



Randolph Town Council

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, October 16, 2023, 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 President Alexopoulos called the meeting to order.

Roll Call – Council Members Present: Christos Alexopoulos (In-Person), William Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (By Zoom), Natacha Clerger (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person).

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held in remembrance of Jeannette C. Travaline, an active community member, and Maureen F. Pellitteri, the previous Department of Public Works Superintendent’s mother.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting February 28, 2022

Motion to approve the Minutes of Town Council Meeting on July 10, 2023, made by Councillor O’Connell, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Motion passes.

2. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meetings May 22, 2023, June 5, 2023 and July 24, 2023

Motion to approve the Minutes of Town Council Meeting on July 10, 2023, made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion passes.

3. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting June 26, 2023

Motion to approve the Minutes of Town Council Meeting on June 26, 2023, made by Councillor Clerger, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-1 (Absent: Burgess and Egan; Abstention: Brewer)

Motion passes.

Presentation:

A proclamation was presented to Motivation Church to celebrate its 10th Year Anniversary and in recognition of their commitment to giving back to the Town of Randolph by contributing their time and resources on various occasions.

Pastors Jason LaPlanche and Sharae LaPlanch were present to accept the proclamation, along with members of Motivation Church.

Public Hearings:

1. 6:15 PM: Special Permit Application and Site Plan and Design Review for a Proposed Development located at 16 Fencourt Avenue

Council President Alexopoulos: This is a continued Public Hearing. Council President Alexopoulos read correspondence from the applicant requesting an additional continuance of the public hearing due to reports of the Conservation Commission being finalized. I am going to continue the Public Hearing to December 8, 2023, at 6:15 PM. The Town Council Clerk will send a letter to Attorney Reilly confirming the continued Public Hearing.

Public Comments/Discussions

1. Genny Castasus, Acorn Drive, Randolph. MA - road pavement request of Acorn Drive.
2. Geurlince Semerzier, 60 Mill Street, Randolph, MA- Is the special permit application for 16 Fencourt Avenue for the building of a new development, or is it just a permit to get some work done? Council President Alexopoulos: It is a new housing development. We don't have information regarding affordable housing at this moment but will be presented by the applicant.
3. Sandy Cohen, Bittersweet Lane: 1. What is the status of the mobility hub? Have we hired a consultant 2. What is the status of Gateway City status? 3. Thank you Town Manager Howard for your work on getting the recreation trips going again. Councillor Huff-Larmond: The Council Order for Gateway City status was referred to the Economic Development Subcommittee so we will be meeting on the subject.

New Business:

1. Council Order 2023-051: FY2024 Randolph Community Preservation Committee Projects

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-051. Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2023-051 and provided a brief explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Town Manager Howard: This is an appropriation so it can't be voted on tonight and will be voted on at the next meeting during the public hearing.

Council President Alexopoulos opened the floor for questions or comments of the Council.

Councillor O'Connell: Is the project for the Pickleball Courts Area just revamping the current pickleball court, or will there be a whole new court? Where will it be? Town Manager Howard: The area they're looking at is one of the fields closest to North Street. Building Commissioner Ron Lum will be present at the new meeting to talk about the project further.

Councillor Gordon: These are great projects. I think the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) does a great job reviewing and approving projects presented to them. I would like to see more transparency regarding how these reports are put together and how they're executed after they've been

voted on. Town Manager Howard: I will speak with the chair of the Committee and see how that is being done for the next meeting.

Council President Alexopoulos: This will go on the meeting for October 30, 2023, at 6:15 PM for a public hearing.

2. Council Order 2023-052: Prior Fiscal Year Unpaid Bill

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-052. Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2023-052 and provided a brief explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Council President Alexopoulos opened the floor for questions or comments of the Council.

Motion to approve Council Order 2022-052 as presented made by Councillor O'Connell, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Motion passes.

