



## **Randolph Town Council**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: Monday, September 30, 2024, at 6:00 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:** Richard Brewer (In-Person), James Burgess (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Brandon Thompson (In-Person).

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor Thompson.

**Moment of Silent Prayer:** A moment of Silent Prayer was held in remembrance of School Committee member Cheryl Fraizer. Cheryl was an active member of the Randolph Baptist Church, served on the Randolph School Committee for many years where she was the voice of progress in education, and was a member of the Randolph Elks Lodge where she embodied the organization's principles in charity and fellowship. Cheryl also participated in the Randolph Senior Olympics where she demonstrated that age is just a number and passion is ageless. She will be missed.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

#### **1. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting July 25, 2022**

Motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting on July 25, 2022, made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Egan)

Motion passes.

Motion to collectively vote on the minutes of the Town Council meeting on August 26, 2024, and September 9, 2024, made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor O’Connell.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Egan)

Motion passes.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos entered the meeting, in person, at 6:10 PM.

#### **2. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting August 26, 2024, and Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting September 9, 2024**

Motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting on August 26, 2024, and September 9, 2024, made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor O’Connell.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Egan)

Motion passes.

Councillor Thompson exited the meeting, at 6:20 PM.

### **Announcements of the President:**

Councillor Burgess: Last Tuesday there was a meeting relative to the School Department entertaining Mark Abrahams Firm to do an audit or a review of all financial policies and procedures relative to the school department and Town departments. The Town Attorney is in negotiations with the firm to get a contract together. Once that is done, a report will be issued to the Council, the school departments and we can use that information to see what action we need to take on finance policies and procedures.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: What is the date of the meeting? Town Attorney Griffin: We are still finalizing the contract and then it will take some time to meet with the various departments and look all the information over so it will take at least a month or two.

### **Public Comments**

1. **Kliton Rrapi, 35 North Main Street:** I am the owner of Zorba's, Two years ago I addressed a concert to the Planning Board, the Director of Planning, and the Building Commissioner Ron Lum about digging in the back of my property without my permission and I never heard from them for at least a year. After a year my neighbor put up a wall which is against the zoning laws of Randolph (Article 6, Section B, 200-33). I addressed this concern to the Town Manager's office about ten days ago. The Town Manager and Building Commissioner visited my property today but I let them know I needed to come to the meeting to inform you as well.
2. **Geurince Semezier, 60 Mill Street:** I stand before you today as a proud Randolph, resident and leader of a vibrant Haitian community. I want to express my thanks and gratitude for his renewed commitment to support the Haitian community. Our town is home to approximately 7,344 Haitian and Haitian Americans, representing a significant integral part of Randolph, diverse fabric. 1st and foremost, I would like to thank the Randolph Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition for organizing the solidarity standout on Sunday. I also want to express my thanks to Town Manager Howard for his renewed commitment to supporting our community. I also wanted to acknowledge Councillors Huff-Larmond and Gordon for their unwavering support of the Haitian Community. Our town is home to approximately 7,344 Haitian and Haitian Americans, representing a significant integral part of Randolph's diverse fabric. I was also surprised to read hurtful comments by some individuals, including a member of the Council. Please understand those individuals who are coming into our country are not looking to drain our resources. They are looking to contribute to the skills, talent, and to local development, just like any other citizen.
3. **Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street:** We had a chance to have a Randolph Representative at the State House and I am disappointed that we didn't vote for the Randolph candidate.
4. **Kevin Coleman Joyce, 8 Dartmouth Street:** I am rising in support of speaking for the Haitian community in the United States. I hope that there will be a resolution tonight. Our founding fathers were very clear, at least the most enlightened amongst them, that we must support ourselves and that includes supporting those who are under attack, and who are perhaps the least able to support themselves. We have to stand with the people of Haiti who are living in America, and the people who are living in Haiti period.
5. **Paul Foose, West Elm Street, Brockton, MA:** I'm here tonight as an organizer for the Randolph Tenants United and the lead petitioner for the mobility hub shuttle bus petition which went through about a year ago. rep of Randolph Tenants United and lead petitioner of the shuttle hub petition that was brought forth last year. I want to bring up issues about the petition, and I quote from said petition that the "Randolph Town Council will conduct a feasibility study including information on securing funding and a feasibility study. The study will be conducted by June 2024 to provide a plan for funding and implementation by June 2025. The feasibility study was submitted in June of 2024 but it does not meet the letters of this petition and does not include a plan for implementation, including funding sources. No

one expects that this will be an easy process or a quick process, there will be hard decisions. This may have to go back to the council or it may have to go back to the voters for approval.

