

Monday, February 9, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
Working Session
Dalton Select Board Meeting

Meeting called to order at 6:36pm by Jo Beth. Select Board members Jo Beth Dudley and Thomas Dubreuil were present. Meeting available for public viewing via Zoom.

Public attendees: Mandy Deveno, Kris Ennis and Terri Parks. Via Zoom: Cathy's iPad, Warren Green, Pam Kathan and Jon Swan.

Jeanette presented the Oaths of Office for Amanda Deveno and Gina Damiano for the Conservation Commission. The Board previously approved their appointment to the commission on January 12, 2026.

The board sign two intent to cut for timber.

Jo Beth motioned to approve the 4th sewer warrant for 2025. Tom provided a second with approval via roll call vote.

Jeanette presented a contract from Knollwood Energy to purchase the town's renewable energy credits. Jeanette offered to send the contract to the board members for their review. The anticipated credit revenue would be in the realm of \$900-\$1000 annually, per Jeanette's conversation with Jack Bingham from Barrington Solar, our solar provider.

The minutes from the January 19, 2026, meeting were pushed out to the next meeting.

The meeting minutes for February 2, 2026, were distributed to the board, and will be reviewed at next week's regular Select Board meeting.

Jeanette had brought up a couple things she noticed in the recording of the February 2, 2026 meeting she missed. Jeanette brought up the acceptable waste item in the proposal and contract with Casella. The quoted price of \$170+/- is not acceptable. Our contract specifically does say that the town would pay \$55/ton for acceptable waste. The town can choose to no longer recycle and place the recycling items in the trash dumpster. No bills have been received from Casella with the recycle loads taken in January. Going from \$32/ton for recyclables in a proposal to a verbal quote of \$170+/- makes no sense. Tom had also mentioned that there was an uptick in tonnage about the time bags started being sold at the Dalton Country Store. Jeanette stated that was because Casella/NCES didn't charge us for actual waste tonnage for the first two months of collections. They charged us for the transportation and the rental of the boxes, but not the tonnage. Therefore later invoices were higher because they included the earlier tipping fees.

Jeanette state that the bags the store had were paid for by the store. According to the 2/2/26 meeting, if the bags were pre-purchased, the town wasn't taking them back. The bags in the clerk's office shouldn't be there. Tom stated that Kyle shouldn't have taken them and he will have to ask why. Jeanette can speak to the store owner to see if they want them back or would rather have a refund check issued by the town. Kyle visited the office and let Jeanette know he spoke with Twin Mountain and Lisbon to see if they would be interested in taking our recycling. Twin was meeting on February 10, 2026. Bethlehem was also contacted to see if they would be interested in working with us once their new transfer station is construction and open. Jo Beth stated that Kyle should take the bags back to the store. Tom stated he would call Kyle to take care of that if we didn't get out of

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the meeting too late. Jo Beth asked for a copy of the report Jeanette provided Tom regarding the invoices paid to Casella. Jeanette stated she would forward a copy to Jo Beth. Jeanette stated it was just a register of the checks. Jo Beth asked Tom if he had looked at the invoices and the tonnage over time. Tom stated he did not. Jo Beth wants to look at a more detailed report regarding the waste being sent to Casella, which would require looking at the invoices. This is what Tom was going to do in the transfer station analysis.

Jeanette stated she did have a nonpublic item.

Jeanette emailed Mandy Deveno regarding her right to know request dates. Mandy confirmed she was looking for January 2025 through February 2026 conversation with legal via phone, text, email, etc. Mandy was present and stated it was not just limited to the HCA topic. Jo Beth stated that there is the log that could be used. Jeanette wasn't sure if everyone was doing the log or if it was just Jo Beth's contacts. She needs Tom's information on his recent conversation with legal. Tom stated he sent it but what was sent was incomplete. Mandy Deveno stated that Tom said the warrant wasn't legal. Tom doesn't recall making that statement. Mandy is asking that if there is controversy on the warrant article, it would be good to get that information so the HCA committee knows what direction to go. Jo Beth reminded Mandy there is attorney-client privilege to take into consideration. Jeanette stated she will provide a formal response to the RTK request once the information is received.

Jeanette provided the board with a draft copy of the town report for their review. Jeanette explained each of the changes that were made since she provided copies to each board member previously. Jeanette stated that she sent the warrant article to the attorney regarding the veteran's credit change due to HB99. She noted we had not received any petitioned Warrant Articles. The annual report is due to the printer on the morning of February 17, 2026, since the 16th is a holiday. A short discussion ensued regarding the town report updates. Jo Beth asked Tom if he had looked at the earlier draft for anything that needed to be changed. He asked if she meant the select board report; she said the entire report, and he didn't have any input.

