



## **Town Council Meeting**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, July 25, 2022, 6:00 p.m. via Zoom**

*The public is invited to attend this meeting remotely only, via phone or computer. In order to maintain safe social distancing guidelines, no physical presence will be allowed at this time. The Town website will be updated on the day of the meeting with the phone and computer access instructions.*

**Call to Order – Roll Call – Pledge of Allegiance:** Council President W. Alexopoulos called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call – Council Members Present:** Christos Alexopoulos, William Alexopoulos, Richard Brewer, James Burgess, Natacha Clerger, Ryan Egan, and Kevin O'Connell

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilor Egan.

**Moments of Silent Prayer:** A moment of silent prayer was held.

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

##### **1. Welcome of New Councillor Kevin O'Connell**

Council President Alexopoulos: I'd like to welcome our newest District One Town Councillor, Kevin O'Connell who was appointed at the last meeting in July. He was sworn in on Wednesday by the Town Clerk and was accompanied by his wife and daughter. Welcome Kevin, and thank you for putting in the time to be a Town Council member.

#### **New Business:**

##### **1. Council Order 2022-039: Prior Fiscal Year Unpaid Bills**

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2022-039 and was joined by Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith to provide additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2022-039 as presented made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councilor Clerger.

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

Motion passes.

#### **Town Manager's Report:**

1. Fox 25 will be next Friday for their Zip Trip from 8 AM to 10 AM. Residents are welcome to join them at the Randolph High School Football Field.
2. The trash and recycling flyer went out since our last meeting and it is also available on the website. It has all the information you need regarding when to put out your trash and recycling, how to handle bulk items, and more.
3. The Town's new website is opening tomorrow. It is completely ADA-compliant and has a lot of navigation tools. We are really excited about this and want to thank everyone from the Town Staff who helped make this happen.

## **Public Hearings:**

### **1. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2022-036: FY23 Water/Sewer Rates Presentation**

Council President Alexopoulos opened the public hearing on Council Order 2022-036. Town Manager Howard introduced this Council Order to the Town Council during the meeting on July 11, 2024. Town Attorney Griffin read the legal advertisement that was published in the Patriot Ledger on July 15, 2024.

Douglas W. Gardner, President of Pioneer Consulting Group, Inc. was present to show a presentation on the Town of Randolph's FY2023 Water and Sewer Rate Study, Findings, and Recommendations.

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

1. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: What is the number of residents that went to the average resident percentage?
2. David Mulligan: If we stay at a zero percent increase, will we still be maintaining putting money aside for the water treatment plant? Has there been any increase in cost from last year to this year for operating? Council President Alexopoulos: Correct, no money would go towards the water treatment plant. Operating costs for the water treatment plant are going up.
3. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: If we don't do an increase, does that affect the Department of Public Works (DPW) budget? Town Manager Howard: The Council would have a couple options. You could either reduce the DPW budget based on consumption data, and it's kind of late to figure that out, or you could tap into the retained earnings account to make up the difference but that also means you wouldn't be putting any money aside.

There were no more public comments. Council President Alexopoulos closed the public comments portion of the public hearing.

Councillor Clerger: Increasing the rates by 4% means increasing the costs to residents by \$4.50 cents on top of housing, food, and other expenses. If we can survive not increasing then we should not increase the costs.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Thank you for the presentation. I think I will be in favor of a 2% increase because we still have to build the water treatment plant and I think it's important we continue doing what we've been doing to prepare for the future. I definitely do not want to go to a 4% increase.

Councillor Gordon: I'd like to hear from the Town Manager how much the marginal cost is that we need people to get water from the public water source. I believe it's pennies per day. I've also attempted to get water in Holbrook and they deny access to their water to people from Holbrook. I think that's a very wrong thing to do, and I'm happy Randolph doesn't do that.

Councillor Burgess: How many gallons of water have we pumped? Town Manager Howard: About 50,000. Mr. Gardner: In cubic feet that would be roughly 6,700 cubic feet.

Councillor O'Connell: Is there any way to get a better program for seniors? Town Manager Howard and Mr. Gardner provided additional information about the senior discounts.

Councillor Huff-Larmond made a motion to increase water and sewer rates for the Town of Randolph by 2% for fiscal year 2023, seconded by Councillor Brewer.

Councillor Gordon made a motion to amend the initial motion to increase the water and sewer rates by 0%, instead of 2%, for fiscal year 2023, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

Roll Call Vote on the Motion to Amend: 2-7-0 (Nays: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Brewer, Burgess, Egan, Huff-Larmond, O'Connell)  
Motion fails.

Councillor O'Connell made a motion to amend the initial motion to increase the water and sewer rates by 3%, instead of 2%, for fiscal year 2023, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Roll Call Vote on the Motion to Amend: 6-3-0 (Nays: Clerger, Gordon, Huff-Larmond)  
Motion passes.

Roll call vote to approve the main motion, as amended, to increase water and sewer rates for the Town of Randolph by 3% for fiscal year 2023.

Roll Call Vote: 6-3-0 (Nays: Clerger, Gordon, Huff-Larmond)  
Motion passes.

#### **Public Comments/Discussions:**

Sandy Cohen, of 63 Bittersweet Lane, read a letter previously submitted by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition concerning the appointment of the District One Town Councillor vacancy.

David Mulligan: Is there anything way to assist the elderly or people who are not physically capable of retrieving water at the Blue Drop Water stations?

Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: I'm disappointed with the vote to increase the water and sewer rates by 3% this year.

#### **New Business (continued):**

- 2. Council Order 2022-038: 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 – Concerning Density Requirements in the Union Crossing Transit District Pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 40A, sec. 5**

Council Order 2024-038 was introduced by Council President Alexopoulos. Council President Alexopoulos referred this matter to the Planning Board and Ordinance Subcommittee.

Motion to refer Council Order 2022-038 to the Planning Board and Ordinance Subcommittee made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

Roll call vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

## **Subcommittee Reports:**

Economic Development/Small Business/Real Estate: Councillor Gordon provided an update on this Subcommittee. We have four guests scheduled to come in and give a presentation and speak to us about what we can do to help small businesses in this post-pandemic era.

Councillor Clerger asked about the appointments to the Subcommittees and Veterans/Military Services.

## **Council Comments:**

**Councillor Gordon:** Thank you to the Board of Health for their assistance in providing me with Covid tests.

**Councillor Huff-Larmond:** 1. There is a cooling center. 2. Randolph Youth Council put together a video that they did with the Police Department. We hope to share it with the community in hopes of having a discussion on youth and how they can collaborate with the police together. 3.

**Councillor Clerger:** I want to send hats off to Mr. Kevin Cook for receiving the HVHC award for his work in homelessness amongst veterans. 2. Food distribution is still taking place on Friday at 2 PM at the Baptist Church in Avon.

**Councillor Brewer:** 1. Congratulations to Kevin O'Connell for stepping up and serving at the District One Town Councillor. 2. The Turner Free Library is a coding and scratch program in August, on Tuesdays August 9 and August 11. There is a free dance class at Powers Farm on Saturday, August 13 from 1:30 to 4:20. It is open to all ages. 3. Kids under 18 eat lunch for free from 12-1 Monday-Friday this summer at the Turner Free Library.

**Councillor O'Connell:** 1. Shout out to the police department for helping the community by going to seniors' houses and installing their air conditioners. 2. Thank you to Officer Gilbert for asking me to DJ at the National Night Out event coming up.

**Councillor Burgess:** Can you write an order that you have to be in the United States to participate in the Town Council meetings?

## **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.