



Randolph Town Council

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, January 29, 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 President Alexopoulos called the meeting to order.

Roll Call – Council Members Present: William Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person), Brandon Thompson (In-Person).

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor O’Connell.

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- 1. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting March 14, 2022**
- 2. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting August 7, 2023**
- 3. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting November 13, 2023**
- 4. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting November 20, 2023**
- 5. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting December 11, 2023**

Motion to approve the minutes of Town Council Meetings: March 4, 2022, August 7, 2023, November 13, 2023, November 20, 2023, and December 11, 2023 made by Councillor O’Connell, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1 (Abstention: Thompson; Absent: C. Alexopoulos, Burgess, Egan, Huff-Larmond)
Motion passes.

Councillor Egan entered the meeting, via Zoom, at 6:04 PM.

Approval of 2024 Town Council Meeting Dates:

The Town Council Clerk announced the Town Council meeting dates of 2024.

February 5 and 26
March 4 and 18
April 1 and 29
May 13
June 10 and 24
July 15 and 29
August 12 and 26
September 9 and 30
October 7 and 28

November 4 and 25

December 9

Public Comments:

1. Natacha Clerger, 52 Thayer Circle: 1. Happy New Year to Randolph! I will be working with the Council President to acknowledge seniors celebrating a birthday of 90 years old or above so please reach out to me so that we can acknowledge and honor you.

Councillor Huff-Larmond entered the meeting, in person, at 6:07 PM.

Councillor Burgess entered the meeting, in person at 6:09 PM.

Appointments:

The Town Council Clerk read the Town Council Subcommittee and Appointments for 2024.

1. 2024 Council Subcommittee Appointments
 - a. Economic Development/Small Business/Real Estate: Jesse Gordon, Ryan Egan, Brandon Thompson
 - b. Human Services/Seniors/Recreation: Christos Alexopoulos, Jesse Gordon, Kevin O'Connell
 - c. Ordinance: Richard Brewer, Katrina Huff-Larmond, Brandon Thompson
 - d. Public Safety: Christos Alexopoulos, Richard Brewer, Kevin O'Connell
 - e. Finance: Entire Town Council
2. 2024 Council Appointments
 - a. School Committee: James F. Burgess, Jr.
 - b. Turner Free Library Trustees: Richard Brewer, Brandon Thompson
 - c. Veterans/Military Services Committee: Brandon Thompson
 - d. Community Preservation Committee: Kevin O'Connell
 - e. Joint Board: Town Manager Brian Howard
 - f. Tri-Board: William Alexopoulos
 - g. Master Plan Implementation Committee: Jesse Gordon

Councillor Gordon has proposed Monday, February 12, 2024 at 6 PM for the Human Services/Seniors/Recreation Subcommittee. Master Plan: Tuesday- February 6, 2024

Councillor O'Connell will circle back with a proposed date.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos entered the meeting, in person, at 6:12 PM.

New Business:

1. Council Order 2024-001: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash to Stabilization Fund

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2024-001. Town Manager Howard introduced the Council Order and provided additional information regarding the purpose of the Council Order.

Councillor Burgess asked a question concerning other stabilization accounts.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-001 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.
Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0
Motion passes.

2. Council Order 2024-002: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash to the Opioid Settlement Special Revenue Fund

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2024-001. Town Manager Howard introduced the Council Order and provided additional information regarding the purpose of the Council Order.

Councillor Huff-Larmond requested an update on where Randolph is in terms of this Settlement. Town Attorney Griffin: The Town was an active plaintiff throughout this litigation and the litigation is now complete. There is a schedule to payments we'll receive over the next twenty years and there is a specific list of what the money can be used for, most of which has to do with continued education. There is currently nothing that segregates these funds so we can track how we spend them. We are in the process of working with a consultant which lets cities and towns know what types of programs these monies can be used on. There are a number of department heads who are also involved in how this money will be spent. Town Manager Howard: There are many ways to approach this and we are looking at examples of what other communities are doing. There is no question that the team will come up with some suggestions that will be of great help in working on this issue within the community. Councillor Huff-Larmond requested to be a part of this discussion.

Councillor Egan: Do these funds go directly into the stabilization account and if so, do we get notified? Town Manager Howard: I believe since this is a transfer, there will be additional transfers. Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith: The State has not really given clear guidance so different cities and towns were doing different things. We decided to have the money come into the general fund which ended up being free cash, which is why we're not moving this money into this special revenue fund and anything received going forward will also go into this fund. It will be overseen by the department heads to make sure it's spent correctly.

Councillor Gordon: So each amount received is from one or a couple pharmaceutical companies and each settlement is separate and a different amount provided over what amount of time? Town Attorney Griffin: Each settlement from each pharmaceutical company is separate. The settlements were done in batches depending on what type of opioid market the company was in. The state used a formula based on the city or town's population size, the impacts of opioids in your communities and whether or not you were a plaintiff. We can expect every September to get a new batch of cash. Councillor Gordon: So this money is not listed in the budget as a non-general fund expense? Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith: Correct, this will not be listed within the general fund operating budget.

Councillor Burgess: If we authorized for example, the recreation department to run a program with the Randolph Youth Council, wouldn't these funds then be listed in their annual operating budget? Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith: The departments initiating or working the programs will work with Town Manager Howard. Once I'm aware of the program, there will be specific line items in their budget to spend these monies. Councillor Burgess: It would be nice to be notified of what anticipated programming the Town intends on using these funds for. How can the school department be involved in future plans? Town Manager Howard: Health Commissioner Gerry Cody is in constant communication with the School Department on various topics, including this one. Councillor Burgess: Can I see the list of things these funds can be spent on? Town Attorney Griffin: There is a link on the Attorney General's website that lists all of these things. I will forward this to the Council.

