



Randolph Town Council

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, June 24, 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: William Alexopoulos, (Via Zoom), Richard Brewer (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), and Kevin O’Connell (In-Person).

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

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held in remembrance of Gale Walsh. Gale Walsh was a long-time election poll worker, was a member of the Randolph Woman’s Club, and was very involved in the community.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- 1. Meeting Minutes of Town Council Meeting April 1, 2024**
- 2. Meeting Minutes of the Town Council Meeting April 29, 2024**
- 3. Meeting Minutes of the Town Council Meeting June 10, 2024**

Motion to approve the minutes of Town Council meetings on April 1, 2024, April 29, 2024, and June 10, 2024, made by Councillor O’Connell, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-0 (Absent: C. Alexopoulos, Burgess, Egan, and Thompson)

Motion passes.

Presentation:

Councillor C. Alexopoulos entered the meeting, in person, at 5:35 PM.

1. Randolph Police Department Scholarship Presentation

Councillor Thompson entered the meeting, in person, at 5:41 PM.

Randolph Police Chief Anthony Marag presented the First Annual Michael Beal Scholarship in memory of fallen Officer Michael Beal who was tragically killed in May of 2022. I’d like to acknowledge some of the people who helped put this together and raise the money. Sergeant Kevin Gilbery was at the forefront of our department getting everything in motion. Keri and Joe Gilbert from 1048 Bar and Grill helped tremendously and devised ideas to fundraise. And Carol Beal, Michael Beal’s widow, who couldn’t be here with us tonight but was a big proponent of keeping Mike’s memory alive and his legacy

for the Town. The money we raised will be able to fund the scholarship for the next five years and we're going to give the scholarship to a student from the Randolph High School who decides to major in criminal justice.

This year, we would like to present the scholarship to Pharytza Bernard who went to Bridgewater State University this year and finished on the Dean's List! The schools highly recommended her and everyone said great things about her. She was treasurer of the Student Council and led the Book Club at the Turner Free Library. Her dream is to join the police department and expand her studies to other areas of criminology. The amount of the scholarship is a tribute to Mike which represents his badge number of 46. We are extremely proud to present this scholarship of \$4,600 to Pharytza Bernard.

The Councillors had an opportunity to congratulate Pharytza Bernard on her achievements.

2. Mobility Hub Feasibility Study

Town Planning Director Michelle Tyler and Consultant David Perlmutter presented the feasibility study presentation which included a project overview, goals, objectives, existing conditions analysis, service alternative development, and the cost-benefit analysis.

Councillor Thompson: How many people did you talk to at the community event? Were any of these vehicles energy efficient? The Uber and Lyft data is a little concerning. Was micro transit tech-enabled? Did you get the current number of riders we have during the study? Ms. Tyler: I believe eight individuals were present at the community event. Mr. Perlmutter: Many vehicles have the possibility of being energy efficient but it becomes more of a challenge with the larger vehicles or buses. The number of current riders we have is not included in the report for this presentation but that was one of the first steps we did.

Councillor O'Connell: Do we have any numbers on what it would cost to start the program? Are the numbers presented for the entire year? Ms. Tyler: Correct, this is for the year. In addition to these costs, there would be not only vehicles to purchase and maintain, insure, and hire employees capable of driving said vehicles but then you need an operational process, somewhere within the Town, to manage these operations. Mr. Perlmutter: State law prohibits the town from operating its own commuter service. The Town would need to contract this out to a third-party vendor because the Town is already an MBTA community. The hiring and operations manager, obtaining vehicles, would also require one or some of the Town's employee(s) time to oversee these operations. Councillor O'Connell: Can we use the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center (RICC) vehicles for this transit? Town Attorney Griffin: If we go the micro-transit route and continue to limit it to those who qualify for those services, then we can.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Thank you to Councillor Gordon who thought this was important and did the research by going out into the community to make sure it was needed. Who were the other stakeholders? Ms. Tyler: The RICC, Elder Services, Randolph Community Partnership, Quincy Asian resources. We reached out to many other organizations who did not respond. Councillor Huff-Larmond: When looking at these three options with the understanding that there may be more options, which do you think is best for Randolph? Mr. Perlmutter: Option four would be available to the general public, and vehicles are smaller.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos: How long would the contract be for? Town Manager Howard: If we're starting from scratch we would need at least a three-year contract maybe even five to make use of the initial costs for getting everything started.

