



Randolph Town Council

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, June 12, 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. In-person attendance held in Chapin Hall, Randolph Town Hall, 41 S. Main Street, Randolph, MA.

Call to Order: Council President Alexopoulos called the meeting to order.

Roll Call – Council Members Present: Christos Alexopoulos (In-Person), William Alexopoulos (In-Person), Richard Brewer (By Zoom), Natacha Clerger (In-Person), Jesse Gordon (In-Person), Katrina Huff-Larmond (In-Person), Kevin O’Connell (By Zoom).

Pledge of Allegiance: Pledge of Allegiance led by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

Moment of Silent Prayer: Moment of Silent Prayer held in remembrance of Harold Fitzgerald who passed away on June 3, 2023. Harold was an active member of his community, and a former Town Meeting member and served on the Randolph Finance Committee; in memory of Richard Peppe, the father of John Peppe a current member on the Board of Assessors. Mr. Peppe passed away on June 4, 2023; and in memory of Will Adams who passed away on June 6, 2023. Mr. Adams was the longest-serving Town Meeting member for the Town of Randolph. His favorite pastime was driving his tractor in the Randolph Night Before the Fourth Parade every year.

Announcements from the Council President:

1. Flag Donation by Mr. Joe Burke.

Motion to accept the gift of the Memorial Day Flag from Joe Burke made by Councillor Clerger, seconded by Councillor Brewer.

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

Motion Passes.

Public Hearings:

The Council President noted that we have two public hearing scheduled for 6:15pm, the Mobility Hub Petition and the FY 2024 Annual Operating Budget. Both hearings were opened. The Council began with the hearing on the Mobility Hub Petition.

1. 6:15 PM: Council Order 2023-028: Mobility Hub Petition

Council President Alexopoulos opened the Public Hearing for Council Order 2023-028. Council President Alexopoulos read the Council Order. The Town Council Clerk confirmed that the legal advertisement for the hearing was published in the Patriot Ledger on June 2, 2023. Council President Alexopoulos opened the Public Comments portion of the Public Hearing.

1. Paul Foos, 527 West Elm Street, Brockton, MA: I was the hand that submitted this petition to the Town Council and represent the Randolph Tenants United. We've been working in this Town for about two and a half years. This Petition grew out of thousands of conversations where we asked people in this Town, "What do you need to survive in Randolph?" People are often walking more than a mile trying to get to jobs, stores, schools, and more. These conversations were considered when speaking with Councillor Gordon in which this Petition came into fruition for a Shuttle Bus Service. I understand that the Brockton Authority Transportation (BAT) system and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) say we cannot have a public transit system but I'm telling the people of Randolph that we do need it. Please use your creativity to make this happen.
2. George Magazine, 17 Hillsdale Road, Randolph, MA: I have been a Randolph resident for over thirty years. I had tried to raise this issue before and I'm happy that this is moving forward. There are a variety of people who cannot get from one side of town to another.
3. Kevin Joyce, Randolph, MA: My wife and I moved to Randolph over thirty years ago and we like it here enormously. It wasn't until I stopped driving two and a half years ago that I then became aware of how difficult it is to commute. I think this would be a great asset for me. In the winter, walks to the market and local stores can be daunting so I speak highly in favor of this.
4. Gladys McClain, Rosemont Square, Randolph, MA: I'm here to speak in support of the Shuttle Bus petition. My mother is dying and I have to take many Ubers to get around, especially being disabled myself. Please help us to get this Shuttle. Many of us don't have the funds to have a car.
5. Sheila Hatley, Randolph, MA: I have been a Randolph resident for five years. I urge you all to try to get this shuttle. There are a lot of us who are not as healthy as we once were and we need this Shuttle to help us get around to the grocery stores, transit stations, and wherever else we might need to go. There are a lot of people who are dying from overexertion simply because they needed to walk to a grocery store. I urge you to get this shuttle for the residents of Randolph.
6. Izabel, 59 Pleasant Street: I have been here since 2019 and it is hard to get around. I just got my Masters in conflict resolution and this goes back to antiracism. I'm demanding for you guys to do right by your people. I stand with the residents of Randolph until this is done. Antiracist policy needs to be in every Town and every State.
7. Laquisha Dargett, Highland Glen Ave, Randolph, MA: I live in the front of the building so it's not as difficult to get to the grocery store but I'm here to represent people who do not have as easy access and have difficulties traveling in Randolph. We are going through a lot living in these apartment complexes with poor living conditions. I have been living here for five years.
8. Kate Shore, Randolph, MA: I am a middle-class homeowner. I have helped to collect many signatures for this Petition and have met many people who have a need for this type of shuttle bus. There are many people who have cars who are fully in support of this petition. There is an environmental issue that needs to be addressed. We all know the use of fossil fuel is a threat to our community and having more communal buses is a way to reduce harm to the environment.
9. Pamela Kelly, Randolph, MA- I am amazed at the beautiful town that is Randolph except there is a need for Randolph transportation. I drive but sometimes my health prohibits me from driving so I need to use the Ride or a Lyft and I don't think it's fair that I have to inconvenience people in order to get to my destination. Scheduling a trip with the ride often needs to be done a day in advance and they're not always on time.
10. Sandy Cohen, Bittersweet Lane, Randolph, MA: I would like to voice my approval of this petition. I constantly see elderly people walking with shopping carts in the heat, in the rain, in the snow and this is not right. If we have the means, we have the way and the will to fund this service for those who need assistance.
11. Becky Robito: I'm happy to hear that this is being presented. I also want to add that this is something that will make the Town more attractive. One of the advantages Randolph has is its accessibility to various highways and to the city. If there is a possibility for this to be expedited that would be great because it is so important to so many people.

