



## **Randolph Town Council**

### **DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

**Meeting Date: Monday, July 10, 2023, 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), Natacha Clerger (By Zoom), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person).

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

#### **Presentations:**

##### **1. ADA Self Evaluation and Transition Plan from Planning Director Michelle Tyler and IHCD**

Town Manager Howard introduced the Planning Director and the Town’s consultants in this matter, IHCD.

Planning Director Michelle Tyler: About a year ago we initiated this process as a Community Development Block Grant Community. One of the commitments we made in receiving these funds is making sure that we underwent an ADA Self-Evaluation Plan. ADA laws went into place in 1990. The consulting firm, Institute for Human-Centered Design (IHCD), was hired last year and over the course of a six-eight month time frame, they analyzed our structures, programs, and facilities, excluding schools and public sidewalks which are done through a separate process, and they are here today to give you an update and brief overview of the transition plan. I am pleased to introduce Ana Julian and David West. I have had the pleasure of working with them over the past year.

Councillor Burgess entered the meeting, in person, at 6:21 PM.

Ms. Julia provided information regarding their scope of work and the findings of the ADA Self-Evaluation: The scope of work included the evaluation of programs and facilities to put together comprehensive data about the current state of compliance that identifies both issues that need corrective action and gaps in policies and procedures. The findings include: 1. The Town has not met its obligation to designate an employee to serve as an ADA coordinator, 2. The Town does not have a formal grievance procedure that is well-publicized for the public, and survey responses indicate that some departments are not aware of its existence, 3. Notice of ADA requirements- The town has a notice of nondiscrimination for employees; however, there are mixed responses regarding where or if the notice is posted, and there is no uniform procedure regarding the posting of the ADA notice for members of the public, 4. Allowing for reasonable modifications of policies, practices, and

procedures, 5. Department responses indicate that it would be beneficial to offer training on effective communication and information regarding auxiliary aids and services.

The basis for the self-evaluations is based on reviewing the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design and the MAAB (521 CMR).

For each building, there was a survey conducted called a “building report” including information on entrances, exits, and key accessibility issues, and it is organized in order of magnitude of cost estimates. The building catalog is a database of each building element that is non-compliant with regard to one or more of the applicable accessibility standards.

Strategies for facilities include 1. Relocation of programs, services, and activities within the current facility, 2. Relocation of programs, and services to another facility, and 3. Renovation of the facility to ensure access to programs, services, and activities.

Mr. David West: Some examples of things we found at the various locations that can be addressed include: **Town Hall:** 1. The identification sign is lower than the minimum height allowed, lack of an assistive listening system, lack of a tactile star at the main entry level, lack of tactile egress signage with raised character and braille, and lack of accessible service counter; **Randolph Intergenerational Community Center:** Lack of illuminated ISA sign, non-compliant van spaces, lack of knee and toe clearance, lack of grab bars at transfer shower, lack of signage with raised characters, and braille; **Turner Free Library:** Lack of an accessible route, excessive cross slope at parking, lack of an illuminated ISA sign, lack of directional sign to an accessible entrance, lack of maneuvering clearance at door; **Central Fire Station:** lack of accessible service center, lack of designation “Van Accessible” at Sign, lack of directional sign to an accessible entrance, lack of signage with the ISA at the accessible toilet room, excessive slopes and route not maintained in operable working condition; **Police Station:** Lack of tactile star at the main entry level, lack of assistance listening system, lack of clear floor space at the emergency shower, lack of signage with raised characters and braille, and parking identification signs lower than allowed; **Outdoor facilities:** Lack of accessible route to Zapustas Ice Rink, lack of accessible route around Imagination Station Playground, lack of an accessible picnic table at Powers farm, bench not on an accessible route at imagination station, route not maintained or operable at Camp building. A summary of typical signage issues was provided such as accessible designations signs, lack of International Symbol of Accessibility (ISA) signs in accessible toilet rooms, and lack of tactile signage with raised character and braille. Recommendations were made in the narrative reports for best practice solutions.

IHCD put together a self-evaluation report and a transition plan database in the form of an Excel spreadsheet.

Planning Director Michelle Tyler: I think the next step is to pass this along to Town Manager Howard to come up with a plan operationally. Councillor Burgess: I ask that you forward a copy of this to the Councillors as well.

Councillor O’Connell: Is this happening for the schools too? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: The funding for this came through Community Development Block Grant requirements, which is designated for the Town. The schools have their own process for this and I don't know the status of the school's progress on this.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Thank you for the presentation. I’m immediately thinking of all the things we can do to be more accessible. Trying to find monies to improve streets and sidewalks has been difficult so I’m wondering if it's possible to find a grant available to correct our sidewalks to make them more accessible. We have a lot of work to do in terms of installing braille in our buildings. Do we have any braille? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: We do. The next presentation ties into your question very well so stay tuned.

