



Randolph Town Council

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, January 27, 2025, 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), Richard Brewer (In-Person), James Burgess (In-Person), Natacha Clerger (Via Zoom), 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 Thompson.

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held in remembrance of Assistant Town Clerk, Kristin McDonald’s, father who passed away on January 15, 2025; and Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Approval of 2025 Town Council Meeting Dates

February 10 and 24
March 10 and 24
April 14 and 28
May 5 and 19
June 9 and 23
July 14 and 28
August 11 and 25
September 8 and 22
October 20
November 3 and 24
December 8

Motion to approve the 2025 Town Council Meeting Schedule made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

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

Motion passes.

Appointment of 2025 School Committee Representative

Council President Alexopoulos appointed Councillor O’Connell as the 2025 School Committee Representative. There were no objections to this appointment. Town Clerk Cheryl Sass Swore in Councillor Kevin O’Connell to his role as School Committee Representative.

Subcommittee Appointments

2025 Council Subcommittee Appointments

1. Economic Development/Small Business/Real Estate: Natacha Clerger, Ryan Egan, Jesse Gordon
2. Human Services/Seniors/Recreation: James F. Burgess, Natacha Clerger, Katrina Huff-Larmond
3. Ordinance: Richard Brewer, Katrina Huff-Larmond, Brandon Thompson
4. Public Safety: Richard Brewer, James F. Burgess, Natacha Clerger
5. Finance: Entire Town Council

2025 Council Appointments

1. Turner Free Library: Richard Brewer, Brandon Thompson
2. Veterans/Military Services Committee: Brandon Thompson
3. Community Preservation Committee: Kevin O'Connell
4. Joint Board: Brian Howard, Town Manager
5. Tri-Board: Richard Brewer
6. Master Plan Implementation Committee: Jesse Gordon

Councillor Huff-Larmond requested to be seated on the Economic Development Subcommittee due to pending and upcoming items that she has been working on. Council President Alexopoulos stated he would look into this further.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion to vote on both meeting minutes of the Special Joint Meeting of the Town Council and School Committee Meeting of December 12, 2024 and Town Council Meeting of January 6, 2025 jointly made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Motion passes.

Motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting on October 28, 2024 and November 18, 2024 made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor O'Connell.

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

Motion passes.

Motion passes.

Announcements from the President

1. Norfolk County Sheriff's Office and Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee are hosting a Blood Drive on January 31st from 12 PM to 5 PM at the training facility, 42 Thomas Pattern Drive, Randolph, MA 02368. To sign up: <https://bit.ly/NCSOdonate>

New Business:

1. Council Order 2025-001: 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 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.

Council Order 2025-001 is being introduced by the Planning Department. Council President Alexopoulos requested a motion to refer this Council Order to the Planning Board and Ordinance Subcommittee.

Motion to refer Council Order 2025-001 to the Planning Board and Town Council Ordinance Subcommittee made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

Public Hearings

- 1. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-018: Acceptance, Via Gift, of George M. Lovering Circle As a Municipal Public Way in the Town of Randolph**
- 2. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-019: Acceptance, Via Gift, of McEnelly Circle As a Municipal Public Way in the Town of Randolph**

The public hearing in this matter was opened on April 29, 2024 and has been continued at the request of the applicant on a few occasions with the most recent request of a continuance being until the latest Council Meeting in March, 2025.

Councillor Burgess: I'm inclined to just sit on this and let them pave and plow their streets the entire winter because we've had this on the agenda for months now. Is the hold up on their end or on our end?

Town Attorney Griffin: Unfortunately the paperwork that is necessary in order to do this is so complicated that they're having a hard time. I would be concerned that if the Council takes no action on the requests that they will try to argue that its been constructively approved. I would suggest you vote to deny the requests or vote to continue the public hearings.

Council Vice-President Brewer: Do we know if the road is compliant? Town Planner Michelle Tyler: Yes, both streets were signed off by the Planning Board as meeting all of the criteria in the subdivision control laws. 2. submeter for adu versus principal unit. We will be billing the primary dwelling unit.

Town Attorney Griffin: I think it's just a Title question that they're grappling with because many of the properties of the road have been sold.

Motion to continue the public hearings for Council Order 2024-018 and Council Order-019 to the Town Council meeting on March 24, 2025 at 6:15 PM made by Councillor Gordon, seconded by Council Vice-President Brewer.

Roll Call Vote: 7-1-0 (Nay: Burgess; Absent: Egan)

Motion passes.

- 3. 6:15 PM - Council Order 2024-052: A Request to amend the zoning ordinance for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's)**

Council President Alexopoulos re-opened the public hearing for Council Order 2024-052 which was initially opened in the Town Council meeting of October 28, 2024. The legal advertisements were announced at the aforementioned meeting. They were published in the Patriot Ledger on November 23 and November 30, 2024.