Councillor O'Connell: Is there anyway the Book Mobile we'll be getting can be turned into an outreach mobile? Town Manager Howard: We can look into that and have a discussion.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-002 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion passes.

3. Council Order 2024-003: Transfer of Free Cash and Enterprise Retained Earnings into OPEB Stabilization Account

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2024-003. Town Manager Howard introduced the Council Order and provided additional information regarding the purpose of the Council Order.

A discussion was held concerning the policies and procedures put in place by the Accountant's office.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-003 as presented made by Councillor Egan, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

4. Council Order 2024-004: ARPA Revenue Loss Transfer

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2024-004. Town Manager Howard introduced the Council Order and provided additional information regarding the purpose of the Council Order.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: What is the feasibility study for the mobility Hub being geared towards? Are bicycle paths included in this? Town Manager Howard: It is specific to buses and vans.

A discussion was held concerning the use and purpose of ARPA funds.

Council President Alexopoulos requested a quarterly report that shows grants received from the Town's departments and School department. Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith: Yes, I can produce that this week and then send the next one on March 31, 2024.

Councillor Burgess requested for the Town Accountant/Finance Director to display a presentation concerning the subject of free cash. Council President Alexopoulos will work with the Town Accountant/Finance Director to decide on an available date for this presentation. .

Councillor Gordon: I'd like for this report to contain all non-general revenue funds such as grants, earmarks, etc. and I think presenting it in the form of a Council Order is best.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-004 as presented made by Council Vice President Brewer, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

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

Motion passes.

Town Manager's Report:

1. I have been working on updating the Good neighbor Guide with other department heads and we hope to have a final version available this spring.

2. I've also been speaking with the Health commissioner and Councillor Brewer regarding updating our recycle bins to be the same size as the bins for regular trash. Additional discussion was held concerning the Town's trash and recycle systems.

Questions for the Town Manager:

1. Councillor Huff-Larmond requested an update on the Department of Public Works Superintendent. Town Manager Howard: I anticipate that I will have a name to bring forward by the next Town Council meeting.

Subcommittee Reports:

Master Plan Implementation Committee: Councillor Gordon provided an update on this Committee. I plan to present the Master Plan Implementation Committee's annual report including recommendations to the Town Council.

Human Services/Seniors/Recreation Subcommittee: Councillor Gordon provided an update on this Committee. Green Community representative, Lisa Sullivan presented at one of our subcommittee meetings last year and I think she should come and speak to the entire Town Council.

Council Comments:

1. Councillor Gordon: 1. The purpose of the report for revenues is to see about grants, earmarks, loan forgiveness, and any other sources of revenue not normally listed in the operating budget. A discussion was held concerning the process for applying and receiving earmarks from the state and I think it would be beneficial to have a Council Order on this information. 2. I want to revisit the subject of becoming a green community, a gateway city, so that we can become eligible for certain grants. The newspaper "The Banner" published an article titled "Gateway to Pre-K" and it's about schools offering free preschool to eligible communities and those eligible communities are gateway communities. I want to make sure that we reach that status so that we can be one of those eligible communities for that program.
2. Councillor Burgess: A request was made concerning the tree fences. Town Manager Howard stated they would be done in the springtime. 2. I attended my first School Committee meeting and it was interesting. 3. There is playground equipment lying around the Lyons School. The contract was not able to install the equipment due to different reasons and requests have been made to have that equipment moved because it is unsafe. We are working on that.
3. Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. The Friendly Food Pantry is in need. If you are able to, please donate. 2. Thank you to all who came to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration. It was the most attended since it was started doing this celebration annually so thank you to the community. There was certainly a call to action. 3. Randolph Youth Council is doing awesome. We had a fun activity day the other day and went to Dave and Busters just to relax since so much was done at the MLK Day Celebration and they've been doing alot community service. 4. I received an update from Representative Driscoll regarding our Home Rule Petition for ballots in haitian-creole. There is a good feeling that this will move forward. 5. We have new neighbors! There are 300+ families in the hotel by Stoughton and we have a responsibility to find out what their needs are and learn how we can be more welcoming. Town Manager Howard: The State is working with communities like Stoughton to provide additional funds for the influx of families. Randolph's School Department has also seen many of these students attending our schools so through the school department, we are certainly learning how resources can be provided. 6. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. held a conference on human trafficking and youth exploitation and had a great panel discussion. It's happening in our backyards and we need to be informed.
4. Councillor O'Connell: 1. The Randolph Police Department is selling patches to raise money for the 100 Club, a nonprofit organization that provides assistance to families of fallen first responders. Sgt. Gilbert is manning this but you can visit the police station to place an order. 2. A new business in town recently opened: Monkey Lounge. The food is great and there is a great atmosphere. Teada opened this past

weekend. They sell Boba Tea and sandwiches. My family and I loved it. I wish both of those businesses success. 3. I went to the recent Massachusetts Municipal Association convention and there was lots of great things to see. 5. I've been receiving lots of emails from parents who have children at the Young School. I just wanted to let everyone know that I'm forwarding them to the right people and I hope to get you all answers soon so that we are on the same page.

5. Council President Alexopoulos: The next Town Council meeting is Monday, February 5, 2024 at 6:00 PM.

Adjournment:

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

Roll Call Vote: 7-0-0 (Absent during vote: Egan and Huff-Larmond)

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.