



Randolph Town Council

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, October 28, 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), Christos Alexopoulos (In-Person) Richard Brewer (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Brandon Thompson (In-Person).

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

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion to vote on both meeting minutes of September 30, 2024 and October 7, 2024 jointly made by Councillor O’Connell, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion passes.

Motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting on September 30, 2024 and October 7, 2024, made by Councillor , seconded by Councillor .

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

Motion passes.

Public Comments

1. Guerlince Zemezzer, 61 Mills Street: As a private citizen since last year I’ve noticed that one particular Councillor has never been to the meeting. Is there a policy to address that? 2. The Assistant Town Manager position- I would like to know how many candidates of color and in particular, if any Haitian American candidates applied and if they were given an opportunity for an interview.
2. Sandy Cohen, Bittersweet Lane: Is there any way to have public announcements come after the announcements from the president? That would be helpful not only for me but for other residents who come to speak as well.
3. Kate, Randolph: I have a concern about the lack of transparency in the job application process. I received no notifications about the interview process. It was not until my second inquiry that I was notified my resume was not selected.
4. Alan, 4 Morse Avenue: I just learned recently that the Assistant Town Manager position was filled. Back in 2023 I submitted my resume and cover letter but I never heard back. In December, Randolph DEI had a meeting with Randolph Police Department and mentioned to Town Manager Howard my interest in the position. To my surprise, I learned recently that the position had been filled. I believe that

I am qualified. I would love for the opportunity to speak further about this position. I wonder if there can be an investigation to look into how many people of color applied for the position and were given an opportunity to speak about their qualifications. Secondly, is it possible to add lights to the cross-walks? I realize that at night when you're driving through Town, you don't notice people standing at the corner wanting to cross the street.

5. Yoletti Ibokette, 28 Restereck Ave, Randolph: I am here on behalf of Randolph DEI to address what we see as a failure to adequately consider racial equity and parity in hiring the Assistant Town Manager. The position has been open for well over a year and a number of qualified individuals of color applied and did not hear back. We believe more intent and effort should have been put into hiring someone who is not only qualified but also reflects the population of Randolph.
6. Kenton Fleming: I am here on behalf of the DEI Coalition regarding the Assistant Town Manager position. The Town Manager has shared that by law the Town cannot require individuals to disclose their race or ethnicity. Despite this, the Town could have encouraged people of color to apply. We must do better.
7. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: Randolph doesn't have a residency clause because if we did then a lot of the good people we do have wouldn't be here. The Superintendent of Schools doesn't live here and she does a great job. I think you just want to hire somebody who is most qualified.
8. Gladys McClain, Rosemont: I want to know what's going on with the shuttle bus. A lot of people in the community really need this bus.

Town Manager's Report:

1. I spoke about the hiring process for the Assistant Town Manager Position and met with Randolph DEI last Friday. It was a good conversation. As I said at the meeting, there is some disagreement which is okay. The DEI components were in the job advertisement, not in the job description. They would have preferred to see it in the job description. We had a hiring committee of seven department heads. I described the department heads at the last meeting but it was people who would interact most with this position. Unless someone chooses to self-identify their race or ethnicity we are not allowed to ask about their race or ethnicity by law. I certainly never want to assume unless they choose to disclose it because I've made assumptions in the past and I was wrong. I'm open to discussions about plans for affirmative actions.
2. The Randolph School Committee and the Town Council are accepting applications from interested volunteers seeking to fulfill the unexpired term of a School Committee member. The term of the appointment will officially expire in January of 2026, when the newly-elected successor is sworn in. Registered voters in the Town of Randolph are eligible to fill this position. To nominate yourself for this position you must submit a letter of interest and resume via email at randolphschoolcommittee@randolph.k12.ma.us no later than November 22, 2024. If appointed, the volunteer will serve on the School Committee until the term expires in January of 2026, or they may run for election to the School Committee in the November 2025 Town Election, if they wish to continue to serve beyond that date. There will be a joint meeting of the School Committee and Town Council to determine who will fill that seat.
3. Election Day is Tuesday! The last day to apply for an absentee ballot is tomorrow.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I am saddened and extremely disappointed about the anti-affirmative action taken to hire the Assistant Town Manager. I believe the thought of a diverse pool of candidates was never the plan. The Town Manager has the right to appoint this position and not to have a committee. Since you have this power and there is a perfect candidate who is a person of color, they should be selected for the position. The words of diversity and the promise of working towards that diversifying Town Hall sounds good but it's about action and there has been very little effort put forward to increase diversity in Town Hall.

