

Date: August 21, 2023

Date Minutes Approved: 10/16/2023

TOWN CLERK
2023 OCT 19 PM 3:22
DUXBURY, MASS.

SELECTBOARD

OPEN SESSION MINUTES

Present: Cynthia Ladd Fiorini, Chair; Michael McGee, Vice Chair (attended remotely until approximately 9:30pm); Amy M. MacNab, Clerk; Fernando Guitart; and Brian E. Glennon, II

Staff: René Read, Town Manager; and Nancy O'Connor, Executive Assistant

Others: Mary MacKinnon, Finance Director; Christopher Ryan, Planning Director; Members of the Finance Committee, Fiscal Advisory Committee, and School Committee (noting that some committee members attended remotely)

CONVENED IN OPEN SESSION (*in-person and Via remote participation by Zoom*)

1. **CALL TO ORDER** This meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00pm. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting will be conducted in person and, as a courtesy, via remote means in accordance with applicable law. Please note that while an option for remote attendance and/or participation is being provided as a courtesy to the public and board members, the meeting/hearing will not be suspended or terminated if technological problems interrupt the virtual broadcast, unless required by law. A transcript or other comprehensive record of proceedings will be available as soon as possible after the meeting. Members of the public who wish to watch the meeting may do so by viewing the Duxbury Government Access Channels – Verizon 39 or Comcast 15. Viewers can visit www.pactv.org/duxbury for information about Duxbury programming including streaming on Duxbury You Tube, to watch replays and Video on Demand.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLIGIANCE**

3. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr. Glennon stated that the Duxbury Aging and Dementia Friendly Task Force met and that group will be coming back to the Selectboard with a focus on housing recommendations. Mr. Ryan added that the group would like to hold a housing summit.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

Update on the status of Comprehensive Plan Implementation – presented by Chris Ryan, Planning Director

Mr. Chris Ryan, Planning Director, provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan. First point he made was that Planning has made meaningful progress on the implementation side of Envision Duxbury over the past year. He said that they worked with the Town Manager on an Envision Duxbury Owners Group Implementation Workshop, which was held on August 9 and was well-attended. He plans to reach out to those Owners via email to provide next steps, action items and priority items. Upon his exit, (Mr. Ryan recently resigned as Planning Director, and his last day is Friday, August 25, 2023), Mr. Ryan will provide an exit memo as a guidance document. Mr. Glennon thanked Mr. Ryan for all of his efforts and asked him if we were in a place where a successor can pick up the ball to continue moving the ball

forward. Mr. Ryan explained that his exit memo/guidance document will provide step-by-step information indicating next steps in order to move forward consistently as well as the PowerPoint presentation from the Owner's 8/9/23 meeting will be helpful. The Selectboard all thanked Mr. Ryan for his time and wished him the best.

FY25 Budget discussion with Finance Committee, Fiscal Advisory Committee, and School Committee - presentation by Mary MacKinnon, Finance Director

Ms. Mary MacKinnon, Finance Director, presented an overview of the FY25 Budget Planning which included: Budgetary Objectives, FY24 Revenue Sources, FY23 Revenue Results, Guidelines for FY25, and Next Steps.

She began with Budgetary Objectives:

- Protect Core Services & Values – preserve high-quality services across all functions including police, fire, education, and more.
- Fiscally Responsible – make sound budgetary decisions that embody the Town's existing policies, protect our credit rating, and reflect best practices across the municipal industry.
- Present a Balanced Budget – present a balanced budget matching revenues to expenditures.

Ms. MacKinnon mentioned key budgetary factors: FY24 GF Operating Budget of \$90m; 91% of revenues derived from taxation and other local sources; and 96.5% of tax base is from residential property owners (only 11 other towns with a higher R/O % of levy).

FY24 Revenue Sources:

- Tax Levy – real and personal taxes due to the Town based on value. Increased annually by 2.5%. She did mention that there was a decline in new growth as the market was starting to cool off, so a moderate decline is forecasted.
- State Aid – amount received from the State to support education and all other governmental services.
- Local Receipts – amounts derived locally through excise, user charges, fees, fines, and other programs.
- Debt Exclusions – amounts derived through voter acceptance of debt funded capital projects in excess of the Prop 2 ½ limits, temporary in nature. These decline as projects are completed and does not include currently approved projects such as the seawall and new DPW facility.
- Excess Levy Capacity – amount of tax levy not used to support the operating budget and therefore not taxes. This carries forward for one year.
- Other – reserves and other funds used to support specific purposes (e.g., betterments, WWIF, ambulance receipts).

