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## Dudley Reelected To Dalton Select Board, New HCA Members Chosen

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After Tuesday's town vote, Jo Beth Dudley was reelected to the Dalton Select Board and four residents were elected to the town's new landfill host community agreement negotiating team. (Contributed photo)

After a town meeting, voters spoke in Dalton on Tuesday, Jo Beth Dudley was reelected to the Select Board, and four residents were chosen to serve on the town's new landfill Host Community Agreement (HCA) Negotiating Committee.

Dudley landed 168 votes versus 131 for challenger Shawn St. Cyr.

Eight candidates ran for four seats on the HCA committee, which was established after a special town vote in January.



The winners were Karel Bean, with 188 votes, Wendy Roberts, with 180, Michael Crosby, with 176, and Paul Deveno, with 170.

Coming up short were Corey St. Cyr, with 131 votes, Robert Sampson, with 98, Pam Kathan, with 94, and Richard Nadeau, with 91. Jim Dannis netted one write-in vote.

A total of 1,220 votes were cast.

The HCA committee was born from a December petition, which states it shall be the policy that the Select Board will not enter into any agreement with Casella Waste Systems or any of its subsidiaries unless a committee is formed to consist of the Select Board along with four residents currently not holding office.

The rationale is that if the proposed commercial landfill receives the necessary permits, the town should negotiate the best possible deal possible for Dalton residents and not rely solely on Casella or the Select Board to determine what is the most favorable agreement for the town.

Under the article, the committee will engage legal counsel and experts knowledgeable in such agreements to help negotiate the best deal for Dalton.

The committee would vote on the final agreement and need a simple town-wide majority vote at a future town meeting.

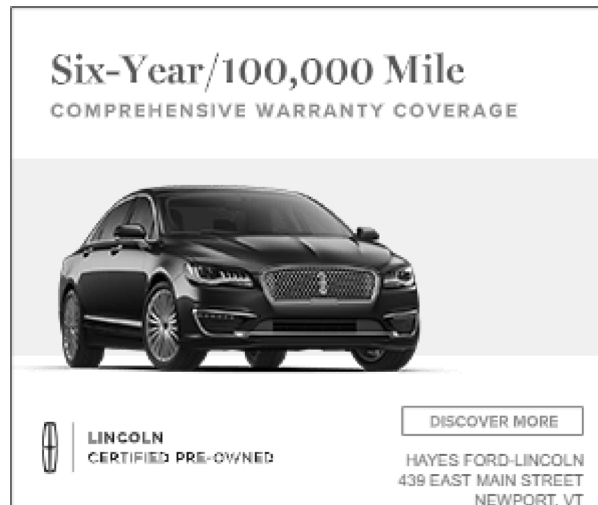
As originally worded, the petition stated that while Casella's proposed HCA for what it calls the Granite State Landfill "might look fair and generous, it is not," and "that's not how \$7 billion companies play ... Only fools would think GSL is offering Dalton the best deal or that they will ever pay out close to what they are advertising under the current terms."

The petition was submitted after several residents voiced doubt that the current Select Board could negotiate the best agreement on behalf of the town.

Jeannette Charon, running unopposed, was reelected town clerk/tax collector with 227 votes versus 15 write-ins.

Elected to the planning board was Emily Thompson, who records video of Select Board meetings for non-town use. She defeated Robert Arrison with 159 votes, versus 115 for Arrison.

After a secret ballot vote during the town meeting segment of the night, residents approved an operating budget of \$1,200,886.



Dudley made a successful amendment to move \$6,500 from the legal budget line to the financial administration line.

The proposed budget is the board's best estimate to run the town for 2025 and takes into account last year's flood damage and actions to mitigate any new problems by improving roads to prevent damage from future floods and heavy rains, she said, adding that the town expects to receive 75-percent reimbursement from Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Selectman Tom Dubreuil had opposed the proposed budget.

Dudley detailed the proposed budget and town needs.

Resident Scott Kleinschrodt asked about the reason for the \$6,500 transfer.

Dudley said it is for a raise for Charon, who has been involved in the flood damage repairs process (estimated at north of \$1 million) and the FEMA process and did not ask for the raise.

Kleinschrodt asked why the raise hadn't been explained.

Dudley said it was well-explained during the town's budget hearing.

Charon said the raise was also discussed during regular Select Board meetings.

Kathan made a motion to reduce the 2025 budget to the 2024 budget amount, for a reduction of \$191,586, or nearly 20 percent. Dubreuil and Selectman Eric Moore supported it.

Kathan's motion failed after some residents asked about its impact on road repairs and different line items.

The budget, as proposed, passed in an 88-34 vote.

Voters also approved a petition requiring that all public session Select Board meetings be recorded on video and broadcast live via Zoom or similar technology.

In addition, they approved a \$82,000 solar panel system for the town highway garage and other municipal buildings to generate electricity for the town, based on the rationale that the system would pay for itself after a few years.

Voters also approved an article to authorize the Select Board to adopt the Dalton Community Power plan to provide lower electricity rates for residents.



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Robert Blechl