



## Randolph Town Council

### Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date: Monday, January 8, 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:** Christos Alexopoulos (In-Person), William Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person), Brandon Thompson (In-Person).

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

**Moment of Silent Prayer:** Moment of Silent Prayer held.

#### **Announcements from the President:**

1. I had the pleasure of attending a tour of the new school being built at the old Devine School location. It

#### **Presentations:**

1. **Discussion Concerning Short-Term Rental Properties with Town Planning Director, Michelle Tyler**

Town Planner was present to discuss short term rentals in the Town of Randolph, such as Airbnbs. The Building Commissioner is calling these short-term rentals “boarding houses” and is advising folks to cease and desist as the Town of Randolph does not allow for them. There are 34 properties in Randolph providing short-term rentals. The conversation the Building Commissioner and I want to have is “how can we make these more definitive in the Town of Randolph and whether or not they are permitted or are not permitted.”

Council Vice-President Brewer: Is this something a third party consultant can look at?

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Should we send this to the Ordinance Subcommittee? Council President Alexopoulos: I think that we as a council should decide whether or not we even want them, , then Town Planner Michelle Tyler can draft the ordinance, then the ordinance will be presented to the Town Council and referred to the Ordinance Subcommittee in the form of a Council Order.

Council President Alexopoulos: I think the question is what do we want our Town to look like and do we want these types of rentals besides our neighbors?

Councillor Gordon: So right now, they are not allowed in residential or business districts in Randolph?  
Town Planner Michelle Tyler: When they are registered as a hotel, the town can collect a lodging tax.

Right now the town is not collecting a lodging tax on the airbnb rentals. Councillor Gordon: I previously had an airbnb and I did not experience it as party central. Many people were just passing through.

Town Attorney Griffin: At this point, we want an understanding of whether or not the Council intends to allow these types of rentals in Randolph and if so, what types of rules and regulations you want to set for them.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I'm thinking about the individuals interested in renting out their home. Some folks might be interested in renting out their home as an additional income for their family.

Councillor O'Connell: I think we should talk to the police about the rentals that exist right now and whether or not this is something that assists in human tracking. We want the police department's input on this so we can have some control.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos: What is the main concern when it comes to the short term rentals? Town Planner Michelle Tyler: From the perspective of the building Commissioner: 1. These are properties that have been registered with the state, and others that we are learning about through complaints of neighbors, which have not been registered with the state. These properties have a high turnover of cars and people going in and out, 2. What is the character of the neighborhood and does short-terms rentals fit within that character, 3. Is there a safety factor involved?

Council Vice-President: I have no problem with looking into this further and getting involved with the process to make sure this is safe.

Councillor Gordon: Is it legitimate to say you can rent on weekends but not everyday? People like the idea of a casual weekend being rented out versus it being a legitimate business.

Town Planner Michelle Tyler: There are communities that have allowed Airbnbs with regulations and these communities also keep a list of folks who are renting their properties out, so yes, you can establish regulations if the council feels this is an appropriate use of the districts in Randolph and then you have to figure out operationally how that would work internally?

Town Attorney Griffin: There is one town that has an ordinance that makes you count the number of days you can rent them out as long as you're doing it on a nondiscriminatory basis. less permissible judgements about how folks can use their property.

Councillor Thompson: Are short term rentals covered the same way as long-term rentals?

## **Public Hearings:**

### **1. 6:15 PM: Community Development Block Grant**

Council President Alexopoulos opened the public hearing for the Community Development Block Grant. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisement that was published in the Patriot Ledger on December 21 and December 28, 2023.

Town Planner Michelle Tyler was present with grant administrator Cassie Boyd Marsh, to request your approval for the next round of funds for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for fiscal year 2024.

Ms. Boyd provided additional information regarding the CDBG. This is year three of applying for this grant. When you are finishing up one grant, you typically start applying for the next round of funding.

We've been using the funds from this grant for housing rehabilitation and child care subsidies. Applications for both programs are taken on a first come, first serve basis. We would like to continue applying for these funds for the same purpose. The grant is competitive but it is really beneficial to the community if it's given. Applications for the grant are due March 25, 2024.

Council President Alexopoulos opened the public comments portion of the public hearing.

1. Mr. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: How old does your child have to be to apply for child care funding? Normally it's for children ages 0-13 or up to 16 if the child has a disability.
2. Kempton, 8 Davis Road: The need is great. Last year we were given \$1.5 million and this year we are asking for \$950,000. Why are we going backwards? Ms. Boyd: The first year we asked and received \$850,000, last year combined two fiscal years together which is why we asked and received more, and the maximum we can apply for during this next year of funding is \$950,000.
3. Guerlince Semezler, 60 Mills Street: Thank you for your work. Is there any funding left from the previous two fiscal years and was it all spent? Is there any plan on how this could expand? Such as providing support for social services. Ms. Boyd: The fiscal year 2022-2023 program is just getting going so it's working through the waitlist. I recommend filling out the pre-application which puts you on the waitlist. As for other programs, there is only as much money available so if we institute another program, we'd be pulling funds away from another.
4. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: Can the rehabilitation of the homes be passed on to a family member and how is a family member defined in this scenario? Ms. Boyd: The definition is fairly loose but you have to prove the home is staying within the family.

There were no more public comments. Council President Alexopoulos closed the public comments portion of the public hearing and opened it to the Council for comments/questions.

