



Randolph Town Council

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, August 21, 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: William Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (By Zoom), Natacha Clerger (By Zoom), Ryan Egan (By Zoom) Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (In-Person).

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Vice President Brewer.

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held.

Presentations

1. Presentation of the 2023 Youth Internship Program

Councillor Huff-Larmond introduced the Town of Randolph High School Internship Program. They’ve been working hard over the last six weeks to put together a final project that the Town of Randolph can use.

Several participants of the Internship program presented a unique and impactful marketing campaign specifically tailored to the interests of Randolph teens. During this presentation, information was communicated regarding the data collected to provide social media platform recommendations and their work experiences while interning in the different department offices.

Public Hearings

1. 6:15 PM: Council Order 2023-044: FY2024 Water/Sewer Rates

Council President Alexopoulos opened the Public Hearing for Council Order 2023-044 and read the Council Order. Town Attorney Griffin referenced the legal advertisements that was published in the Patriot Ledger on August 5, 2023. Town Manager Howard introduced Council Order 2023-044 and provided an additional explanation on the purpose of this Council Order. Assisting with the presentation is Matthew Abrahams, of The Abrahams Group. Mr. Abrahams gave an updated presentation on the Water and Sewer Rates.

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

1. Joe Burkner, 54 Hills Street: If I don’t use too much water this year, do I still pay the base charges? Town Manager Howard: The base charge is for all users, regardless of the amount of water they use. Mr.

Burke: Why is the sewer charge so high? Town Manager Howard: Because there is no way to differentiate on the system whether you're using the water within your house or not.

Council President Alexopoulos closed the public comments portion of the public hearing and opened it to the Council or comments/questions. Discussion was held concerning how the water and sewer rates are calculated and the Town's Water Stabilization Fund.

Council Vice-President Brewer made a motion to increase water and sewer rates for the Town of Randolph by 2% for fiscal year 2024, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

Councillor O'Connell made a motion to amend the initial motion to increase the water and sewer rates by 2.5%, instead of 2%, for fiscal year 2024, seconded by Councillor Burgess.

Roll Call Vote on the Motion to Amend: 1-6-0 (Nays: C. Alexopoulos, W. Alexopoulos, Brewer, Burgess, Gordon, Huff-Larmond; Absent During Vote: Clerger & Egan)

Motion fails.

Roll call vote to approve the main motion to increase water and sewer rates for the Town of Randolph by 2% for fiscal year 2024.

Roll Call Vote: 7-0-0 (Absent During Vote: Clerger & Egan)

Motion Passes

2. 6:15 PM: Special Permit Application for a Proposed 24-Hour Warehouse Operation located on multiple parcels on Randolph Road, Randolph, MA 02368

Council President Alexopoulos: This is a continued public hearing. This public hearing was opened on Monday, July 24, 2024. The public comments portions of the public hearing was also opened and closed on July 24, 2024.

Attorney Robert Buckley, representative of Bluewater Property Acquisitions LLC ("Applicant"), and Alex Escamilla, Head of Development for Bluewater Property Group, were present to discuss the future development of the properties located on Randolph Road.

Mr. Buckley: We have spent the last three weeks analyzing the comments of the general public and comments of the Council and concluded that the comments mostly concerned the impact of operations. The applicant felt confident that they could put the facility here with minimal impact versus other potential uses so that's why they came here.

Councillor Huff-Larmond raised questions about the sound study.

Councillor Gordon spoke on behalf of abutting residents he connected with, and many concerns were raised about the traffic at the intersection of Oak Street and North Street. Signage might be helpful to indicate to trucks that they must turn right instead of left. Another concern was raised concerning the walking trails in the area and Councillor Gordon proposes that these remain accessible.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos suggested additional mitigation funds would be necessary to ensure the safety of residents passing through the intersection of Oak Street and North Street and a clause in the Special Permit decision that would ensure there is no idling or movement of trucks between the hours of midnight and 5 AM. Attorney Buckley: It would be difficult to minimize the traffic to zero, as we would need to be prepared for unforeseen circumstances such as weather that may impact a driver from arriving at their expected time of arrival.

Council Vice President Brewer suggested applying shock-absorbing rubber to help eliminate the sound of trailers backing into the building.

Councilor Burgess moved to grant a Special Permit for the purpose of a drive through, a teller operation, for banking operations, for the property at 7-31 Warren Street as requested by the Applicant pursuant to applicable law and specifically as show on plans C501, C502, and C102, as presented to us and as amended, with the conditions that they are instructed to include the new vegetation that is shown on the plans, the painted asphalt signage indicating traffic patterns as approved at North Main Street, the speed bumps, one or two, as may be relocated on site so as not to conflict with the entrance or egress of the banking teller operation, and that the signage for the kiosk is approved per the Town Council with the condition that on the tower the signage is directional only, as the applicant already has a sign on the front of the building and there is going to be one on the kiosk and one on the rear of the building, but that the Town Council has no objection to the signage as presented coming off of North Main Street, that the Council finds that the use is in harmony with the purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance, that it is not detrimental to the zoning district nor the abutters, and that the Council finds that the other findings and requirements of the ordinances for the issuance of a Special Permit have been met.