Council Vice-President Brewer: What are the fares going to be for residents utilizing this charge? Mr. Perlmutter: We have studied fares of \$2 for the fixed and microtransit route, and \$3 for the rideshare service.

Councillor Gordon: I see that the Stoughton shopping area was included in the map and I'm wondering why other shopping centers were not included. Mr. Perlmutter: We were aiming to push as much service coverage while being limited to three vehicles. We didn't run simulations on the routes you are suggesting but we can certainly look into it however it would significantly drive up the cost. Councillor Gordon: Could we make a fare-based system where riders from other cities would pay their share for utilizing this service?

Town Manager Howard: Thank you for the presentation. We need to cut this short and move on to the public hearing. If there are additional questions, please get them to Ms. Tyler and she can get the answers from Mr. Perlmutter if she does not have the answer already.

Public Hearings:

1. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-027: FY2025 Water and Sewer Rates

Council Order 2024-027 was introduced at the Town Council meeting on June 10, 2024. Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public hearing on this matter. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisement which was published in the Patriot Ledger on June 7, 2024.

Town Manager Brian Howard and Matthew Abrahams, of the Abrahams Group gave an updated presentation on the Water and Sewer Rates.

Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public comments portion of the public hearing.

1. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: What is the cheapest option for the taxpayers right now? Town Manager Howard: The "do nothing" scenario allows us to operate this year but it would not allow us to put funds aside for the projects we have been discussing. Option 1 is a 1.0% rate increase which would allow us to continue to set funds aside.
2. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: An increase would be an investment in more reliable water for the residents. We know we will have a large amount of money to pay once the Water Treatment Plan comes online and in my opinion it's better to do it in increments versus doing a big increase all at once.

There were no more public comments. Council Vice-President Brewer closed the public comment portion of the public hearing and opened it to the Council for questions or comments.

Councillor O'Connell made a motion to increase water and sewer rates for the Town of Randolph by 1% for fiscal year 2025, seconded by Huff-Larmond.

Discussion: Councillor Huff-Larmond: If we have an opportunity to increase it by 0% then I think we should take advantage of that and save our residents some money.

Councillor Gordon made a motion to amend Councillor O'Connell's motion to increase water rates by 0% and sewer rates by 1% for fiscal year 2025.

Roll Call Vote: 2-5-0 (Nays: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Brewer, O'Connell, Thompson; Absent: Burgess and Egan)

Motion fails.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos: I think Councillor O'Connell and Sandy Cohen have the right idea. We should continue to add funds to the reserves. There was a recent emergency in one of our water treatment plants requiring a significant cost and we have large expenses for the new Water Treatment Plant coming up that we need to plan for. I think that we should look into the discussion we had when this was introduced regarding increasing savings options for our seniors.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I understand we are trying to be fiscally responsible, which I want to be fiscally responsible as well, but I am trying to think of the residents in addition to the seniors. I have an appetite for 1% but I don't want to look beyond the needs of our residents.

Councillor Gordon requested a point of order to do a roll call vote on the main motion.

Roll call vote to approve the main motion to increase water and sewer rates for the Town of Randolph by 1% for fiscal year 2025.

Roll Call vote: 4-3-0 (Nays: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Brewer; Absent: Burgess and Egan)
Motion passes.

Councillor Gordon: I'd like to request additional discussion on Councillor C. Alexopoulos' point of increasing savings for our seniors. Can a different rate be set for seniors? Town Manager Howard provided additional information regarding the current senior discounts. Town Attorney Griffin also provided additional information and said that extensive research would need to be done to come up with different scenarios to increase savings for seniors but that it is possible.

2. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-023: Request for the Town Council to Initiate An Amendment to the Randolph Zoning Ordinance – Chapter 200 of the General Code of the Town of Randolph – To Amend Section 200-5, Zoning Map, to include 661 North Street in the Residential Multi-Family District (RMFD) Pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 40A, sec. 5

Council Order 2024-023 was introduced at the Town Council meeting on April 29, 2024. Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public hearing on this matter. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisements which were published in the Patriot Ledger on June 7, and June 14, 2024.