6. **Natacha Clerger, 52 Thayer Circle:** Although we are mourning the passing of a wonderful woman who has served the community for many years on the school committee, whom, by the way, I had the opportunity to collaborate with for a year as a Town Counselor representative on the School Committee, Miss Cheryl Frazier, I want to take this opportunity to thank the residents of Randolph for the enormous support they have shown to the Haitian community, not only doing these past few days, but also throughout my 13 years living in Massachusetts. My gratitude on behalf of the Haitian community goes to the Randolph Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition and the Democratic Town Committee for the rally in front of Stetson Hall, which many great leaders attended. I want to thank my fellow veterans at the Amvets Post 51 and the Town Councillors who have supported my events, resolutions, and proclamations during my time in office.
7. **Gladys McClain, Rosemont Square:** I am a lead organizer at Rosemont Square. I think we should as residents be notified about what is going on. If we didn't live here then you wouldn't be here and we're asking you to help us. I don't want it, I need it.
8. **Yolet Evokete, Restarick Ave:** I'm also Haitian American and I'd like to make a few comments on behalf of the Haitian newcomers in Randolph. There's a quote by a Mormon missionary, named Joshua Graham that speaks to the situation we find ourselves in. It says "I survived because the fire inside me burned brighter than the fire around me." In Haiti, everything was burning around these newcomers. Today Haiti has become unsurvivable. Folks have had to flee with the clothes on their backs, leaving behind everyone that mattered to them, including their children and elderly parents. The newcomers didn't come straight to the US. They went to other countries, including Ecuador, Panama, Honduras, and more. At first, these newcomers were tolerated in these places. After all, they took jobs that the citizens of these countries didn't want to do. They learned to speak the language and send their children to school. Soon though, the anti-black immigrant threats and physical attacks began forcing them to move from country to country, always with the same results. So now they're here in Randolph and they are so grateful because the newcomers are resilient. Many of them are already working while others anxiously wait for their work permits so they can earn their keep and help those they left behind in Haiti.
9. **Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane:** I learned about a serious accident that happened on the intersection of South Main Street and Center Street, and two elderly people were severely injured. I hope the Town Council or Town manager can look into this. I've spoken to every Representative Randolph has at the local and State level and I'm still waiting.
10. **Cathy, Rosemont Square:** I'm here to support Rosemont Square. There are a few issues going on with the road with there being a huge pothole. A tree fell on my car and after it was investigated it was found not to be their fault and I had to pay out of pocket to fix my car. There are rats in dumpsters and it's very scary when you go to the dumpsters late at night.

#### **New Business:**

1. **Council Order 2024-045: Council Order Authorizing a Five-Year Contract Between the Town of Randolph and Changing Environments, Inc. d/b/a Soofa**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-045 and Town Planning Director Michelle Tyler provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor Burgess: How many signs? Where do you recommend installing the signs? What is the sign going to be wrapped in? Town Planner Michelle Tyler: There will be four signs. We can electronically track each sign and monitor the content on the signs. I've made recommendations to install the signs near Town Hall, near the MBTA commuter station, near the Corkin building, and another one on North Main Street. The wrap will be in shades of blue to mimic Blue Hills and have the Town of Randolph Town Seal on it. Councillor Burgess: The contract allows advertising. Is it your proposal that we have advertising? Town Planner Michelle Tyler: I have recommended against that. Other communities do that

as a revenue-generating process, I recommend to the Town manager that that would be more of an operational challenge because the Town wouldn't control the vendors and their advertisements. Councillor Burgess: What is the process if we want to sign that contract without agreeing to that section? Town Attorney Griffin: You could make explicit in the vote that the vote is contingent on that being optional language. I have not discussed with SOOFA whether or not they would accept the contract with that provision eliminated. If SOOFA refuses the contract with the amendment then we would come back to the Council and ask you to approve a different version of the contract.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I think this could be significant and would make a huge impact in our Town. I'm thinking we can use it to encourage individuals to vote and inform them about other activities happening in Town.

Town Planner Michelle Tyler: The advertising that is being referenced is specifically revenue generating from outside organizations, such as local businesses or any business.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-045 with the exclusion of section 1C and section 3 of the attached contract made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

Councillor Gordon: I'd like to hear what the revenue would be.

A discussion of the Council was held concerning section 1C and section 3 of the accompanying SOOFA contract which allows for advertisements on all SOOFA signs and the revenue collected from said advertisements.

Councillor Gordon made a motion to amend the initial motion to approve the Council Order and attached contract as presented, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

Roll Call Vote on the Motion to Amend: 1-5 (Nays: C. Alexopoulos, Brewer, Burgess, Huff-Larmond, O'Connell; Absent: W. Alexopoulos, Egan and Thompson)

Motion fails.

Roll call vote to approve the main motion to approve Council Order 2024-045 with the exclusion of section 1C and section 3 of the attached contract.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: W. Alexopoulos, Egan, Thompson)

Motion Passes.

## **2. Council Order 2024-046: FY2024 Unpaid Bills**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-046 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-046, made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: W. Alexopoulos, Egan, Thompson)

Motion passes.

## **3. Council Order 2024-047: Transfer from Retained Earnings for Blue Drop Obligations**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-047 and Town Attorney Griffin provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-047, made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: W. Alexopoulos, Egan, Thompson)

Motion passes.

#### **4. Council Order 2024-048: Acceptance of Gift of Funds from Library Trustees**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-048 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: What would this allow? Town Manager Howard: Sunday hours at the Turner Free Library, twice a month from 12 pm to 5 pm from November through April.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-048, made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: W. Alexopoulos, Egan, Thompson)

Motion passes.