Councillor Gordon: I’m wondering how we can maximize our score and does that summary sheet include the costs? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: Yes, it does include costs. Councillor Gordon: I’m looking at the grant

score weight considerations, does the Disabilities Commission count? And if we're willing to be a part of the community compact cabinet? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: We are not a part of the Community Compact Cabinet, we can look into it further when that round opens in 2024. We do have a Disability Commission in place. Councillor Gordon: Are there any recommendations on how to maximize our score to be more competitive from our guests? Mr. West: While it is very competitive, we work with a number of cities and towns in Massachusetts, and others have used our plans to successfully receive grants. It's not impossible.

Council President Alexopoulos: Thank you for the information. If you may provide us with the report as requested. Planning Director Michelle Tyler: Yes, I will also post it on the website so that the public has full access to it as well.

## **Public Comments/Discussions**

1. Eddy Goules, Randolph, MA: I want to thank you for voting to put Haitian Creole on the ballot. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. We are very grateful.
2. Girlin Silmercia, 60 Mill Street, Randolph, MA: I share the same sentiment as my friend Eddy. I have been a resident for six years now and I have come to love the town. I have seen the progress you are making for a growing community and I am just here to show my gratitude.
3. Joe Burke, Hills Street: Does this include access to Town meetings that the public is not invited to go to in person but can't access the meeting online? President: We'll look into this for you.
4. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: My trash is being picked up at 7:00 PM. Does anyone know why? Town Manager Howard: Trash pick-up is overseen by the Board of Health and we use a third party for trash pick-up service. A phone call can be made.

## **Presentations (Continued):**

### **2. Language Access Project from Planning Director Michelle Tyler**

Planning Director Michelle Tyler: This is another project I've been engaged in for the past year. A healthy community is one in which the public is engaging and participating through voting, attending public hearings, speaking during "Public Speaks," etc. Language access is an entry point to longer, more sustainable equity practices that create communities that are welcoming to all, regardless of race, gender identity, and class. Language access isn't the end goal but the start of a journey. We were funded through the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) which is a technical assistance program. The first step is to understand what language access is. There were monthly team meetings over the last year, research was conducted, and there were various round table discussions. We started by establishing language focus groups. We posted them everywhere, in five different languages. We did not get as much participation as we would have liked but will be trying again. Also, as part of the project, MAPC asked what frequently-used document they would like translated and the marriage certificate was highly suggested. MAPC paid for it to be translated and we now have it available translated in another language and available to fill out online. We started to learn that there needs to be support from the highest levels of municipal government; we need multicultural staff available and to be able to compensate them, digitizing our forms which may be more easily translatable so technology will play a tremendous role, outreach to residents needs to be done in multiple languages, and maintaining all of this consistently. Municipal staff being informed and knowledgeable on how to communicate with others who speak a different language is also important.

We are going into year two. We got a second year of funding through MAPC because the project was successful enough. The delivery from this project will be a language access guide that can serve as a guide for municipalities. Not every community's needs or goals will be the same but this guide can be a starting place for a municipality to decide where to go next. So where do we go from here? There are a number of options including whether the community would like to establish a local ordinance or adopt a policy for resolution. There is thought to doing that to ensure it is operationally sound including necessary funding mechanisms.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Thank you! Anyone wanting to learn how to speak Haitian creole we will be at the RICC on Saturdays at 1:00 PM. 2. Understanding language and culture are very separate things. 3. Utilizing staff to translate is not always fair to the staff member or resident.

Councillor Gordon: 1. What is the agenda for the second year of MAPC funding? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: The agenda will be the focus groups as well as the beginning of drafting the language access guide. We will refine the agenda for the next month in the coming weeks.

Councillor O'Connell: Thank you!

Councillor Burgess: You make me proud every day!

Councillor Clerger: Do you plan to increase ESOL classes for people to be able to learn English as well? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: I am happy to incorporate that into an agenda in an upcoming meeting for discussion.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Who is at the table? Planning Director Michelle Tyler: The monthly project team meetings are with Arlington, Beverly, Milton, Randolph, Quincy (which has been in and out), MAPC, and Bay State Community Services. The Round Tables are available for all to participate.

Council President Alexopoulos: Thank you. This is a great start. Whatever you need, just let us know.

## **New Business:**

### **1. Council Order 2023-042: FY2023 Year-End Transfers**

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-042. Town Manager Howard provided a brief explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2023-042 as presented made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

### **2. Council Order 2023-043: FY2024 Transfer of ARPA Revenue Loss Funds for HVAC**

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-043. Town Manager Howard provided a brief explanation of the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2023-043 as presented made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Discussion was had regarding whether or not it would be worth it to replace the entire HVAC system, instead of continuing to make repairs. Town Manager Howard explained that option will be looked into further.

