

Town of Dudley

Board of Selectmen

November 21, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Dudley Municipal Complex

71 West Main Street

Dudley, MA 01571

Room 321A

Approved 12/5/2022

Some matters have been taken out of agenda order but were typed up in agenda order for ease of locating information when necessary.

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:

Honorable Chairman Jason Johnson opened the meeting at 6:33pm. In attendance were Honorable John Marsi, Honorable Mark Landry, Honorable Steven Sullivan and Honorable Kerry Cyganiewicz. Also present were Jonathan Ruda, Town Administrator and Michelle Jervis, Administrative Secretary.

2. John Marsi motioned to approve the minutes of 11/7/2022 as written. Steven Sullivan seconded. Unanimous 5-0.

3. Citizen's Comments – n/a

4. Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Ruda stated that we will be having a joint meeting with the Capital Improvement Planning Committee and the FAA on 12/12/22 @ 6:30pm to hear a report from Mark Abrahams concerning our budget in the months ahead and the future operational needs of the school district. Town Hall closures are coming up with Thanksgiving and the day after. Also, the town hall will be closed on 12/9/22 for a mandatory A.L.I.C.E training.

Regarding grants, Tighe and Bond were awarded the engineering services for the First Avenue Infrastructure Improvement Project. This is part of the Community Block Grant. On the EV Charging station grant, we have installed EV charging stations at the library, and they are functioning. PARE Engineering has been awarded the culvert design options and application preparation to apply for a FEMA Hazardous Mitigation Grant to address all three culverts on Schofield Ave including the one at the sewer pumping station. The cost for the engineering will be split with the enterprise fund and the general fund. Mr. Ruda thanked the town hall employees that helped out in the recent election. He was happy to report that the voters approved the large capital purchase of the fire department's new fire apparatus. Finally, Santa will be touring Dudley on 12/3/22 beginning at noon with the tree lighting at 6pm. All are invited to attend. John Marsi motioned to approve the Town Administrator's Report. Kerry Cyganiewicz seconded. Unanimous 5-0.

5. Public Hearing:

Principal Assessor, Lisa Berg – Tax Classification Hearing for FY23 – The Public Hearing opened at 6:43pm. Ms. Berg stated that Dudley is 93.2% residential, 2.5% commercial, 2% industrial and 2.3% of personal property. Historical these percentages have not fluctuated compared to other years. The average single family home in fy23 is \$360,942

(up 17%); condos \$145,860 (up 19%); two family \$283,482 and three family \$348, 176 (both up 20%); and commercial up 4%. The Board of Assessors recommend a tax rate of \$10.16/\$1000 as well as a single tax rate. If we go to a split tax rate the small businesses would hurt since we do not have a lot of large businesses. Out of 351 towns in Massachusetts 115 have a split tax rate. Dudley is 74th lowest in the state. Mr. Ruda stated that it is important for the public to know that this translates to loss of revenue.

The Public Hearing closed at 7:01pm. John Marsi motioned to leave the tax rate as a single tax rate as recommended by the Board of Assessors. Mark Landry seconded. Unanimous 5-0.

6. New Business:

Sarah White – H.A.N.D.S – Ms. White came before the Board. She wanted everyone to know that H.A.N.D.S (Helping Address the Needs of Dudley Seniors) is active. Applications for fuel assistance are available online and paper copies are at the library and the town clerk's office. She welcomes all applications as well as donations. Any donations can be mailed to PO Box 343, Dudley, MA. 01571.

Police Chief's Appointment – Chairman Johnson stated that the Board is declaring a vacancy for the position of Police Chief effective January 13, 2023. That date is the date our Chief Steven Wojnar will be retiring. Mr. Ruda stated that this is a different process than other department heads such as Fire Chief and Highway Superintendent. The appropriate action is to promote within the department and the leadership role will be going to Lieutenant Marek Karlowicz. Steven Sullivan stated that there were many opportunities to speak with Lt. Karlowicz and feels he is more than capable to do the job. He has big shoes to fill but he is professional and caring. John Marsi stated that he echoes Mr. Sullivan's statement and that the police department runs very well and does not need to go outside to find a hired gun to change things. Hiring from within is the right thing to do. Mark Landry stated that he is very comfortable moving forward and there is no question about loyalty and professionalism promoting the Lieutenant to Chief. Kerry Cyganiewicz agrees that hiring within is the right thing to do. Finally, Jason Johnson stated that Lt. Karlowicz has a foundation of solid leadership, integrity and high performance and it is key for the department. Education and institutional knowledge in our tight knit community is essential and that he is well respected in his department.

Lt. Karlowicz came before the Board. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve. He has a great group of police officers, and he relied on this group. He is prepared to fulfill the role of Police Chief and has big shoes to fill but very grateful. His vision for the department is to invest in full time officers. As you know the reserve force has been diminished and he would like to build up the force; update technology and most of all community policing. It is essential to have a good relationship with the schools. He needs to lead by example. He has moved up in the ranks and he knows he will need to make some tough decisions. He has an Undergraduate Degree from Curry College and a master's degree from Nichols College. His background in the department is that in 2000 he began as a reserve officer, 2002 promoted to full time mostly working the midnight shift. In 2019 he was promoted to Sergeant and worked 2nd shift and then promoted to Lieutenant. He has been working with Chief Wojnar taking over the budget, administration issues, negotiating and purchasing and he is grateful for the opportunity and thanked the Chief. He feels integrity is number one in his eyes along with ethics. **Kerry Cyganiewicz motioned to appoint Lieutenant Karlowicz as the next Police Chief for the Town of Dudley subject to successful contract negotiations and to authorize the Town**

Administrator to work with Labor Counsel to negotiate a contract to move forward with Lt. Karlowicz subject to the Board's approval. John Marsi seconded. Unanimous 5-0. Lt. Karlowicz thanked everyone including his family and his parents.

7. Departmental Communication:

Jeff Murray, Highway Superintendent – Mill Race Bridge bid opening date will be scheduled this week for the demolition of the bridge.

Cell Tower authorization – Mr. Ruda stated that in 2014 the town authorized the Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease agreement for a cell tower on town property off of Schofield Ave. We received two bids for this project, town counsel is reviewing the contract, and he would like to have the Board authorize him to enter into a lease agreement. John Marsi motioned to authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a lease agreement for the construction of a cell tower pursuant to 2014 Town Meeting vote. Mark Landry seconded. Unanimous 5-0.

Chief Wojnar stated that the police cruisers have finally arrived. They look a little different and are hybrids. Also he has distributed the nip bottle information to all the all alcohol package stores in town and will follow up with the results.

Richard Carmignani, Jr. stated the water bills are going out the first week in December. He will print the tax bills mid-month and stated the new accounting software will make it easier.

8. Adjournment:

John Marsi motioned to adjourn at 7:50pm and to convene into Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21, specifically reasons two and three, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body as declared by the Chair, and further, the Board will not reconvene into public session. Mark Landry seconded.

Roll Call Vote:

Jason Johnson, Aye

John Marsi, Aye

Kerry Cyganiewicz, Aye

Steven Sullivan, Aye

Mark Landry, Aye

Respectfully submitted

Michelle Jervis, Administrative Secretary

**** Documents physically identified, discussed, or considered by the Board:**

Draft minutes of 11/7/22

Tax Classification Hearing presentation