Town Attorney Griffin: This Council Order was introduced in the fall and continued to the Town Council meeting in December. The State issued draft guidelines that changed a few times, and so that Town Planner asked that the Town Council not take action in December, so that there was time to make amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to make sure that it was in compliance with the State's guidelines.

he Town Planner has done a lot of work. She met with the Ordinance Subcommittee, she met with the Town Manager, myself and all department heads whose departments would be affected by this Zoning Ordinance. In front of you tonight, is an amended version of the Council Order suggested by the Planning Board which is titled Council Order 2024-052A containing additional language and edits highlighted in purple. It is requested that you passed this Council Order tonight because the State statute on accessory dwelling units will go into effect next Monday, and if we don't have the Town's ordinance in place, then there would be no guide rails for anybody who's making those applications and it would be just based on the State's criteria which does not contain as much guidance as is needed. I yield to the Town Planner.

Town Planner Michelle Tyler: I don't have anything else to add based on that! I also met with the historic commission before presenting this. What we did find in the draft regulations was that our ordinance could include regulations specific to historic districts that were more restrictive than what we have for other residential districts. So I did add a section at the very end of the ordinance that references that, and I met with the Historical Commission to obtain their input on content before them, ensuring that it met the state regulations and incorporated it into this Ordinance.

Councillor Burgess: What does it mean "protected use" in Section 5-2(e).

Councillor Huff-Larmond: The presentations were extremely helpful. I love the FAQ. We need this on the website because this answers a lot of questions people may have. The Ordinance Subcommittee agrees to adopt the ordinance as presented by the Planning Board tonight.

Councillor Gordon: Could you summarize the process for applying for an ADU? Town Planner Tyler: In theory, it is no different than applying for a building permit to construct a single family home. We currently have a paper application which will eventually go online. Councillor Gordon: What if variances are needed? Town Planner Tyler: We are aware of many owners who have built an Accessory Dwelling Unit which would have to ultimately meet the new criteria including getting an occupancy permit to reflect this. Councillor Gordon: What should they have to apply? Town Planner Tyler: They should have the necessary plans.

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

Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: Will trash be separate? Town Planner Tyler: Yes. It will be a separate address assigned by the engineer referenced on all mapping systems with separate trash and recycling bins. Joe Burke: The homeowner will have the burden of all taxes and fees.

There were no more public comments. The public comments portion of the hearing was closed.

Motion to accept Council Order 2024-052A made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Motion passes.

New Business (continued)

1. Council Order 2025-002: Previous Fiscal Year Unpaid Bills

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2025-002 and was accompanied by Town Accountant/Finance Director to provide additional information regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Councillor Burgess and Councillor Huff-Larmond had remarks regarding the Town's policy and procedure regarding previous fiscal year unpaid bills.

Motion to approve Council Order 2024-002 as presented made by Councillor O'Connell, seconded by Councillor Thompson.

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

Motion passes.

2. Council Order 2025-003: Transfer of General Fund Free Cash to FY25 Operating Budget

Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2025-003 and provided additional information regarding this gift.

Councillor O'Connell: If the Zamboni goes down, do we have a rental Zamboni we can get? Town Manager Howard: We used to keep an old gas one as a back up used only in those emergency situations. I don't know if that's still operational.

Motion to approve Council Order 2025-003 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Brewer.

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

Motion passes.

Public Comments

1. Christopher O. Crosby, Beverly Circle, Randolph, MA: Mr. Crosby expressed concern and frustration regarding the Town's trash fees, the school system and its bus routes, the See, Click, Fix application, and the Town's water filters.
2. Alan Fortworth: Previously we expressed our appreciation for updates to the Human Resources section of the Town website which affirms the Town's commitment to fostering and welcoming inclusion in the workplace that reflects our community's diversity. While the Metropolitan Area Planning Council Technical Assistance Program could not support us, we are seeking other funding opportunities to sustain this work. We appreciate seeing Town Manager Howard at the MLK, Jr. celebration and for issuing a proclamation affirming equity and inclusion as a priority for Randolph. We look forward to an update on the Town's next steps in sustaining this initiative. We also hope to schedule a meeting to discuss plans for collaborating, moving forward. We also want to affirm the DEI Coalition's commitment to Randolph residents impacted by the Trump administration's stance on asylum seekers and refugees. In response, we formed a new subcommittee to assist our immigrant neighbors, including those seeking asylum.
3. Sandy Slavick: I feel the need to speak up again. Our police department affirms they will not act as immigration officers and all residents should be assured that anyone who needs assistance in any way as a witness, as a victim, as a family member can depend on our dedicated police officers to serve and protect. BUt right now, not everyone knows that our friends and neighbors are living in fear and we need to reassure them that they belong. Our Town should make a public declaration that we are a welcoming community. Randolph is the face of America as it is today. We are diverse in race, ethnicity, language, and economic status. We are proof that diversity works.
4. Geurlence Semezies, 60 Mills Street: I stand with you tonight as a resident and someone representing my own community. Many other immigrant groups, including Haitians, are here legally and have been granted a legal path into the Country whether its temporarily or permanently. They are afraid. I am asking that every Councilor who are representing individuals in your district be mindful.