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

Councillor Gordon: I'll speak about three different things: 1. The vision for what this does, 2. The policy for how it does it, 3. The politics for how it all works. The vision is that wherever you are if you walk to one of the main streets then there will be a shuttle bus going more or less in the direction in which you are going to cut a mile or two off your walk. Hopefully, there will be a bus stop that can take you generally to the area you wish to go to to make life more fluid. I hope that many families who have two or more vehicles can convert to one vehicle. 2. The policy we read in the Petition is very specific. It is about the mobility hub program which is an active state program that has worked in several towns statewide. In Acton, MA, a mobility hub shuttle was set up so that residents can get from wherever they are to the commuter rail. That is basically what the vision here is. The feasibility study is very specific. A feasibility study is done to determine whether or not something is feasible. This is very carefully worded to not talk about whether it should happen but how it should happen with deadlines. The deadlines are June 2024 to set up the program and June 2025 to actually implement the program. 3. The politics of this is that if this fails tonight, it will need to go before another petition. That petition requires 2,000 signatures and we have two groups to help get those signatures, that is Randolph Tenants United and the Randolph Democratic Town Committee. This petition had one of the most overwhelmingly positive responses I've seen, having done many petitions in the past. The people really want this.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I signed the petition as well. This is not new to Randolph. I don't want people to think this is the first time this came up, or that the Town of Randolph is against this because that is not true. I have been on various committees that have been looking into this and my hope is that the Town can collaborate with those committees that have already done work and research to find out how this can be made possible. Randolph's Community Wellness group has brought this up, and the committee meeting on how to spend ARPA funds has discussed this. I know this because I have been on those committees. I'm sorry if you have been under the impression that the Town has not been talking about this. I agree with environmental justice. I'm excited about this. I'm just hoping that there will be a collaboration with the organizations that have already worked on this.

Councillor Clerger: I am fully in support of this initiative. We walked together from Rosemont to the Corner of Oak Street and North Main Street and it took us just under an hour. I can only imagine how many disabled people have to wake up and go to work, or run errands and it takes them a longer time. As a member of the Town Council since 2017, I can say that we have never ignored the major issues and needs of the town. As Councillor Huff-Larmond said, there has been work done regarding this issue and I know the work will be done to make this happen.

Councillor Brewer: I understand the need but I also understand what the potential cost can be. I don't have a problem doing the feasibility study but really have to look at what the cost would be on a yearly basis. Sometimes grants are given that only last a few years and then it becomes the Town's responsibility. I just want people to be prepared that there may be an override to continue supporting these services.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Part of the discussion has been not just how to start the services, but how to maintain the services. Because getting it started is often the easy part.