The motion was seconded by Council Vice President Brewer.

Roll call vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

Town Council President Alexopoulos moved that the Council find:

- that the adverse effects of the proposed use will not outweigh its beneficial impacts to the Town and to the neighborhood, in view of the particular characteristics of the site, and of the proposal in relation to the site;
 - that the proposed use is acceptable in light of the requirements contained in the Town Zoning Ordinance and the Table of Allowable Activities;
 - that the proposed use is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance;
 - that the proposed use is consistent with the Town Master Plan;
 - that the proposed use is acceptable, in light of traffic flow and safety concerns, including parking and loading;
 - that the proposed use is acceptable in light of the adequacy of utilities and other public services;
 - that the proposed use is acceptable in light of the impacts of the proposed use on neighborhood character;
 - that the proposed use is acceptable in light of the impacts of the proposed use on the natural environment; and
 - that the proposed use is acceptable in light of the fiscal impacts of the proposed use, including impact on Town services, the tax base and the employment considerations;
- and that the Town Council vote to grant the Special Permit pursuant to the Town of Randolph Zoning Ordinances and all other applicable law with the following conditions:
- they are instructed to include the new vegetation that is shown on the plans,
 - they are instructed to include the painted asphalt signage indicating traffic patterns as approved at North Main Street,
 - they are instructed to include the speed bumps, one or two, as may be relocated on site so as not to conflict with the entrance or egress of the banking teller operation,
 - and
 - that the signage for the kiosk is approved per the Town Council with the condition that on the tower the signage is directional only,
- The motion was seconded by Councilor Egan.
- Roll Call Vote:8-0-1 (Abstention: Burgess)

Motion passes.

Based on the above vote, the Special Permit was deemed granted.

Public Comments:

1. Michelle Ajax, 15 Virginia Circle; Mark Chobanian, 17 Virginia Circle; Lovelyn Akonkem, 18 Virginia Circle: Concerns were raised regarding the gravel blasting at the T.L. Edwards site in Avon. A discussion of the Council was held concerning the issues raised and potential remedies to be taken.
2. Joe Burke, 54 Hills Street: A question was raised concerning the taxes of residents as they relate to debt exclusion for the schools that were built in Town.
3. Debbie Nathan, 8 Alden Circle: The Town has a Good Neighbor Guide with a lot of helpful information and I'm not sure many residents know about this pamphlet. I'm wondering if there is a way to get this information posted on an electronic sign so that people can see it when they're out on the road.
4. Sandy Cohen, 63 Bittersweet Lane: The intersection at Highland Avenue and Warren Street is prone to flooding since the construction of the Taj Estates began. Is it their responsibility to mitigate the flooding, or the Town's responsibility? I'm also curious to know the Town's traffic plans for that area. What is the Town doing to address the feasibility study for the mobility bus?
5. Paul Foos: I'm here to ask about the Randolph Citizen Initiative that was submitted and voted on affirmatively by the Council, and wondering what the status of the feasibility study is.

Motions, Orders, and Resolutions:

1. **Councillor Burgess made a motion to direct the Town Manager to issue a directive that all meetings shall be open to the public, except executive sessions.**

Town Manager Howard: I've put together a draft directive that I would to finalize and send out to Boards, Commissions, and Councils as soon as possible. It strongly encourages the hybrid component for conducting meetings.

A discussion was held concerning two resolutions Councillor Gordon proposes to add to an upcoming agenda.

New Business:

1. **Council Order 2023-047: Acceptance of Registrars Recommendation for In-Person Early Voting for Fall 2023 Local Election**

Council President Alexopoulos introduced and read Council Order 2023-047. Town Manager Howard provided a brief explanation regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2023-047, as presented, made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Brewer.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

2. **Council Order 2023-048: FY2024 Budget Transfers**

Council President Alexopoulos introduced and read Council Order 2023-048. Town Manager Howard provided a brief explanation regarding the purpose of this Council Order.

Motion to approve Council Order 2023-048 made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor C. Alexopoulos.

Roll Call Vote: 9-0-0

Motion passes.

Correspondence:

1. Mass in Motion Randolph Program: Christine Tangishaka, through the Mass in Motion Program has worked collaboratively with the Friendly Food Pantry for sourcing fresh produce to be made available to residents using the pantry services. This year, she was able to establish a program to provide vouchers for purchasing produce at the Main Street Market. This is only one of the initiatives we have underway with the Mass in Motion program.

Council Comments:

Council Vice President Brewer: The Mid-Autumn Lantern Festival is taking place from August 25 through August 27, 2023, at the parking lot behind the Ice area. General admission is \$5.

Councillor Natacha Clerger: I want to encourage residents to continue to come to our meetings and let us know their concerns or contact us individually. We are nine Council members, with nine different personalities and opinions but we always come together to make decisions within the best interest of the community.

Councillor C. Alexopoulos: A friendly reminder to residents who may be having gatherings, please be mindful of your neighbors and the noise.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: 1. Sunday, August 27, 2023, is National Movie Day. 2. I'm proud of the interns that were able to present today. They worked hard for the last six weeks. 3. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee is meeting on September 5, 2023 at 6:30 PM.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Councillor Burgess, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.