Town Managers Report:

1. I was in attendance at the MLK, Jr. celebration at Stetson Hall. It was well attended, and a great discussion was had by the panel. Just another wonderful event held, and if you have a chance, make sure to check it out on RCTV.
2. I also wanted to thank St. Bernadette's for their Lunar New Year Celebration yesterday. There was great food, music, dancing and celebration of Asian culture. So happy Lunar New Year!
3. There will be a Flu vaccine clinic at the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center on Friday, January 31, 2025 from 1 PM to 4 PM. It is recommended to go to the Town's website to register in advance.
4. The Finance Department will host an "Understanding Your Tax Bill" presentation on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 5:30 PM in Randolph Town Hall, Chapin Hall. Understanding your real estate tax bill on X at Chapin Hall and on Zoom.
5. The AARP Free Tax Preparation Program is being held on Thursdays from 9 to 6 PM starting on February 6, 2025. It is by appointment only and there is ultimately a waiting list. Make sure you go to the website and you can sign up right under Town News.
6. We received notice that we remain in compliance with the MBTA Zoning Act, and are eligible for all grants listed in the act. The Town Planner Michelle Tyler did a wonderful job from beginning to end making sure that we would be in compliance so thank you.

Correspondence

1. **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - Final Flood Determination for Norfolk County, Massachusetts** - The Federal Emergency Management Agency has submitted its final flood hazard determination for Norfolk County, MA. The Planning Committee will be forwarding a petition for a zoning amendment concerning floodplains in the coming weeks. Councillor Burgess had questions regarding the status of the zoning ordinance and certain streets listed in the notice from FEMA.
2. **Xfinity Program Changes** - Effective January 14, 2025, NESN and NESN+ will move from Extra, Popular TV, Sports & News, and Xfinity TV Starter Latino to Digital Preferred and Ultimate TV. Customers are receiving notice of these changes in their bill.

Committee Reports

1. Councillor O'Connell: I've been approached by a few residents who are inquiring about the hours of the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center. People have been turned away and told they are not allowed to enter or use the track or other spaces until after 3 PM. Can the Recreation Subcommittee take a look at that? Council President Alexopoulos instructed the Council Clerk to circulate an email to the Recreation Subcommittee to investigate further.

Council Comments:

1. Councillor Clerger: Please continue reaching out to me for free fresh food distributions.
2. We need to continue to support and pray for one another here in the community.
2. Councillor Gordon: 1. I also attended the MLK, Jr. celebration hosted by the DEI Coalition and I posted on Facebook what I thought was the most noncontradictory thing you could say and apparently it was very contradictory. Diversity, equity, and inclusion at the municipal level is alive and well.
3. Councillor Burgess: Our police department cannot participate in the assistance of immigrant deportation. The Superintendent sent a letter to parents informing them of their rights. 2. We have two audits from the finance department taking place. Where are we on these reports? Town Manager Howard and Town Attorney Griffin provided an update and will get back to Councillor Burgess with more information.

4. Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. The DEI Coalition had been extremely busy. We are kicking off our third session of ESL classes at the RICC. 2. The DEI Coalition met with the Randolph Police Department and the Randolph High School Principal to put together human trafficking workshops for staff, then possibly with parents. 3. MLK, Jr. Day was great. It was snowing and the DPW Department cleared it up. Thank you to DPW. The roads were beautiful. Thank you to the Stetson Trustees, Randolph Community Television, Randolph Youth Council, and all who came. We had a really good time. 4. Randolph being a majority minority Town with a large population of new neighbors, it's important for us to make our residents feel as if they are welcome here. Myself and Councillor Gordon are working on something while still trying to be careful. People want to know what the Town Council is saying. 5. Happy Lunar New Year to all who celebrate.
5. Councillor O'Connell: 1. Thank you to everyone for the chance to be the Council Representative on the School Committee. It's a very important position to me having a 3 year old, I have two years before she is in Kindergarten. Thank you to Lisa Millwood for putting in the word for me. My goal is to be the bridge between us. That is my goal for the year. 2. I went to the MA Municipal Association Conference. There were lots of training classes and I was able to take away a lot from them that I plan on using as a Councillor, businessman and in my daily life. 3. A couple meetings ago we had a group visit us called Keep Randolph Clean and Keep Massachusetts Beautiful is having a contest where you can nominate our group for a prize. Make sure to nominate them!
6. Councillor Thompson: Make sure you validate contractor licenses like surveyors, architects, anything like that. There are tools available on the MA State website to help with that. 2. The MLK, Jr. event was great, the food was great, and they did great job with the panel. That was my first time in Stetson Hall but Katrina and the DEI Coalition did a great job. The important part of being in a community is feeling safe in the community. I think the Randolph Police Department and all of us here do a great job in making us all feel safe. I don't think we need to change anything just because things are happening at the federal level.

Adjournment:

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

Roll Call Vote: 7-0-0 (Absent during vote: Clerger; Absent: Egan)

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.