on how to recycle and mulch. These costs are here to stay, and a long-term solution is needed. Ms. Sullivan noted that reusing needs to be the priority moving forward. This will be driven by cultural changes.

Sprague Street Truck Request: Ms. Sullivan asked that the Select Board collaborate with the planning board to formally request Amazon to fund a truck study for Sprague Street for \$35,000. Ms. Palumbo stated the importance that the Amazon trucks, as well as all trucks, be restricted to improve the speeding and volume issues. It was noted that this is also being addressed on the Boston side. Dr. Teehan noted that a truck ban is virtually impossible because of other laws, especially when trucks are accessing property on the street.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to support the request of the transportation advisory subcommittee working group to ask the planning Board to request Amazon to fund a truck study for Sprague Street in the amount of \$35,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. MacDonald. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan	Yes
Dimitria Sullivan	Yes
James A. MacDonald	Yes
Sarah MacDonald	Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin	Yes

Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Public Safety Building Update: Mr. Goodwin outlined the public safety building construction. Escalation and soil nailing are almost complete, and the shot creek has been installed. Foundation preparation is the next plan. The perimeter of the site is being monitored for vibrations. Contractors are accountable to keep the vibrations low. There is a groundbreaking ceremony tomorrow. It will not be available to the public but will be on Dedham TV. High-profile local politicians have been invited. Mr. Goodwin confirmed that the project is slightly ahead of schedule and below budget.

Budget Presentation: Mr. Goodwin presented the 2022 financial year proposed budget.

Revenue Estimates: State aid is better than anticipated. Based on early projections, a 2.4% increase is expected for a total of just below \$10 million. Local receipts such as permit fees and motor vehicle registrations have increased from 2021 but are 10% below 2020. This is driven by a decrease in venue usage and was conservatively budgeted. Free cash are funds in the savings account that are not allocated for any purpose. This is usually used for one-time capital projects.

In 2021, \$1 million will be used to stabilize the levy, keep the town's AAA rating and decrease borrowing expenses. Approximately \$5.3 million of the major capital stabilization fund will be spent on debt service. The general stabilization fund has been growing around \$300,000 per year due to income growth. Given the extraordinary conditions of COVID-19, the town recommends using \$1.5 million from the fund. There is currently a balance of \$7 million. Compared to other AAA rated communities, this is above expectations. The tax levy is where most of the revenue is anticipated. It has increased by 4% from last year. Overall, revenue is expected to increase by 3.9%

Operating Expenditures Summary: It is required by law to have a balanced budget. General government has an increase of 16.7% due to a \$1.1 million dollar salary reserve fund because of eight unsettled collective bargaining agreements. This represents a COLA increase. Town facilities have increased due to COVID-19 and utility rates. This is a potential firework year for parks and rec, resulting in a small increase. Dedham District education has an increase of 4% due to restoring cuts from last year and other items.

Debt service will increase incrementally over the next few years. For 2022 the increase is 12.1% but will begin to decrease in 2023. This is a significant driver to increase in expenditures. It is not recommended that any free cash be used for capital expenditures in 2022 to maintain reserves and potentially offset a tax increase. The transfer of \$1.2 million to the Robin Reyes account is to keep the account solvent in the long run. This began in 2019 and will continue for the next few years as debt services is paid over the next few years.

FY22 Budget Drivers: General government, which is the \$1.1 million for the salary reserve, has driven the budget up with a 16.74%. The finance department increase is a result of filling staffing positions. This is essential as there have been moves between financing and the police department. Employee benefits has increased by 1.44% due to a 3% increase to health insurance. There have been other decreases which mitigated the overall increase. Debt services have increased by over \$3 million or 12%.

Town Personnel Changes: It has been recommended to hire a systems engineer. This was suggested last year under the title network engineer. This would be an additional \$91,000 annual cost but it would reduce the \$15,000 IT vendor monthly reducing annual costs by \$85,000. This almost covers the position. Facilities have requested a three day a week per diem position move to a full-time custodian position for \$28,000 per year.

Capital Improvement Program: There are approximately \$10 million of requests for this year. There is only one project that is bondable. Mr. Goodwin wants to ensure that debt payments are reasonable and does not increase outside of the town's capacity.

Sewer Enterprise Fund: Operating expenses increased by \$232,454. A rate study on the enterprise fund needs to be done soon. Reserves have been decreases due to capital and operating expenses. Citizens need to be prepared for an increase.

Tax Levy/Rate Impact: There have been minimal increases, especially compared to other municipalities in the county. The Town has been financially savvy to do this. Excellent services are delivered for minimal increases. Due to COVID-19, temporary staffing was reduced, and services provided, such as outdoor recreation services, were reduced for cost savings. There was \$3 million in pandemic federal and state funding to offset budget challenges. The tax levy is not evenly distributed between property class, as residential property value is increasing, and commercial property value is decreasing.

Initially, the tax increase was 9% and the team have worked to bring it down to 6.8%. Mr. MacDonald requested the \$17.4 million be broken down between education and Town for a more complete picture.

Mr. Goodwin noted that there will likely be funding from the federal level which will flow down through the state. This needs to be watched carefully as to abide by the rules and regulations associated with these funds and maximize eligibility.

Mr. Goodwin noted that this a proposed budget and is the beginning of the process. The final decision is with the town meeting. Since the pandemic started, community engagement has been different but has been successfully done via Zoom.

Mr. Coughlin asked for more information regarding the 7% decrease for commercial properties. There are some companies, such as Walmart and Amazon, that are doing extremely well. Mr. Goodwin noted that this is an estimated decrease. If the value is higher than it will lessen the burden on the residential side. The 7% was selected as a worse-case scenario to create a conservative budget.

Mr. MacDonald requested a breakdown of projects with costs and debt service. He also requested projections out 30 years of debt service cash flow that outlines capacity and when items drop off. This is in anticipation of additional capital projects. Mr. John also noted that there is taxpayer appetite for debt that should be considered.

ACTION — Mr. Goodwin and Mr. John will provide a breakdown of projects with costs and debt service and a chart of projects over 30 years of debt service cash flow that outlines capacity and when items are completed.

4. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Goodwin reiterated that he attended the finance official session today. His focus is currently the budget. He is looking to mitigate negative impacts on residential taxpayers. He would like to remind residents of code enforcement.

5. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Sullivan wanted to let the Board know that she has submitted an article for section 6.4 and other changes.

Mr. Goodwin noted that the state will begin to vaccinate teachers and other educational staff.

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. MacDonald to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. MacDonald. A roll call vote was taken:

Dennis Teehan	Yes
Dimitria Sullivan	Yes
James A. MacDonald	Yes
Sarah MacDonald	Yes
Kevin R. Coughlin	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 members of the Select Board. This document shall not be considered to be a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.

Director

Director

Date

Date