Councillor Gordon: To be clear, yes there will be a feasibility study but the feasibility study goes directly into implementation. Yes, we should plan on funding this with our town funds. By voting yes, that means implementing.

Council President Alexopoulos: I don't believe it's just the cost of the program when looking at the feasibility study. You have to take a look at the setup of the program, management of the program, the

roots of the program, and all of the factors it would take to provide a bus service. Can the Town Attorney weigh in on whether this order requires implementation?

Town Attorney Griffin: The plain text of this Council Order does not require that the bus service be implemented. The plain text of this requires that the Town conduct a feasibility study, that the feasibility study be about providing shuttle bus service to Randolph residents, that the study include information on funding as available, that the feasibility study be completed by June of 2024, and that the feasibility study provide a plan for funding and implementation by June of 2025. It does not require that the Town actually implement that plan for funding and implementation. I just didn't want anyone to be unclear about what they were voting on.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I think that was important to clarify. Was there any collaboration with the Town, or while you were preparing the Council Order did you do any research with any other organizations who have done this? Could you still go to other committees and discuss this?

Councillor Gordon: Yes, this was discussed with the Coalition of Social Justice. Councillor Huff-Larmond: I'm not surprised that this was an easy petition, I'm talking about talking to other organizations in the town who may have some insight. Councillor Gordon: Yes, I look forward to those conversations.

Councillor Brewer: I want to be clear on what I'm voting for. If I vote for the feasibility study, I do not want to implement this without knowing what the costs are. Will there be another vote at a later date for amounts and things like that? Council President: That is my understanding. There are a lot of hurdles to overcome here. We do have the MBTA and BAT services who provide services in Randolph and there are various rules that apply because we already have transportation service. I, for one, would like to see what the feasibility study will bring forward such as the number of vehicles, and number of runs, what the routes would be. It's like setting up a business. You don't just jump into it because it's a great idea. You have to figure everything out because you want it to succeed.

Town Attorney Griffin: In order to implement this, it would require funding and only the Town Manager can initiate an appropriate order. You will receive a feasibility study and then in order for it to proceed to the next step there will need to be some additional action taken. There will need to be an additional vote in order for this to go forward.

Councillor Gordon: I understand the legal reading. I have a different reading. The phrase "a plan for funding and implementation by June 2025" in my view, means a plan and implementation by June 2025. I could tell you that there is no further vote for implementation. The whole goal is for this to be state and federal funding. My understanding of this is implementation by June 2025.

Council President Alexopoulos: I am confident in what the Town Attorney has explained regarding this Council Order. At this point, the chair awaits a motion.

Council Vice President Brewer: So, this will be voted on based on the Town Attorney's interpretation, is that correct? Council President Alexopoulos: That is correct. As noted.

Motion to approve the Council Order 2023-028 as presented made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by Gordon.

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

Motion Passes.

2. 6:15 PM: Council Order 2023-029: FY 2024 Annual Operating Budget

Council President Alexopoulos opened the Public Hearing for Council Order 2023-029. Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-029. The Town Council Clerk confirmed the legal advertisement was published in the Boston Herald on June 2, 2023.

Council President Alexopoulos: This Council Order is being introduced by the Town Manager. At this time, I will allow the Town Manager to give a presentation on the FY2024 Operating Budget and then I will list each line item of the budget and request that if any Councillor has questions about a specific line item, or would like to discuss it, then they state "Hold" and we will come back to it. Hopefully at the end of the discussion, we will be prepared to vote on the budget next Monday.

Town Manager Howard introduced and described Council Order 2023-029. Town Manager Howard was joined by Town Accountant/Finance Director Janine Smith, who provided an update regarding the Town's Revenues including a three-year comparison of the different sources of revenues, the tax levy, and a three-year comparison of the local receipts projection.

Town Manager Howard provided information on the Town's expenditures for FY2024. The Town is increasing the school department's budget allocation by 6.5%, and an additional \$1,250,000.00 to the schools for capital expense purposes. Fixed costs such as health insurance, retirement, utilities, and state/county assessments continue to drive the budget. This budget also maintains staffing for public safety, the Department of Public Works, and finance operations. The Randolph Intergenerational Community Center will be fully open and operational with no user fee through the next year. This is the final year for no user fee. The Assistant Town Manager position is in the budget. Lastly, there has been an increase to the Planning department budget for purposes of grant writing.