3. Council Order 2023-053: Authorization and Approval for Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA" For Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement Between Randolph Firefighters, Local 1268, IAFF ("Union") and Town of Randolph Massachusetts

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-053. Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2023-053 and provided an explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Town Manager Howard: This contract will make it so that all of the Town's Union contracts, once this one is approved, are up to date. This is exciting. I want to thank the bargaining team and membership of the union as a whole for the great conversations. Some of the key items within the new contract to highlight are: 1. This contract clarifies the issue regarding personal days not being carried over such as vacation time, 2. Juneteenth is now reflected as a Holiday, 3. In the Health and Safety category, there is a personal equipment safety stipend so firefighters can purchase any cleaning products they may need, 4. We were able to work out sick leave buyback and add five additional days to the annual buyback 5. The cost of living increase is in line with other unions at 2.5%. , 6. There is increased field training which is extremely important, 7. A system coordinator position is being added in with a stipend, 8. There is an increased educational credit of 250 a year, and the Fire Department Chief will have the authority to ensure the nature of the programs and classes being subscribed to.

Fire Chief Cassford: The Randolph Fire Department was awarded the 2022 Safer Grant which is a grant from FEMA that allows us to add firefighters over the course of three years and they would also cover the costs of their insurance, etc. The amount of the grant was over \$2M which covers the three years. So without any unforeseen circumstances, we will be adding eight firefighters. At the end of the three years, we will need to find a way to integrate them into our staffing or obtain additional funding through grants that exist to keep the retention of firefighters. We will also be able to participate in regionalized dispatch with this contract.

Council President Alexopoulos opened the floor for questions or comments of the Council.

Councillor Gordon: I see Civil Service is still listed in this contract. I'm curious if this discussion came up during negotiations. Town Manager Howard: Every contract is unique. There were a lot of discussions about this topic but we were not able to find an agreement. With that said, we have been

fortunate with our outreach that with the last series of new hires, we have been able to attract more diversity. We are committed to reflecting the town and the language needs of our residents.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: This is good to hear. It's important to keep Randolph's need for diversity as a priority when looking for employees to service our community. I appreciate that. On a number of occasions, we have talked about the firefighters program at the high school and I have been asking about the progress of students and how that's going. I have a vision that students can embark on these programs and then take the exams to become First Responders. Town Manager Howard: It's a well-attended program and very successful. They often go into a four-year program after high school so we don't have any data yet to reflect whether or not it's getting us immediate firefighters. We probably won't know for another few years. They all certainly enjoy the program. Councillor Huff-Larmond: I would love to see the data being collected about this.

Motion to approve Council Order 2022-053 as presented made by Councillor Clerger, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion passes.

4. Council Order 2023-054: Transfer of ARPA Revenue Loss Funds

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-054. Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2023-054 and provided an explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Town Accountant/Finance Director: This includes the school. They will look at how we can make this process efficient for everyone.

Council President Alexopoulos opened the floor for questions or comments of the Council.

Motion to approve Council Order 2022-054 as presented made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Motion passes.

5. Council Order 2023-055: Amendment of Section 18-3 of the General Ordinances of the Town of Randolph Concerning Department Revolving Funds

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-055. Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2023-055 and provided an explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Town Manager Howard: This is a change to our ordinances so this will simply be an introduction and cannot be voted on tonight. There is a program for recreational and senior bus trips operating out of the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. This allows us to run trips for individuals to reserve their spot for a trip by making a payment to the Town and then the Town can in turn pay the vendor. This allows these departments to continue to make these trips which were very popular but were no longer able to do because the company previously used is no longer operating.

Council President Alexopoulos to open the floor for questions or comments of the Council.

Council President Alexopoulos: This will go on the meeting for October 30, 2023, at 6:15 PM for a public hearing.