Councillor O'Connell: Do you have to fall in a certain income eligibility? Ms. Boyd: Yes, there is an income verification process and the caveat is that it must stay in the family. Councillor O'Connell: If you have a child receiving the child care subsidy, does it stay with them or do you have to reapply every year? Ms. Boyd: The families would need to reapply at the end of the grant term.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Many residents have approached me on both subjects so this is definitely a great need within the community and is very beneficial.

Councillor Gordon: The grant should be a model for all grant applications. Bailey Boyd Associates are doing great. How can we request additional funding? Ms. Boyd: The allotted funds are not specific to Randolph. The maximum amount a single community can request is \$950,000. The maximum amount for two communities applying for the same grant is \$1M but they would have to split the funds

Council Vice-President Brewer: Do you have contractors that you work with or does the homeowner solicit the contractor? Ms. Boyd: We go through a procurement process and there is a lot of oversight. We have a housing rehabilitation specialist inspecting and engineering throughout every step of the process and make sure we're all moving along as expected and that the work is being done appropriately. Any contractor is eligible to bid. If the homeowner has a different preference and the contractor is not the lowest bidder, then the homeowner would need to pay the difference.

Motion to submit the FY2024 Community Development Block Grant application made by Council Vice President Brewer, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

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

Motion passes.

**Public Comments:**

1. Guerlince Semezler, 60 Mills Street: Congratulations to the newly elected officials and please reach out to me if there is anything you need.
2. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: When there's a snowstorm, many of those homes and apartments providing short-terms rentals often have several different vehicles occupying the homes and it makes it very difficult during the winter for residents in the area to find parking.

**Appointments:**

1. 2024 Council Subcommittee Appointments
  - a. Economic Development/Small Business/Real Estate
  - b. Human Services/Seniors/Recreation
  - c. Ordinance
  - d. Public Safety
  - e. Finance
2. 2024 Council Appointments
  - a. Turner Free Library Trustees
  - b. Veterans/Military Services Committee
  - c. Community Preservation Committee
  - d. Joint Board
  - e. Tri-Board
  - f. Master Plan Implementation Committee

Council President Alexopoulos will continue this to the next council meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 29, 2024.

**Town Manager's Report:**

1. I'd like to bring forward the name of Araba Adjei-Koranteng, Esq. to the Planning Board. Araba grew up here in Randolph and later worked for the Randolph Recreation department when she was younger. She currently is the assistant general counsel for the National Association of Government Employees and prior to that she was an assistant district attorney in Suffolk County.

Motion to ratify the appointment of Araba Adjei Koranteng, Esq. to the Planning Board made by Council Vice President Brewer, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

2. Peggy Mount-Louis brought forward the name of Catherine Yahiaoui for the Council on Aging. Catherine has been a resident of Randolph for the past 25 years and is very involved at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center.

Motion to ratify the appointment of Araba Adjei Koranteng, Esq. to the Planning Board made by Councillor Gordon, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

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

Motion passes.

3. AARP is offering Free Tax Aid. This is a tremendous opportunity for folks in the community to receive free tax preparation. You can call and schedule an appointment by phone or you can do so online.
4. A series of interviews were held for the Department of Public Works Superintendent position and we may have two more within the next week. We hope to have a candidate to bring forward very soon.

### **Correspondence:**

1. Announcement from Randolph Police Chief Marag: A team of assessors from the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission is scheduled to arrive on January 23, 2024 to begin examining various aspects of the Randolph Police Department's policies and procedures, operations, and facilities.
2. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Celebration is on Monday, January 15, 2024 from 10 AM to 1 PM. Registration is required.
3. Randolph Elder Affairs Blood Drive is on Tuesday, January 30, 2024 from 9 AM to 2 PM at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. Please call 1-800-733-2767 to schedule an appointment.

### **Council Comments:**

1. Councillor Gordon: 1. I met with the School Committee to discuss the next Massachusetts Building Building Authority (MSBA) grant and Lisa Milwood said she would be willing to have a joint meeting with the Town Council to discuss future projects. 2. A few months ago I brought up the issue concerning blasting in the T.L. Edwards in Avon and want to encourage any residents impacted by this to join me at the next Avon Town meeting. 3. I'm putting together another petition regarding the changes being made at the intersection of Chickatawbut road. Please contact me if you want to sign the petition and need additional information.
2. Councillor C. Alexopoulos: Welcome to this new session. I'm looking forward to working with my fellow Councillors for this new cycle
3. Council President Alexopoulos: Welcome newly elected Councillor Brandon Thompson.
4. Councillor Brandon Thompson: Thank you for welcoming me to the new session and to the Town Council Clerk for helping me get up to speed.
5. Councillor O'Connell: Thank you to Natalie and Michelle, and everyone else who made our Inauguration a beautiful time in this room. My family enjoyed the catering and thank you again for all your hard work and thank you to Natalie's husband Ricardo for singing the National Anthem. He did an excellent job.
6. Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. Thank you Natalie, and Michelle for all your work on the Inauguration. Happy New Year! It's great to be sitting with my fellow Councillors. 2. MLK Day is happening on January 15, 2024 from 10 AM to 1 PM with breakfast, entertainment, and great guest speakers. Come out and celebrate the dream. 3. I'm meeting with Attorney Campbell regarding reproductive rights. I'm sure it will be a very thoughtful discussion. 4. Thank you to DPW for doing a great job for our first snow fall.
7. Council Vice-President Brewer: Thank you to Natalie, Michelle, and everyone on their hard work making the Inauguration a success , 2. I was driving past the T.L. Edwards and heard very loud sounds from the machines in that area. If I was a neighbor, I would definitely be bothered.

### **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.  
Roll Call Vote: 7-0-0 (Absent: Burgess and Egan)  
Meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM