



Randolph Town Council

Special Town Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, November 18, 2024, at 5:30 p.m.

This is a hybrid meeting. The Public is invited to attend this meeting in person or remotely, by telephone or computer access.

Call to Order: Council Vice-President Brewer called the meeting to order.

Roll Call – Council Members Present: Christos Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (In-Person), James Burgess (In-Person), Natacha Clerger (In-Person), Ryan Egan (Via Zoom), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person), Brandon Thompson (In-Person).

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor Chris Alexopoulos.

Councillor Huff-Larmond entered the meeting, in person, at 5:36 PM.

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held in remembrance of Council President William “Bill” Alexopoulos. Bill passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family on November 3rd, 2024. Bill and his family moved to Randolph in 1963, a Town that he loved. He attended the Devine School in Randolph, and graduated from Thayer Academy and later Boston University with a degree in Biology. Bill dedicated over 40 years of his life to the Randolph community, serving in numerous roles, including as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Board of Health, Town Meeting Member, Chairperson of the Joint Water Board, Board of Selectmen, and Town Council. Known for his unwavering principles and gentlemanly demeanor, Bill was a familiar face at Town Hall, often stopping by multiple times each week to check in on town business. You could always tell when Bill was here by the sight of his big red truck with his personalized license plate in the parking lot! William’s life was a testament to faith, family, friendship, and community.

Each Councillor and the Town Manager had an opportunity to express their condolences to the Alexopoulos family and share their sentiments. Bill’s wife, Alexandra Alexopoulos, expressed her gratitude for the Town’s support.

Reorganization of the Council Officers

1. Motion to elect Council Vice President Brewer to serve as the Council President for the remainder of the year made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.
Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0
Motion passes.

Presentations:

1. FY2025 Tax Classification Presentation

Council President Brewer introduced Town Assessor Janet Teal to present the 2025 Tax Classification.

Principal Assessor Janet Teal and consultant Nate Cramer presented options regarding the tax rates. The purpose of this presentation is for the Town Council to decide on a single or split tax rate, whether to adopt open space discount, whether to adopt a residential exemption, and whether to adopt small commercial exemption. The presentation further covered prior year tax rates, prior year tax shifts in the residential factor, and the projected average increases in tax bills depending on which shift is adopted by the Council this year.

A discussion was held concerning the effects of the tax shifts on residents and businesses in the Town of Randolph.

Council President Brewer: This will be continued to the Town Council meeting of Monday, November 25, 2024, at 6:15 for a public hearing.

Public Comments

1. Yoletti B, 28 Restarick Ave: I am here on behalf of the DEI Coalition to provide an update on our efforts to advance equity and inclusion in the Town Hiring and retention. Our goal is to ensure town hiring reflects the demographics of Randolph, where over 70% of residents are people of color. Our vision is to ensure Town Staff, including leadership reflect Randolph's racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity. We recently met with Town Manager Howard and Town Attorney Christine Griffin are excited to collaborate with the Town on an application to the metropolitan area planning Council's MAPC technical assistance program. The program supports racial equity projects and helps communities set measurable goals for change.
2. Guerlince Semezier, 60 Mills Street: I want to offer my condolences to the Council for the recent passing of the Former Council President. At the last meeting, I had the chance to speak about Councillor Egan's absence and it is nice to see him on Zoom but I'm wondering what are your plans in terms of in-person meetings?
3. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: The Governor allows boards to meet in-person and zoom. If you want to blame anybody, blame the governor. Bill was a real close friend. Anytime there was a snowstorm, Bill would come down and plow at the Saint Bernadette Church. Every fundraiser we had, he always donated. I'll miss him just as much as they do.

Town Manager's Report:

Department of Public Works Superintendent, Niel McCole, provided an update regarding various topics.

1. A twenty foot section of the twenty-four inch main that connects the water treatment plant to our water distribution system and that of Holbrook has been removed so that it can allow the coupling of the two subaqueous lines that run from the new braintree plant to our side of the reservoir. 2. The Safe Water Drinking Act has something called a Lead and Copper Rule requires Towns to submit a letter to their local governing authority, which for us is the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, including information on our lead service line inventory. In response to that, we were given thirty days to notify residents in three specific categories of water service line materials. We needed to generate different letters to go out based on the addresses and the information we had on hand. That process was completed last week. We've updated our website with valuable information and several links that residents can click on to find additional information.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Thank you for meeting with the DEI Coalition to make sure that when we are thinking about hiring retention and just a better environment for all that we have equity, equality and inclusion at the forefront. Town Manager Howard: I'm always willing to have a conversation.