Town Manager Howard provided information on the use of ARPA funds in the budget, including the following priorities: First, to continue to fund two paramedics and associated OT costs for a second daytime ambulance; Second, to mitigate energy/fuel increases due to inflation and refuse costs from tonnage increases; Third, to provide Sunday hours at the Turner Free Library; Lastly, to offset a portion of lost special education circuit breaker funds to the Randolph Public Schools.

Town Manager Howard provided additional information on the Town's general stabilization fund. Through the compliance with Town financial policy, that the bond counsel reviews, that puts us at about \$7 million in general stabilization funds. I believe at the last meeting, the town's stabilization funds were mentioned and it's important to note that there are multiple stabilization funds meant for different things. The water/sewer stabilization fund cannot be used for things not related to the issue of water. Randolph has taken a proactive approach to increasing the general stabilization fund that is unique and has worked out very well for the Town.

Town Manager Howard provided information on the Town of Randolph's cherry sheet. The full story of the cherry sheet puts us at about \$23,420,113. Additional information was also provided on how the annual budget is built. We have estimated revenues, minus assessments and charges, giving us our total budget for the year.

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

1. Joe Burke, Hills Street: 1. I'm a little confused on the school budget. When I watched the school committee meeting and listened to when people came to this meeting to speak about the school budget, they requested funds for school repairs. I thought the increase was included in the 6.5% increase and not given to them in an additional set of funds through the capital. 2. I don't see a capital improvement plan for the fire department, department of public works, or other departments. Why isn't there one for those

departments? 3. The funds for health insurance, workers' compensation, and retirement of employees in the school department are paid separately from their allotted budget, on the Town side. Why isn't that in the total line item? 4. When are we going to do a capital improvement plan for other departments? The Department of Public Works needs more equipment. 5. Is there going to be an increase in payments for residents for refuse?

Town Manager Howard: Getting our tonnage down is critical. The purchase of new bins would not fall on the residents. The School Committee asked for a significant increase last year, and we put more money into the schools than we ever have with the support of the Town Council. This year we're able to increase it even further to 6.5%. I looked into the issues raised by the students, parents, and educators and I think we can make strong improvements. There will be a capital plan for the Town put forward by my office. I think we'll be making another infusion into the Department of Public Works' needs through the capital plan as well.

2. George Magazine, Randolph, MA: Are any of the increases directed to our youth in this budget?

Town Manager Howard: Specifically, there is funding available in the school department, community programs, and the Turner Free Library. There is a lot of programming available for youth. We've been successful in working with QUARI out of Quincy in putting together programs for youth and we're always looking for different ways to tap into funds for additional youth programs. Also, with this budget, the tennis courts, basketball courts, and track will all get resurfaced.

Mr. Magazine: Are there any Veterans' Benefits?

Town Manager Howard: Yes, The Veterans Benefits line item is included and works in conjunction with what we use from the state. If at any point during the fiscal year, additional funds are needed then we would be able to shift funds to provide what is necessary. Another key thing is working with veterans in the federal and state programs above what the local level is able to do.

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

Councillor Clerger: I have a question for Town Attorney Griffin: Was the investment in Belcher Park fields mentioned to the Town Manager? Town Attorney Griffin: Yes, it was discussed at length. We are trying to find a way to support the fields because the way the ownership is set up is a bit complicated. We are all aware and working extensively to figure out a way to get it done. Councillor Clerger: Thank you. I heard Town Accountant/Finance Director Ms. Smith saying we've done great by not using certain funds. That means we don't need to raise taxes this year because we're doing such a great job.