The board discussed the warrant articles for the town. Jeanette stated that DRA gave guidance that any FEMA reimbursement funds not allocated into a fund through a warrant article would stay in general funds and make its way to fund balance at the end of 2026. Those funds could then be used for reducing the municipal tax rate for 2026, if possible and the Board chooses to do so. The board discussed what was taken from capital reserve funds in 2025 and what the board would like to replenish with some of the FEMA funds received and accepted in 2025. The TAN note approved in 2024 of \$500,000 was taken in two separate disbursements, and has been paid back. Those loan funds were needed for cash flow due to the road repair work that was being completed due to the July 2024 storm damages. Conversation ensued regarding the amounts to be replaced into capital reserve accounts. These funds were used for funding road repairs while FEMA worked through damages, pricing, expenses, etc. in order to reimburse the town for costs incurred. It was determined that Adam needed to provide a list of work items to be done that would fall under the paving capital reserve for 2026. The board would like pricing from the paving contractor for work to be completed in 2026. Jeanette will see if Adam can pull that together. Funds will be replenished

Monday, February 9, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
Working Session
Dalton Select Board Meeting

into the paving and highway equipment accounts. Additional money is proposed for the fire department capital reserve account.

Jo Beth completed capital equipment replacement plans for both departments (Highway and Fire/Rescue) showing what new equipment will cost when the town anticipates needing to purchase replacement vehicles. These plans show what needs to be placed in the accounts to allow the town to save the funds for these vehicles as opposed to taking out bond notes and paying extra interest. Tom stated that Jo Beth could do what she thinks she should do, and he doesn't want to sit all night and argue about it. He doesn't know enough about it. The revenue report showing almost \$4m says to him that the taxes shouldn't keep going up. He doesn't understand enough about it. Jeanette is good with the numbers. Jeanette explains the revenue report includes property taxes of which school and county come off the top. That's \$500k for the county and almost \$1.3m for the school. Those funds are funneled through our tax bill. The report is skewed which is why Jeanette breaks it down in excel. Property taxes are not 'revenue' as far as DRA is concerned. Jeanette further shows the information on the television screen, showing the 2025 revenues for taxes highlighted in yellow. It's highlighted because that's what the report shows, but it's not included in the actual revenue reports DRA uses. It's similar to capital reserve transfers. It's not really revenue, it's just coming over from a different account. DRA's revenue guidelines are very specific. These things have to be taken into consideration when looking at the big picture. It's not an easy task to reconcile everything.

Jo Beth states this is the town's opportunity to plan for the vehicle replacements. If we don't plan ahead, this is going to come back to bite us in upcoming years. Tom stated that the town is going to vote on it and Jo Beth agrees that we just need to lay it out so they know their options. The board's responsibility is to decide what to present. Jo Beth asks Tom if this is reasonable. Tom stated that nothing sounds good to him and he's not putting his name on it. Jo Beth let Tom know that the board needs to move forward so the warrant is ready for town meeting. The proposed warrant articles come from the board who is obligated to care for the town. Eric is not present, so that leaves it up to Jo Beth and Tom. Jeanette will confirm the additional funds for the highway and fire department capital reserves can be done. Jo Beth states we should be able to do it since the money is in general funds right now.

After discussion about how to distribute the FEMA reimbursement, It was decided to propose \$377,500 into the Paving CRF and \$11,400 into the Highway Equipment CRF, to reimburse these CRF's for the money used for the flood damage repair and mitigation. The Board also discussed putting \$100K of the FEMA reimbursement money into each of the Highway and the Fire/Rescue Vehicle CRF's, to offset the cost of replacement vehicles. About \$400 would thus remain in the general fund, and could be rolled over into the fund balance at the end of the year. Jeanette will discuss it with DRA. Jo Beth motioned \$377,500 to paving CRF, \$11,400 for highway equipment CRF, leaving \$600,000 would go into general funds. Then from the \$600,000 left over, \$100,000 would go into highway equipment CRF and \$100,000 would go into fire dept. vehicle CRF. Leaving approx. \$400k in general funds to potentially make its way to the town's fund balance. Tom provided a second. Jo Beth voted yay. Tom asked if he voted no would we be able to move forward.

Monday, February 9, 2026 @ 6:30 PM
Working Session
Dalton Select Board Meeting

We would not. It was explained to Tom that he doesn't have to personally vote with the plan; he needs to give his approval for the board to use this for the town's warrant, to be presented at the Budget Hearing. Nothing is finalized until the town votes on the articles. Jo Beth wrote out the plan on the blackboard. Jo Beth called the vote again for putting this forward as the board's changes to the warrant articles. The motion unanimously passed.