#### **5. Council Order 2024-049: Transfer of Care, Custody, Management and Control of the Former Devine School Properties To The School Department and the Former Lyons School Properties to the Town**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-049 and Town Attorney Griffin provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor Burgess asked for additional information regarding this Council Order. Town Attorney Griffin: The Council took a vote to transfer the former Divine School property to the School Department, but the vote was contingent on the School Committee voting to transfer the Lyons school back to us. This confirms that they took the action that the transfer is complete. In addition to that, the School Committee voted to transfer the Lyons school property to the Town. The Town Council has to vote to accept that it's not complete upon the School Committee vote. The Council also has to vote to say, yes, we would like to accept the Lyons School property. So this Council Order will accomplish both of those things. This confirms that the divine school is going to the school committee, and it confirms that the Town Council is accepting the lion school from the school committee.

Councillor Burgess invoked Rule 21 on Council Order 2024-049.

#### **6. Council Order 2024-050: Amendment of Section 18-3 of the General Ordinances of the Town of Randolph Concerning Department Revolving Funds**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-050 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order. This Council Order requires a legal advertisement for a public hearing and to be on two meetings so it will be on a future agenda for a vote.

#### **Motions, Orders and Resolutions:**

Councillor Gordon proposed a council order on mobility hub grant research. This Council Order says we're going to codify the middle option that was shown to us in the presentation and let's assign a Town staffer, or at the discretion of the Town Manager, an outside consultant, to explore the grant options which are detailed in the feasibility study. Town Attorney Griffin provided limited commentary regarding the status of the feasibility study.

Councillor Gordon proposed a council order concerning blasting rules. Town Attorney Griffin provided limited commentary regarding the current state and local rules that exist for blasting.

Town Attorney Griffin will spend additional time researching both topics and return to the Council with an update.

### Correspondence:

**1. 2024 Harvest Hoopla:** Stop by Powers Farm on Saturday, October 19, 2024, from 12-4 PM for lots of fall fun! If you are interested in registering to be a vendor, register online at <https://bit.ly/HarvestHooplaVendor24>

**2. 2024 Trunk-or-Treat:** Stop by the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center for a fun trunk-or-treat event on Saturday, October 26, 2024, from 6-8 PM.

**3. Letter from Town Clerk Cheryl Sass Concerning Early Voting:** Early voting will take place at Randolph Town Hall, 41 South Main Street, in the Lincoln and Washington Room on the following dates and times:

Saturday 10/19	9:00 – 3:00
Sunday 10/20	9:00 – 1:00
Monday–Friday 10/21-10/25	8:30 – 4:30
Saturday 10/26	9:00 – 5:00
Sunday 10/27	9:00 – 1:00
Monday 10/28	8:30 – 4:30
Tuesday 10/29	8:30 – 7:00
Wednesday 10/30	8:30 – 4:30
Thursday 10/31	8:30 – 7:00
Friday 11/1	8:30 – 4:30

**4. Randolph Fire Department Open House!** Stop by the North Randolph Fire Station at 952 North Main Street on Saturday, October 5, 2024, from 1 PM to 3 PM for this year's Fire Department Open House!

**5. Randolph Pack the Pantry 5k Run/Walk:** November 9, 2024, starting at 10:00 AM. Register at [RandolphRunners.com](https://RandolphRunners.com).

### Council Comments:

- Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. Randolph Youth Council is hosting a hygiene products drive for those who are in need. There is a box at Town Hall and the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center (RICC) for those who would like to participate. 2. The Randolph Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition (Randolph DEI) had a Standout last Sunday in support of the Haitian Community. We will continue to show our support to our neighbors. 3. Randolph DEI is starting English classes which will be held at the RICC. Stay tuned for more information. 4. Cheryl Fraizer will be missed. We have worked on many projects together from even before I was a Councillor.
- Councillor O'Connell: 1. Ms. Frazier was a rock in the community that held a lot in place. She will be missed in the community. 2. Thank you to Natalie for setting up our booth at the Randolph Services Fair. 3. A new business is going into the old C&J location. I can't wait for that to open.
- Councillor Gordon: Randolph Redevelopment Authority is planning for the Town Council to move forward on hiring an executive director. 2. We should talk about the earmark process. I think we should send a letter from the Council and we should collectively discuss what should go into that letter. 3. I think another representative of the Town brought up that we should do a Resolution about our support of

Haiti and the Haitian community. I think that's a great idea. Yes, we had a great event at the Stetson Hall but I think we really should have a resolution on that propose.

4. Councillor C. Alexopoulos: I recently met with Councillor O'Connell and Community Programs Director Liz LaRosee about the annual Winter Wonderland Event. If any businesses want to participate, there is an interest form available for people to fill out.
5. Councillor Burgess: Mr. Vance had comments about the Haitian Community that were unfounded, racist, and unbecoming to any person who wants to serve this country. I know the Council doesn't support that sentiment and it is not accepted and would not be tolerated in the Town of Randolph.

### **Adjournment:**

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

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: W. Alexopoulos, Egan, Thompson)

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM