



Randolph Town Council

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, November 25, 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 President Brewer called the meeting to order.

Roll Call – Council Members Present: Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (In-Person), James Burgess (In-Person), Natacha Clerger (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person)

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor Clerger.

Moment of Silent Prayer: 1. Joseph W. Marotta, Jr. passed away on November 7, 2024. Joe was originally from Randolph and is a cherished and respected member of the community. Joe was a man whose life was marked by kindness, faith, and selfless dedication to his family and work. 2. Karl D. Wells passed away on November 18, 2024. Karl's life was a testament to love, hard work, and community spirit.

Councillor O'Connell and Councillor Huff-Larmond entered the meeting, in-person, at 5:40 PM.

Councillor Burgess made a motion to start with the presentation by the EPA and DEP concerning Baird McGuire Superfund Site, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

Roll Call Vote: 7-0-0 (Absent: Egan and Thompson)

Motion passes.

Councillor Thompson entered the meeting, in-person, at 5:45 PM.

Presentations:

1. Presentation by EPA and DEP concerning Baird McGuire Superfund Site

Project Manager, Chris Kelly, provided a presentation regarding the Baird McGuire superfund site. Mr. Kelly explained the site history and background, and the current site status. Planned work for 2025 includes: continue post-pilot test maintenance and reporting, continue pilot-test-specific groundwater surface water monitoring, continue established long term monitoring program, continue GWTP maintenance activities.

2. Presentation of proclamations to Jill Hall, Anne Coolidge Masse, Thomas Tran, and Peggy Montlouis

Leader and Organizer of the Keep Randolph Beautiful Team, Jillian Hall provided a presentation regarding the purpose of Keep Randolph Beautiful. Some of their accomplishments include: 2. collecting cleanup supplies donated by citizens, eight group cleanups held, and 276 bags of litter collected! Keep Randolph Beautiful continues to seek Town support by attending cleanup events,

promoting the Keep Randolph Beautiful events, enforcing litter ordinances, working with Randolph Schools to implement community service hours for their students, and investing in improved trash receptacles.

A Proclamation was given to Jill Hall, Anne Coolidge Masse, Thomas Trans, and Peggy Montlouis for their outstanding work.

Ryan Egan entered the meeting, via Zoom.

Public Hearings:

1. 6:15 PM: Public Hearing and Vote on FY2025 Tax Classification

Town Council President Brewer opened the public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2024 Tax Classification. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisement that was published in the Patriot Ledger on Wednesday, November 20, 2024.

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 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.

Council President Alexopoulos opened the Public Comment portion of the Public Hearing.

1. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: I'd like to see you hold the shift at 1.75 because we have the new school and water treatment plant that are new builds so we're going to need money set aside.
2. Geurlince Semezier, 60 Mills Street: I hope you consider keeping the rate at 1.75 and consider the residents that cannot afford to pay more.

There were no additional public comments.

Motion made by Councillor Burgess to adopt a commercial exemption, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion Passes.

Motion made by Councillor Burgess not to adopt a residential exemption, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion Passes.

Motion made by Councillor Burgess to adopt open space exemption, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

Roll Call Vote: 3-5-1 (Nays: Alexopoulos, Burgess, Egan, Huff-Larmond; O'Connell; Abstention: Clerger)

Motion fails.

Motion made by Councillor Burgess for a tax rate shift of 1.73, seconded by Councillor Discussion: Councillor Burgess: I want people to remember that it is the type and quality of a business that will benefit Randolph. Attracting a business for business' sake will not do it for us.

Councillor Clerger: I was leaning more towards a shift of 1.74. I am always against raising the taxes for

our residents.

Motion to amend the 1.73 tax shift to 1.75 made by O'Connell, seconded by Councillor Clerger.
Roll Call Vote: 4-5-0 (Nays: Alexopoulos, Brewer, Burgess, Egan, Huff-Larmond, O'Connell)
Motion fails.

Motion to amend 1.73 to 1.74 made by Gordon, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.
Roll Call Vote: 4-5-0 (Thompson, Egan, Burgess, Brewer, Alexopoulos)
Motion fails.

Roll Call Vote on the main motion for a tax rate shift of 1.73.
Roll Call Vote: 7-1-1 (Abstention: Clerger; Nays: Huff-Larmond)
Motion passes.

2. 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 was joined by Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith to provide additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order. Town Attorney Griffin referenced the legal advertisement which was published in the Boston Herald on November 20, 2024.

1. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: Where is that money coming from?

There were no more public comments. The Council President closed the public comments portion of the public hearing and opened the floor for comments of the Council.

Councillor Huff Larmond: How much is the Town spending on these expenses?

Councillor Gordon: So when departments have retirees, they are hit with a large burden that is unpredictable. So the bottom line is they will no longer have this unexpected burden.

Councillor Clerger: So this is like a safety net if an employee decides to leave?

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-061 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

3. 6:15 PM: 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 was joined by Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith to provide additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order. Town Attorney Griffin referenced the legal advertisement which was published in the Boston Herald on November 20, 2024.

1. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: Where is this money coming from? If the employee passes away, does the money go to their spouse? Town Attorney Griffin: It would go to their Estate.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-062 as presented made by Councillor Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

Old/Unfinished Business:

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

Council Order 2024-060 was introduced at the Town Council meeting on November 18, 2024. Town Manager Howard provided a brief explanation regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-060 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

Public Comments:

1. Becki Robitaw, 42 Woodlawn Road: I'd like to express my condolences to the Alexopoulos family for the loss. I had a question regarding the exemption. I know the appropriation of funds, when someone retires, is there a need for them to give an advance notice like six months to a year?
2. Jamie Ackles, 32 Richard Road Road: 1. Congrats to the Blue Devils Football team. It's their second year going to the super bowl. The superbowl will be in Gillette Stadium on December 6, 2025 at 6 PM. 2. There was talk about the clean-up crew. We are also requiring students to have volunteer hours so we'll work with our student leadership to help that team out. 3. I'm here as an individual member of the school committee and do not represent the opinions of the entire committee. In watching the last Town Council meeting, there was a lot of discussion around the budget process free cash and I want to share insight on this that I have been a part of the School Committee and Finance Subcommittee. With potential federal changes in school funding, we're probably going to see a ripple effect on the State Level and we may need to do something with our state officials to start pushing for more of a needs based allocation when it comes to funding. With the 5% budget increase received by the schools, it still resulted in 40 positions being eliminated at our schools. I'm hoping for a little bit more collaboration as it relates to our budget process.

Town Manager's Reports:

1. Town Manager Howard explained the process for budgeting the School department funds.
2. Town Manager Howard provided an update regarding the Unidirectional Flushing Plan and recent water issues that have taken place in the Town. Department of Public Works Superintendent Neil McCole joined Town Manager Howard to provide additional information regarding the recent work that has been done on the piping systems.

Correspondence:

1. Department of Public Utilities - Notice of Filing and Public Hearing: The Department of Public Utilities will host four public hearings to receive comments on Eversource Energy's petition seeking approval of its Three-Year Energy Efficiency Plan for 2025-2027. For additional information regarding the public hearings, you may visit: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/energy-efficiency-dockets-and-filings>
2. Winter Wonderland 2024 - December 14, 2024 from 3-6 PM at Crawford Square.

Announcement from the President:

1. There is a joint meeting of the Town Council and School Committee to vote on the applicants for the vacant School Committee seat on Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM.
2. Our annual year-end party will be held on Tuesday, December 10 at 6 PM at the RICC.

Council Comments:

1. Councillor Gordon: I will report on the Small Business and Real Estate Subcommittee: We discussed the PFAS Resolutions and testing of PFAS.
2. Councillor O'Connell: Thank you to DPW for their road work in District One.
3. Councillor Huff-Larmond: Randolph Youth Council has a new president and vice president. We are starting to think about next year as this year comes to an end. 2. I had a great time at the Randolph Police Department's Centennial. I was really impressed with the event. The video made me really proud to be a Randolph resident.
4. Councillor Gordon: I commend the Randolph Police Chief for accomplishing making the Randolph Police the model for all the surrounding towns in terms of service but in terms of affirmative action as well. Happy Thanksgiving to all!
5. Councillor Clerger: I am proud of us for a smooth meeting tonight. ON behalf of CONCERNED Citizens of Randolph Team, I want to express our sympathy to the Wells family who was an aly. Mr. Wells and his friends would step up and keep the program going by providing food to distribute to the community. Thank you to Senator Elect Driscoll for bringing me turkeys to distribute. Thank you to Sargeant Ryan Kinnon who has done such a great job with the black tie event at the Randolph Police Departments Centennial Gala.
6. Councillor Alexopoulos: On Saturday December 7, 2024 we have the North Randolph Tree Lighting Celebration at 4:30 PM at Milton Monument. It will be hosted by myself and the North Randolph Business District. Tree Lighting will take place at around 5:30 PM. Chief Marag and Randolph Police Department thank you for hosting a wonderful event. It was nice to see so many familiar faces. Happy Birthday Sergeant Brewer!
7. Councillor Burgess: North Randolph Tree Lighting Event is taking place Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 4:30 PM. We will miss Bill and Shamus will be missed this year. 1048 Grill has volunteered to step up/
8. Councillor Brewer: I'd like to commend the police Department on the 100th Year Gala. It was professionally done.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Clerger.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: Egan, Huff-Larmond, Thompson)
Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.