The board reviewed the proposed revenues for 2026. Tom asked about titles on the report asking why they are listed as other; Jeanette confirmed the detail is there, it's just not showing because the screen isn't big enough and that column is hidden. Revenues were reviewed line by line. Tom asked about motor vehicles by asking if the town keeps that money or it goes to the state. Jeanette stated this was just the revenue side and the payments to the state are on the expense side. Jo Beth asked about UCC fees. It's from communications connectivity fees. The anticipated revenue for 2026 from FEMA is for work that's been done but not yet paid. As we do more work, that revenue amount will increase. Jo Beth asked if the town would get more railroad tax if the railbed reactivates. Jeanette wasn't sure but hopes so. The rental fees being collected for North Star Canine's use of the facilities are a welcome addition to our revenue report. The trainer loves the facilities and it's offsetting some of the town's expenses for the building. Revenue for tires at the transfer station was up last year. Increasing the amount is fine, but it's hard to know if people will take their tires to the transfer station or not. Jeanette asked if the board wanted to revise any of the department's revenue numbers. Tom had no changes; neither did Jo Beth. Jo Beth asked if a placeholder would be advised, similar to expenses. Jeanette doesn't believe so; she feels it's better to be conservative.

On the Expense side of the budget, Jeanette mentioned that the wage rate for the transfer station attendant isn't high enough with the new rate approved by the board. The line item increased \$8700. Jo Beth asked if there is the same amount of weight in recycling as there is in trash. Jeanette asked if they're charging us \$170/ton. Tom stated that if it says \$55/ton, then that's what it's going to be. Tom suggested reducing disposal and transportation fees to make up for the wage increase. Jeanette stated that doesn't make sense. We increased that line item because now we have to pay for recycling. We don't know what that cost is going to be yet. Jeanette asked if all the metals were going into the metal dumpster now. It doesn't make sense to sort them and then put them all into the dumpster later and handle things 3 or 4 times. Jo Beth suggests lowering the disposal and transportation line items down to at least \$70k. Jo Beth then suggests splitting the difference and changing it to \$75k. Tom stated that glass can be returned to the ground. Tom stated that Bob had been doing it for years behind the highway department. Jo Beth stated that DES would have to provide guidance on that. Tom agrees to go down to \$75k. The total transfer station budget has increased more than \$46k. The total budget increase is 10% or \$119,850. Jeanette asked if the numbers were good to use for Thursday. Tom isn't good with any of it. Jeanette asked what he proposed changing. He wants to stay at last year's budget. Jeanette went over some of the items that would change. Tom asked why it goes up and then is told it's due to the cost of living. Jeanette asked if any of Tom's personal bills have decreased. Tom stated he understands what is going on. Jo Beth reminds him that this is what the board is doing, not any of us individually. Tom states money from FEMA can be taken to lower the budget. Jeanette explains that you can't just take

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money over and above the approved appropriations. DRA doesn't allow that. The board has to set a reasonable budget needed to run the town. Tom stated that he understands that. He said we all know times are hard so why do we keep buying and buying – like new trucks. We have to spend the money before we get it back from a grant. Jeanette noted the town spends the money whether or not it's on an old truck with continued repairs or new trucks via grant opportunities. Jeanette stated that she didn't see anything in our budget that is unnecessary. Nothing is cheaper. Jo Beth asked again where Tom would like to change, specifically. Jeanette asked again, is this what's being used to present on Thursday at the Budget Hearing. Just like the warrant articles, the town makes the final decision. Jo Beth motioned to move forward with the proposed expenditures and revenues for presentation on Thursday night at the budget hearing. Tom asked if they can move forward if he abstains. Tom stated he will let the town speak. Jo Beth suggested reducing the disposal and transportation line item to \$70k. Tom says he doesn't know the actuals. Jeanette stated that no one does. Jo Beth reminds Tom of the motion. He provides a second with approval via roll call vote. Motion carries.

Tom stated he had read the job description for the new transfer station position, as drafted by Jo Beth. He stated the position should show up every quarter to provide an update to the Select Board. Additionally, money should be provided to the administrator daily. Jeanette stated he does it weekly, on Monday. Jo Beth took the position description changes and told Tom he had agreed to draft an offer letter and we need the offer letter now. She will send out a revised job description to the board and try to do an offer letter. Tom stated the RSA has something about holding the money. Jeanette provided clarification on that RSA.

Jeanette mentioned there is a nonpublic for RSA 91-A:3 II(c). Jo Beth motioned to enter nonpublic at 8:44pm. Tom provided a second. Approval via roll call vote.

Jo Beth motioned to return to public session at 8:57pm. Tom provided a second with approval via roll call vote.

Jo Beth motioned to seal minutes from nonpublic #1. Tom provided a second with approval via roll call vote.

Jo Beth motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:58pm. Tom provided a second with approval via roll call vote.

Minutes Respectfully submitted by Jo Beth Dudley.

Minutes Approved On: 3/2/26 (date)

Jo Beth Dudley

Jo Beth Dudley

Thomas Dubreuil

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Eric Moore