Town Manager's Report:

1. Turner Free Library is open on Sundays! Full schedule available online at www.turnerfreelibrary.org
2. Randolph's Annual Harvest Hoopla on October 21, 2023,
3. Randolph's 2nd Annual Trunk or Treat on October 28, 2023,
4. Randolph Pack the Pantry 5K Run/Walk on November 4, 2023,
5. MBTA Community Workshop on October 28, 2023.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. I want to thank you for the MBTA zoning thing so that people understand it's not as easy as simply answering "yes" or "no" to something as complicated as this topic. 2. I want to follow up with you on the Assistant Town Manager position. Various residents have called me expressing that their not happy with the process. They've explained that they send the application to an email address and never receive a response or even confirmation of receipt. For transparency reasons, we need to address that. Randolph is different today than it was years ago.

Town Manager Howard: Employee benefits are difficult to manage. The Assistant Town Manager position would help with a lot of the Human Resources and benefits stuff. We need to address that and will come up with a plan to do better. We've also been struggling to find a candidate to address all of those areas required of a Department of Public Works Superintendent. Some of the committee members and I are even considering the need for possibly hiring an assistant to handle some of the load.

Correspondence:

1. Comcast: Program Changes: On September 22, 2023, CalmLIFE On Demand was renamed ZenLIFE by Stringray; On September 21, 2023, the Ovation channel will be relocated to the B2/Entertainment tier; On or after September 26, 2023, the INSP channel will be relocated to the More Sports Entertainment pack. The change will occur on or after September 26, 2023.

Subcommittee Comments:

Human Services/Seniors/Recreation: Councillor Gordon provided an update regarding this Subcommittee. We received correspondence regarding the Ponkapoag Pond Fisherman's Cove Improvements and Landscape Management Plan for Canton and Randolph, Massachusetts. I'd like to call a meeting of this Subcommittee to discuss this. This is about Ponkapoag pond and we're trying to get more amenities for Randolph, Massachusetts on our side instead of Canton which currently holds the main entrance.

Council Comments:

Councillor Clerger: The Randolph Friend Food Pantry is still in need of food. If you are feeling generous, please feel free to donate. The Pack the Pantry race is occurring on November 4, 2023, at 10:00 AM. Please register.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos: Thank you to Fire Chief Cassford and the fire department for a wonderful day at the Open House held on Sunday. It was a great time.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Randolph Youth Council had their first meeting of the year. Our first event will be at Powers Farm tabling at the Harvest Hoopla and they will be selling donuts and apple cider. They will also be doing a can drive to donate to the pantry. At some point, they also plan on reading to the youth.

Councillor Gordon: 1. Congratulations to the Town Manager and Fire Chief Cassford for their work on obtaining the grant funding and I encourage you to obtain the follow-up grant to keep the additional

firefighters. 2. I sent off a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the state requesting the total amount Randolph contributes to the State. I also want to see a list of all the grants we receive because I think we do great work on obtaining grants and want to see how we can keep that going. 3. We received correspondence regarding the Ponkapoag Pond Fisherman's Cove Improvements and Landscape Management Plan for Canton and Randolph, Massachusetts.

Councillor O'Connell: Please join us at the MBTA Community workshop on October 28, 2023. There will be three sessions with the first starting at 10 AM, then 1:00 PM, then 4:00 for two hours each. You will learn a lot with the program and about what will happen with the Town. 2. It was a great event at the Fire Department's open house. My daughter enjoyed spraying the fire hose. 3. I want to congratulate Lumi and Lather for the recent grand opening of their Spa Business here in Randolph. We wish you all the best. 4. The Higashi School hosted their annual gala and they had a wonderful charity event raising funds for the school. They're growing gardens and there was discussion about potentially being able to use the food that's grown to give back to the food pantry. 5. I want to thank the School Committee for inviting us on a walk-through of the Randolph High School. It opened my eyes to a lot of work that needs to be done. 6. Country Club Drive and some of the surrounding streets are getting repaved. Thank you to the Department of Public Works and everyone working on that.

Council President Alexopoulos: The Town Council was invited to visit the Randolph High School for a tour and we got to see the improvements being made such as the brand new boilers and looked at what areas needed additional improvements.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor Clerger, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent: Burgess and Egan; Absent During Vote: Huff-Larmond)
Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.