Motion to continue the public hearing on Council Order 2024-023 to July 15, 2024, at 6:15 PM made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

3. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-033: Community Preservation Budget and Reserves

Council Order 2024-033 was introduced at the Town Council meeting on June 10, 2024. Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public hearing on this matter. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisement which was published in the Patriot Ledger on June 18, 2024.

Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public comments portion of the public hearing.

3. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: Can we get a breakdown of the various categories you have to see what has gone and what the balances are? Does this include renovations to Stetson Hall?
Town Manager Howard: Yes, when the Community Preservation Committee comes forward, they will provide a sheet that shows that data. There was money set aside from the Community Preservation Committee and the Town's general funds from the operating budget for Stetson Hall.

4. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: How did we make out with the lands being dedicated to future use of pickleball courts? Town Manager Howard and Town Attorney Griffin provided information regarding the process for the transfer of ownership of the land.

There were no more public comments. Council Vice-President Brewer closed the public comment portion of the public hearing and opened it to the Council for comments and questions.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-033 as presented made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

On discussion, Councillor Gordon asked about open space and recreation and the possibility of changing the title of "open space" to "open space and recreation" Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith: We are required by the State to have three categories on our balance sheet and what is scripted here is what the statute prescribes.

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

Motion passes.

4. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-034: FY2025 Capital Plan

Council Order 2024-034 was introduced at the Town Council meeting on June 10, 2024. Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public hearing on this matter. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisement which was published in the Patriot Ledger on June 18, 2024.

Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public comments portion of the public hearing.

5. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: Is the \$100,000 for the camera coming out of the water and sewer enterprise fund? And for the fire department, are we using any money from the ambulance enterprise fund? Town Manager Howard: The ambulance enterprise fund can only be used for ambulance-related matters. As for the water and sewer enterprise fund, yes, we will be using those funds.
6. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: What are we buying for \$100,000? Town Manager Howard: We are buying a camera that will allow us to go through the sewer system and look for blockages or cracks in the system caused by tree routes. It will be for cleanouts and repairs.

There were no more public comments. Council Vice-President Brewer closed the public comment portion of the public hearing and opened it to the Council for comments and questions.

Councillor Gordon: I am thrilled about road paving which is triple the amount of funds used in the previous years. We passed a Council Order two years ago requesting a list of recognized and unrecognized roads and we have not seen that list. Can we please get that list? At the last meeting, we discussed guidance for how we should do sidewalks and curbs and I'd like to offer that guidance at our next meeting so I'll prepare a Council Order regarding that.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-034 made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

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

Motion passes.

Town Manager's Report:

1. Town Manager Howard received a request from the Chair of the Council on Aging to fill an open seat with John MacPhelemy who has expressed interest in being a member.

Motion to appoint John MacPhelemy to the Council on Aging made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

2. Councillor Huff-Larmond requested an update on the Assistant Town Manager position. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition expressed interest in participating in the hiring process. Councillor Gordon: I have heard from several people that they have applied for a position and never got any acknowledgment. I'd like to change that process so they know their application has been successfully received. Town Manager Howard: The IT department set up an automatic email acknowledging an application was received by the Human Resources department which will solve that issue.

Old/Unfinished Business:

1. Council Order 2024-028: Water and Sewer Enterprise Budget

Council Order 2024-028 was introduced at the Town Council meeting on June 10, 2024. Council Vice-President Brewer opened the public hearing on this matter. The Town Council Clerk referenced the legal advertisement which was published in the Patriot Ledger on June 18, 2024.

Council Vice-President Brewer closed the public comment portion of the public hearing and opened it to the Council for questions or comments.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-028 as presented made by Councillor O'Connell, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion passes.

New Business:

1. Council Order 2024-035: Appropriation of Public, Education, Government (PEG) Access Funds

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-035 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor Thompson asked about the possibility of using these funds to make improvements on the Randolph Community Television website. Town Manager Howard will look into this further.

This Council Order requires an advertisement and to be on two meetings before a vote takes place so Council Order 2024-035 will be continued to future Town Council Meeting.