Ms. MacKinnon also discussed beach revenues and provided projected information correlating the increased number of plover pairs with the decrease in beach revenues over the years. Ms. Candace Martin asked if the costs of the beach lease also included Beach Ops. Ms. MacKinnon answered no. She also touched upon the FY23 Revenues results (Free Cash not included because the books are not yet closed).

Ms. MacKinnon provided a summary of what all of this means:

- FY25 budget projection assumes a 3.29% increase as inflationary pressures from goods & services and wages will make this difficult.
- FY25 will yield very little excess levy capacity on a \$90m budget.
- Revenue growth is not keeping pace with the cost of doing business.
- FY26 and beyond are projected structural deficits.

FY25 Guidelines:

- Level Services – all departments are requested to submit a level services budget and no additional staffing requests will be considered.

Mr. Guitart commented that the Coastal Resiliency Task Force needs a support admin and how to go about doing that. Mr. Read responded that the Planning Board has expressed that the priority of a Coastal Resiliency Planner may be more of an Assistant Town Planner as they have made finalizing the zoning by-laws for over a decade and that is their number one goal. He continued to say that they were not looking at new hires this year as there is no room in the budget. Mr. Guitart remarked that we should have an idea of the services and the costs and hopefully can discuss this in the future to be able to get to either prevent an override or justify one or where we can cut to maintain our revenue projections. Mr. Guitart also remarked that the Library needs to keep within the MAR (Municipal Appropriation Requirement). Ms. Shannon Godden, Finance Committee, also reiterated the same concern.

- Fee Schedules – departments will be asked to review their respective fee schedules. Fees should reflect the cost of providing the related service, should be competitive and reasonable.
- ClearGov – budgets will be entered into ClearGov beginning Monday, August 28. Refresher training sessions will be scheduled in the coming week.

Mr. Friend Weiler, Finance Committee, added that he supports the notion about digging deeper into our future in order to be prepared, determine what is important and what is not, and come up with a plan.

Ms. Sullivan suggested a conversation with the Department Heads to provide them with professional development tools when looking at their existing budgets to make sure that they are as efficient as possible. She added that these Department Heads are very well trained in their individual disciplines, but not necessarily budget/financial planning.

Ms. MacNab added that with a lot of our services going online since Covid, she believes there should be an ability to shift services around to not negatively impact our tax rate going forward.

Mr. Frank Holden, Fiscal Advisory Committee and Audit Committee member, stated that they have looked closely at the budget process and articulated the need for a more strategic process in doing the budget with cross-checks and comparisons between departments and other towns.

Ms. Ladd Fiorini remarked that regarding our values and strategic planning, we should keep in mind that we as a coastal community are facing a real crisis with rising sea waters and flooding. The Coastal Resiliency Task Force discussed the process of hiring a resiliency coordinator – not in conjunction with planning but rather with what our goals were. She added that she was hesitant in saying that we cannot hire that kind of position. She understands that there are other priorities in Town and welcomes a conversation with us and the various Town groups that are interested in where we are as a Town and our goals and our core services and values. She remarked that this might also be the time to start thinking about becoming a little bit less residential and welcoming other types of businesses in Town to help us with our expenses.

Ms. Sullivan said that these are all important conversations, but be very clear that if you are adding someone, you're eliminating someone. That's the message. Each of our Town Departments have very strong support groups who are vocal about their ability to deliver services. The message appears that there is not any excess capacity for next year to add anybody without the elimination of a service we are currently delivering – a difficult challenge here to get done.

Ms. MacNab and Mr. Guitart support the analysis of services being provided by each person in each job. Mr. Guitart again reiterated the need to have the conversation of services and the related costs.

Mr. Glennon added that another important component to this is the school department (half the budget) and is a vital partner in these discussions.

Next Steps:

She provided an overview of the budget timeline, when ATM warrants open and articles are due, and when the warrants close up to the 3/9/24 ATM/STM.

Mr. Read referenced the timeline provided and hoped to get the budget message out next week for level services, but expressed that there appears to be a desire to do a different timeline and extrapolated that some want an override this year because any new positions would require an override. He explained that when you buy an override, you aren't buying an override for one position, for one year, but buying an override for many years and for a lot of money (\$5m+). He commented that we are showing everyone now that we can balance the budget without an override (without new positions).

Ms. Ladd Fiorini stated that she wasn't hearing that we want an override, but rather take a good look at how the Town is being serviced now and if that is the most efficient way to do it or if there is money available to switch things around. Ms. MacNab also added about looking at all the jobs in Town, what each person is doing, and how we can trim that down or move things around.

Mr. Read mentioned that we did get an earmark from the State for coastal resiliency/infrastructure and maybe that could be used, but our first priority is hiring a Planner before hiring a coastal resiliency person because that person would report to the Planner.

Mr. Guitart suggested that representatives from each committee (FinCom, FAC, SB, SC, etc) get together to start discussions regarding our provided services and their costs. Mr. Read reminded everyone of the

statutory requirements related to sending out the budget message. Ms. MacNab stated that she is not in agreement with level services.

Ms. Sullivan commented that she doesn't want to leave the impression that meeting with Department Heads was not an exercise that Finance Committee didn't do every year. She confirmed that every year the Finance Committee has department liaisons and they meet with the Department Heads, take a good hard look as to how they are running their department and how they are staffing it; and that has been part of the Finance Committee's charge on an ongoing basis. Mr. Guitart said that they need to figure out what is the service and what is the cost and start that conversation. Mr. Holden added that Department Heads are all excellent managers in the jobs that they do, and we should engage with the Department Heads in creating criteria for a framework of services and compare to other towns. Mr. Glennon remarked that personnel don't stay at a job just for the paycheck, there's a lot more too it, they like who they work with, etc., and Duxbury is unique in a lot of ways. If we are talking about potential personnel cuts, a cut is going to wear away good will, and we want to be careful that we do not send this message to our valued employees to promote bad morale as it is not all about dollars and cents. Mr. Read suggested that we could ask the Department Heads for a cost of their services.

Mr. Weiler provided a summary of what was stated:

- We are not looking for an override
- The budget process has to get going, we can ask the Department Heads to look into their budgets in order to look for efficiencies that they could bring forward (to do things better and here's how).

Mr. Read reiterated that there will be no override, start the budget process, will suggest level services as that will help determine efficiencies in FY25.

Ms. Laurel Deacon, as a resident (she is also on the School Committee) asked what the Town's priorities are as she felt it was challenging to show up to Town Meeting in an educated way. Mr. Glennon responded that she should look at Envision Duxbury on the Town's website as this is a terrific place to start looking at the Town's priorities.

Dr. Klingaman, DPS Superintendent, stated that school parents would like to see certain things and all Department Heads are tasked with making our departments as strong as they can be and level services can equal cuts as well as case loads for our special ed teachers. We always look at efficiencies and where we may be able to switch some positions. As a school department we will be looking into what our educational research recommendations are for class sizes (pre-k to 12+) taking into account contractual guidelines and best practices. To answer Mr. Glennon's question about what is needed – the school has an extreme need for adjustment counsellors for our students in order to support the social/emotional needs of our students. Between class size and emotional/social support, we have a robust special education program, but we need to make sure we have appropriate ratios for the caseloads. Ms. MacNab talked about school cuts and that maybe those cuts should be administrative staff so that wouldn't have as big of an impact on the children as there is a big difference there. Dr. Klingaman responded that there needs to be more education as to what the administrators' roles are as you cannot simply cut administrators because of the regulations we have with DESE regarding our evaluation process and curriculum and to make sure it is as strong as possible. She confirmed that they definitely didn't have extra administrators in terms of what everyone's roles and responsibilities are regarding safety, security, supervision, and

collective bargaining restrictions. She also noted that the administrators work extra long hours as they are at sporting and activity events after school hours.

Mr. Glennon remarked that he would like to see more synergies between Town and School departments. Dr. Klingaman said that they already have IT and Facilities shared and will work with Rene to come up with other areas and also to utilize places like the PAC (Performing Arts Center) for additional revenue.

Mr. Read summarized again - there will be no override, we will start the budget process, check for efficiencies in FY25 and FY26, and level services. Mr. Guitart stated that we should add to the conversation for a description of the services provided and the costs for those services.

Selection of one (1) Selectboard member to serve on Planning Director hiring team

After a brief discussion, it was determined that Mr. Glennon would be the Selectboard representative on the Planning Director hiring team.