New Business:

1. Council Order 2024-052: Request for the Town Council to Initiate an Amendment to the Randolph Zoning Ordinances - Chapter 200 of the General Code of the Town of Randolph - Concerning Accessory Dwelling Units

Town Manager Howard presented Council Order 2024-052 that is being introduced by the Planning Board. Council Vice-President Brewer referred this Council Order to the Planning Board and Ordinance Subcommittee.

2. Council Order 2024-053: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash for Mobility Hub Study

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-053 and provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor Thompson: Are these the same consultants used in the first study? Town Attorney Griffin: It would have to go out to bid.

A discussion of the Council was held concerning which transit service the Town would be interested in learning more about.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-053 with the amendment to add “micro transit” in the third line of the Council Order made by Councillor Gordon, seconded by Councillor Brewer.

Roll Call Vote: 6-1-0 (Nays: O’Connell; Absent: Burgess, Egan)

Motion passes.

3. Council Order 2024-054: Transfer of ARPA Revenue Loss Funds to Randolph Cultural Council

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-054 and Town Attorney Griffin provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-054 as presented made by Councillor O’Connell, seconded by Councillor Thompson.

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0 (Absent during vote: W. Alexopoulos; Absent: Burgess, Egan)

Motion passes.

4. Council Order 2024-055: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash to FY25 RPS Operating Budget

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2024-055 and Town Attorney Griffin provided additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-055 as presented, made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

Correspondence:

1. Community Enhancement Event Hosted by the Randolph Police Department and Councillor Kevin O’Connell: Holiday Food Drive on Sunday, November 17, 2024 from 9 AM to 12 PM. Food items can be dropped off to the Randolph Police Station, 41 S Main Street, Randolph, MA.

Council Comments:

1. Councillor Thompson: I had a great time at the trunk or treat at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. There was another one at St. Mary's with the Randolph Police Department and they did a great job as well. Liz and Robyn did a great job. There was a huge turn out.
2. Councillor O'Connell: I went to the trunk or treat event run by the Young School Parent Teacher Association. I hope they had a good book fair. Thank you for putting that together.
3. Councillor Huff-Larmond: Thank you to everyone who gave hygiene and health items to the Randolph Youth Council. We were able to pack 50 bags so far and then out to those in need. Last Thursday, Blue Hills NAACP had a meeting at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center (RICC). Registration is ongoing. If anyone is interested in attending, we welcome you. Randolph DEI has been very active. We started our first ESL class at the RICC for six weeks from 4 PM to 6 PM. We're really excited to continue working with Randolph residents as they learn the English language. Vote, vote, vote!
4. Councillor Gordon: I'd like to call a meeting of Economic Development, Small Business, and Real Estate Subcommittee. The purpose of the meeting is for a member of the EPA to give a presentation on the Baird McGuire site including water testing and soil testing. I went to the Board of Health meeting to inquire about PFAS testing at the TLA site and they explained they do not speak for TLA. I believe there are four Boards involved but I request that we enforce that testing.
5. Councillor C. Alexopoulos: Have a safe Halloween.
6. Councillor Brewer: Have a safe Halloween. The Trunk or Treat was a great event. It gets better and better every year. Thank you to Liz LaRosee and all of the staff for putting it together.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.