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

Motion passes.

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

1. The Randolph and Holbrook Joint Water Board, have vacant spots for both Holbrook and Randolph

Motion to appoint Town Manager Howard to the Joint Water Board made by Council President Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion Passes.

2. The Disability Commission also has a vacant position and Mr. Al Williams had reached out to serve.

Motion to appoint Al Williams to serve on the Disability Commission made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Council President Alexopoulos.

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

Motion Passes.

3. Councillor Huff-Larmond asked the Town Manager for an update on the vacant Department of Public Works Superintendent position and about the wild coyotes roaming Randolph. Town Manager Howard: The position has been advertised. There is nothing we can do because they are protected wildlife.
4. Councillor Burgess asked the Town Manager for an update regarding the renovations for Town Hall's first floor and Town Hall windows. Town Manager Howard: I will speak with Building Commissioner Ron Lum and get back to you with information.

## **Committee Reports:**

Human Services/Recreation/Seniors Dept. - Councillor Gordon provided updates on the recent subcommittee meeting that was held. Green Communities attended the meeting as a guest and explained how we can become a part of green communities. I also spoke with a green communities committee chair for another Town and he has volunteered to participate in the next subcommittee meeting. Once all five criteria to participate are met we can apply and we can get a grant. Councillor Huff-Larmond: Did you meet with Lisa Sullivan? Town Manager Howard: She mentioned at the meeting that I had just recently signed a grant app through MAPC to help guide us through and I believe she mentioned that takes around a year to a year and a half to get through the whole thing.

Contract Negotiation Subcommittee for Town Attorney Griffin: Councillor O'Connell: I was appointed Chairperson for the Contract Negotiation Subcommittee for Town Attorney Griffin. We were able to meet today and it is still ongoing.

Councillor Burgess asked Councillor O'Connell for updates relating to the 16 Fencourt Ave Plan Review Authority. Councillor O'Connell: The Plan Review Authority voted in the negative on the total package. Town Attorney Griffin: My understanding from speaking with the Chairperson of the Plan Review Authority is that he is putting together a report which summarizes the discussions held and will include proposed conditions should the Council decide to issue the Special Permit, but they are also giving you their recommendation which is based on the vote, which is in the negative. Council President Alexopoulos: This special permit application will come before the Council during the September 11, 2023, Town Council Meeting.

Council President Alexopoulos: The developer for the project at 502 South Main Street reached out to request an extension of his special permit application. Town Attorney Griffin is working with the developer on the best way to proceed.

## **Council Comments:**

Councillor Clerger: The Non-Profit Organization “Concerned Citizens of Randolph” will be closing on July 21, 2023, for lack of volunteers. If anyone wants to join forces, I would be more than happy to continue. 2. What's happening with the Department of Public Works, why can't we keep a superintendent for too long? Council President Alexopoulos: I don't think we have a problem but people have the right to do what is best for them.

Councillor Burgess: Can we address the issue regarding Joe Burke, the public can't participate in person in scheduled public meetings? Council President Alexopoulos: I've discussed this with the Town Manager. He will make a ruling. Mr. Joe Burke: Planning Board is the only one I'm not allowed to enter in person.

Councillor O'Connell: 1. We had a wonderful Night Before the Fourth Celebration and I want to thank Randolph Community Television for taking me under their wing and allowing me to host and interview people. 2. On July 30th, Kerms Shop, a local business on North Main Street that sells sneakers, is having its Second Annual Kerms Day at Powers Farm. 3. If you didn't get a chance to watch the parade, you can watch it through Randolph Community Television. There is a wonderful tribute to Will Adams.

Councillor Gordon: 1. The Vaccination program at Town Hall is open on Thursdays from 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM in the Lincoln Room, 1st Floor. I went recently and even received a gift card to Stop & Shop. 2. I started the process to bring the budget up in November. You can see the basic proposal that I made available on my website and I will be working on it during the next few months to create a Parks and Recreation Department. 3. I'm working on putting together additional information for the Green Communities Program to explain the benefits of including cost savings within the Town's Budget.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. We will have interns participating in an internship program and visiting the Town Hall offices. 2. I also had a great time at the Night Before the Fourth Parade. Thank you, everyone, for coming. 3. Lastly, today is my 19th Anniversary! Happy Anniversary to my husband Frank Larmond.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos: Thank you to everyone who contributed to putting together the Night Before the Fourth Parade. The fireworks display was wonderful and it was a great time to see everyone and be a united front with my colleagues and the residents.

## **Adjournment:**

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

Roll Call Vote: 7-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.