(Note: Mr. McGee left the meeting at approximately 9:30pm)

5. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Brief update on the seawall – the MEPA applications were submitted on July 28 and were published in last week’s Environmental Monitor. The Environmental Monitor is a bi-weekly publication produced by the State’s Department of Energy and Environmental Affairs and provides notice of new projects that have been submitted to the MEPA office for review and other projects under review and certificates and public notices. Our project engineer, Pat Brennan, has estimated the best case scenario would be a May or June 2024 timeframe to go out to bid and a July 2024 timeframe to start construction. Worst case scenario we would be going out to bid in the spring of 2025 with start of construction sometime thereafter. Pat has also advised that the agencies are more likely not going to allow the wall project to begin until beach nourishment is part of the project. That will be the comment he expects from the permitting agencies. Pat is waiting for that to be issued in writing before we can commit to any kind of timeline.

6. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS/RE-APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Ms. MacNab moved that the Selectboard appointment the following:

<u>Board / Committee</u>	<u>Appointment/Re-appointment/Resignation</u>	<u>Term</u>
<u>Audit Committee</u>		
Friend Weiler, Sr.	Appointment	06-30-2024
<u>Local Historic District Commission</u>		
Michael Faut, as Alternate	Appointment	06-30-2026
<u>Nuclear Advisory Committee</u>		
Michelle Hatfield	Appointment	06-30-2026

Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 4:0:0

The following boards/committees have available seats:

<i>Alternative Energy Committee</i>	-	<i>one seat</i>
<i>Economic Advisory Committee</i>	-	<i>one seat</i>
<i>Finance Committee</i>	-	<i>one seat</i>
<i>King Caesar Advisory Committee</i>	-	<i>one seat</i>
<i>Nuclear Advisory Commission</i>	-	<i>one seat</i>
<i>Open Space Committee</i>	-	<i>one seat</i>
<i>Seawall Committee</i>	-	<i>two seats</i>

Comments:

If anyone is interested in volunteering on a board or committee, you are encouraged to fill out a Talent Bank form, which can be found on the Town's website under the Forms & Documents tab.

7. ONE-DAY LIQUOR LICENSE REQUESTS

09/18/23 Friends of the COA – Golf Tournament Reception

Ms. MacNab moved that Mr. Paul Brogna, as a representative of the Friends of the Duxbury Council on Aging, is granted a One-Day Wine & Malt License for their Golf Tournament Reception on Monday, September 18, 2023 at the Duxbury Senior Center, 10 Mayflower Street, from 5:00pm – 8pm, contingent upon the conditions of the license.

Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 4:0:0

09/30/23 St. John's Church – 200th Birthday Gala

Ms. MacNab moved that Ms. Mary Steinke, as a representative of St. John's Church, is granted a One-Day Wine & Malt License for their 200th Birthday Gala on Saturday, September 30, 2023 at St. John's Church, 410 Washington Street, from 5:30pm – 9:00pm, contingent upon the conditions of the license.

Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 4:0:0

8. EVENT PERMITS

09/02/23 4th of July Committee – Beach Party

Ms. MacNab moved that the Town of Duxbury 4th of July Committee is granted permission to hold the annual Beach Party and related events on Saturday, September 2, 2023 beginning at 4:00pm on Duxbury Beach, contingent upon the conditions of the permit.

Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 3:0:1

(Ms. MacNab abstained as her husband is on the committee)

9. MINUTES

Note that the 01/23/23 Selectboard Executive Session Minutes were not approved as there was not a quorum of the members to do so. They will be added to the next agenda.

Ms. MacNab moved to approve the 08/07/23 Selectboard Executive Session Minutes, with contents to remain confidential until the need has passed.

Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 4:0:0

Ms. MacNab moved to approve the 03/06/23 Selectboard Open Session Minutes, as presented and/or as amended. *Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 3:0:1*
(*Mr. Glennon abstained as he was not a member of the Selectboard*)

Ms. MacNab moved to approve the 07/24/23 Selectboard Open Session Minutes, as presented and/or as amended. *Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 4:0:0*

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) Next Scheduled Selectmen's Meeting will be on Monday, August 28, 2023 at 7:00pm
- 2) Planning Department Open House regarding Washington Street Right-of-Way Determination - Sidewalk Project - The Duxbury Planning Department is hosting an Open House for Washington Street property owners and other interested citizens to view and comment on the draft right-of-way plans for the Washington Street corridor. We encourage you to attend on Thursday, August 24, 2023 at the Duxbury Senior Center anytime between 3:30 and 6:30 pm to view the posted draft plan panels, ask questions of staff or consultants, and make any comments.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. MacNab moved to adjourn at approximately 9:45pm.
Seconded by Mr. Glennon Vote: 4:0:0

Minutes submitted by Nancy O'Connor

List of documents in Selectboard file:

Selectboard Agenda
FY25 Budget documentation
Committee Appointments
ODLLs
Event Permit
Minutes
Announcements