New Business:

1. Council Order 2024-056: Council Order Authorizing the Town of Randolph to Enter into an Intermunicipal Agreement Among The Town of Randolph, The City of Quincy, The Town of Holbrook, The Town of Weymouth and the Town of Braintree Concerning the Provision of Public Health Services

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-056 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approved Council Order 2024-056 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 8-0-0 (Absent during vote: Clerger)

Motion passes.

2. Council Order 2024-057: Approval of School Based Health Center to be Located in the Randolph High School

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-057 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approved Council Order 2024-057 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

3. Council Order 2024-059: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash for Financial Review Services

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-059 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

The Council had an opportunity to ask questions regarding the Financial Review Services and what the services will entail.

Motion to approved Council Order 2024-059 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

4. Council Order 2024-060: Establishment and Funding of FY2025 Reserve Fund

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-060 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Council President Brewer: This Council Order will be available for a vote during the next meeting on November 25, 2024.

5. Council Order 2024-061: Acceptance of Local Option Statute M.G.L. Ch. 40, Section 13D Concerning Reserve Fund for Payment of Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-061 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Council President Brewer: This Council Order will be available for a vote during the next meeting on November 25, 2024.

6. Council Order 2024-062: Appropriation of Funds to the Reserve Fund for Future Payment of Accrued Liabilities for Compensated Absences Due Employee of Town Upon Termination of Employment Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 40, Section 13D

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-062 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Council President Brewer: This Council Order will be available for a vote during the next meeting on November 25, 2024.

Correspondence:

1. Winter Wonderland - December 14, 2024 from 3 to 6 PM at Crawford Square, Randolph, MA!

Subcommittee Reports:

1. Motion to appoint Council President Brewer to the Tri-Town Water Board made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Alexopoulos.
Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0
Motion passes.

Council Comments:

1. Councillor O'Connell: Thank you to the Randolph Police Department and Friendly Food Pantry for the food drive we hosted last Sunday. Thank you to all residents that came to donate and all involved to help collect food for people in need. 2. It was a pleasure to be at the Veterans Day Ceremony. Councillor Thompson gave a great speech about reaching out for help when you need it.
2. Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. The Randolph Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coalition (Randolph is hosting an event on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 6:00 PM to have a post election discussion. Please join us at the New Jerusalem Evangelical Baptist Church, 871 North Main Street, Randolph, MA. 2. The Randolph Youth Council continues to be strong. If you are interested in participating please contact me at 617-240-7106. We actually now have members from Brockton and Braintree and have a new president and new vice president. 3. ESL classes continue with DEI at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. We are in our fourth week and the students are great. We are excited to be doing this work. There will be another six week session in the new year. We want to continue doing this work for as long as we can. 4. When speaking about department heads, I want to make sure we're clear about what and who a department head is. In discussing the process for hiring equity and inclusion, some individuals were not aware they were a department head.
3. Councillor Gordon: 1. There is an Economic Development subcommittee meeting right after this meeting. 2. I participated in a teacher strike in Marlborough. I went in support of the strikers. 3. I want to encourage a Human Resources focus on the Assistant Town Manager Position.
4. Councillor Alexopoulos: Thank you to the Town for their support in the passing of my father and former Council President Bill Alexopoulos. It has been heartwarming to read messages. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. It's a difficult time losing a parent and it's even more difficult for the Town to lose someone who meant so much to the Town for over forty years. I remember in grade school going to plow with my dad, and my dad just never being one to say no. He did whatever he could to help. I hope this serves as a lesson to you all that the way you act sometimes is disheartening. I hope you reflect and even though we may bicker here, you leave it here.

5. Councillor Clerger: 1. It is still hard to speak without crying. I remember the Council President came to me and said “Natasha you were elected to serve the people of Randolph, not a certain group of people so be there for your constituents. You’re a Councillor-At-Large,” and that’s what I’ve been doing ever since. I’m going to miss him a lot. 2. Being at meetings remotely is legal and the School Committee is still only meeting remotely. You need to leave Councillors alone who are attending the meetings online.
6. Councillor Burgess: I was approached by a number of employees in this building about the last meeting so I had to watch it. I’ve been an elected member for a long time and there were things that were said that I want to be on record saying I distance myself from the words used by a Councillor who would question the Town Manager and the role that he played.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent during vote: Clerger, Egan, O’Connell)

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.