2. Council Order 2024-036: FY24 Budget Transfer

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-036 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-036 as presented made by Councillor Thompson, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

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

Motion passes.

3. Council Order 2024-037: Transfer of Water/Sewer Retained Earnings for Joint Water Board Emergency Operations and Repairs

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-037 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-037 as presented made by Councillor O'Connell, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion passes.

4. Council Order 2024-038: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash to Support Town Celebrations

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-038 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor O'Connell asked about the possibility of having a "laser fireworks display" instead of real fireworks.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-038 as presented made by Councillor O'Connell, seconded by Councillor Gordon.

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

Motion passes.

Correspondence:

- 2024 Randolph Reads Program:** Randolph Reads is an annual summer reading program to inspire community, connection, and a love of reading while exploring important themes. This year, we are diving into stories of resilience and the innovation of scientists, activists, and everyday citizens fighting to renew the health of our Planet Earth.
- Randolph Hiking Adventures,** a program run by the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center and Randolph Mass in Motion Initiative is hosting two more Hiking Adventures on July 14, 2024, at the Wolcott Path Loop Green Dot and August 18, 2024, at the Blue Hills (Skyline Trail). To register: bit.ly/LetsGoHiking24
- Randolph Recreation Presents Randolph Summer Sounds: Concerts & Farmers Artisan Markets:** On the first Sunday of every month from June to September, stop at the Joseph J. Hart Memorial Park at 240 North Street in Randolph for concerts and Farmers Artisan Markets. The concerts are from 1:30 to 3:30 PM, and the Farmers Market runs from 1 PM to 4 PM.
- Life and Basketball Mentorship Program:** Open to Randolph Residents in grades 6 to 12 on Wednesdays, from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. No registration is required. For more information or if you are interested in being a mentor, please email driley@randolph-ma.gov.
- Quincy Asian Resources, Inc. Presents: Summer Nights!:** From July 8 through August 14, 2024, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM there will be basketball, crafts, boxing, and more at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. Space is limited. Pre-register!
- Randolph 2024 Night Before the Fourth Parade:** The Parade kicks off at 7:00 PM on 7/3/2024! The route begins on North Main Street from the Higashi School into Crawford Square. Information on registration, volunteering, and sponsorships is available at www.randolphicc.com/parade

Committee Reports:

1. Councillor Gordon provided an update regarding the Green Communities Process and requested that correspondence from the Environmental Planner at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Council Comments:

1. Councillor Thompson: Thank you to the Red Sox Foundation and Robyn Rinehart for their work on the Little League fields. The mural looks great and the fields look awesome. Hopefully, we'll be able to get more activities going now.
2. Councillor O'Connell: There is an International Room in the Turner Free Library and I'd like to see if we can show more culture in that room and dedicate it to the late Councillor, Ken Clifton since he had a love for reading.
3. Councillor Huff-Larmond: I'd like to congratulate Lucinda Mills who was recently awarded for her award on social work efforts. I also want to congratulate Superintendent Thea Stovell for receiving an award for advancing equity and civil justice and for putting forth efforts to ensure inclusivity in the school system. Randolph Youth Council will also be in the parade this year so look out for them and we will be putting together a Car Wash to raise funds so keep an eye out for more details. Thanks for a great Juneteenth! There are Pride events this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday so stop by! The NAACP is restarting and looking for fifty members from the Norfolk Community to participate so if you're interested please inquire for more information.
4. Councillor C. Alexopoulos: The Red Sox Foundation did a great job with the baseball field and they will be organizing a tutorial in the future. Juneteenth was great, thank you Councillor Huff-Larmond for putting that together. Nine dancers from Stajeز will be joining Team USA to compete at the World Hip Hop International Dance Competition in August. Thank you, Keri Sullivan and Liz LaRossee for putting together another great Senior Prom. The room was packed with everyone dancing and having a good time. It was so much fun! I hope to see you all on the parade route on the Night Before the Fourth!
5. Councillor Gordon: On June 11, Stoughton held a special election for a debt exclusion to build a new school and the voters said no. Braintree also held a recent special election for a 2.5% override for their share of the Water Treatment Plant and the voters said yes.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Thompson.
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent during vote: W. Alexopoulos; Absent: Burgess and Egan)
Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.