Councillor Gordon: I want to talk about the process of the budget and would like to see a new process implemented next year. We publish a draft budget by April, and we then have 90 days to comment on it and discuss it with the Town Manager. The Town Manager would then incorporate reasonable changes into the final draft of the budget and then present that draft to the Town Council. I will push for this stringently next year. Town Manager Howard: Since the implementation of the Town's current form of government, the Town Council has often varied the process for how and when the budget is approved. That happens in order to give the Town the best opportunity to know what the revenues are coming in from the state and various other figures. I want to make it clear to the general public that this has been the standard procedure for more than ten years. It all depends on when the state comes out with the numbers that they are going to give the cities and towns. The reality is, until we know what the true dollar amount is coming back to Randolph, it is very difficult to finalize a budget for a municipality with a city form of government, like ours. Councillor Gordon: On November 30 of this year, I will submit a request to follow the Town Charter and obtain a preliminary budget.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: We have looked, in the past, at the dates for budget submission to see if it was something that was able to move around. As the town manager has said, the budget has not been able to meet what the charter states on various occasions. That conversation was had years ago. I just think there was an issue that hindered us from coming together to edit that part of the charter. I'm wondering if it makes sense for the Town Council to get together and edit some portions of the charter that simply don't work.

Council President Alexopoulos: At this time, I will list each line item of the budget and request that if any Councillor has questions about a specific line item, or would like to discuss it, then they state "Hold" and we will come back to it.

The Council President read each line item in Council Order 2023-029.

Line Items with Councilors Requesting a "Hold" are the following:

Town Council - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Town Manager - Councillors Gordon and Huff-Larmond
Law Office - Councillors Gordon and Huff-Larmond
Police/Fire Injured on Duty - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Town Clerk - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Planning - Councillor Gordon
Police Department - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Fire Department - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Animal Control - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Animal Inspector - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Randolph Public Schools - Councillor Gordon
DPW Highway - Councillors Gordon and Huff-Larmond
Street Lights - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Traffic Collections - Councillor Huff-Larmond
Community Programs - Councillor Huff-Larmond

Discussion:

Town Council Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Can you explain the salary increase? Council President Alexopoulos: The position of the Town Council Clerk went from a part-time position to a full-time position. Councillor Huff-Larmond: And the line item for professional development, we never use the full amount. My question is, is that something we want to review? Town Accountant/Finance Director Smith: Anything that is left at year-end gets transferred into free cash. Council President Alexopoulos: Those funds are available if anyone wants to take any classes or professional development courses to enhance their education in government.

Town Manager Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Is the salary of the Assistant Town Manager position included in this budget? Town Manager Howard: It is under the line item for professional salaries and \$125,000 is set aside for that position. Councillor Gordon: The Assistant Town Manager position is currently described with two functions: Human Resources and Operations. I'd like to propose that it include grant coordination functions as well, in order for that position to speak with all the department heads and help coordinate potential grants with the state. Town Manager Howard: I'm not sure I necessarily agree with that function falling within that position. As I have mentioned, funds for Planning have been added to the Planning Department budget. We currently do a lot of work on grant writing and maintaining those grants. Grants are very item specific and not generally operational. It's important when we talk about grants, that people understand we are very successful in that area. Certainly, there is always room for

improvement. Councillor Huff-Larmond: I'm hesitant about adding another responsibility to the assistant town manager position since it has already been difficult to fill that position. Council President Alexopoulos: I think why we've been successful recently in grant funding is because we are getting very specific individuals to request grants. They specialize in the specific field of grant writing. I would be more inclined to leave the position as it is written now, as opposed to adding additional duties.

Law Office Line Item

Councillor Gordon: This is one of the specialties for grants we often need, which is legal help. It doesn't have to be in-house, it can be contracted out too. For example, we can increase the line item for "Special Council" to allow for grant assistance in the legal department. This could be used to support Chapter 90 efforts as well. Town Manager Howard: We don't know what we don't know. If a transfer is necessary in the future, we can return to the Council and request for that transfer. We constantly have to adapt, but I don't think it is necessary to increase that line item at that time. Council President Alexopoulos: I know that with accepted versus non-accepted streets, some streets take significant costs and some require less. So instead of funding additional engineers and attorneys to help with getting a street fixed, paved, or accepted, we just do the work. We try our best to take care of all streets whether they are accepted as public ways or not. Councillor Huff-Larmond: Is the line item for special council, for other law firms? Council President Alexopoulos: Yes, that is outside counsel anytime we need legal work outside of Christine's expertise. Councillor Huff-Larmond: So, is the amount listed at \$150,000 because we don't have as much work to do for the Trash-Transfer station? Town Attorney Griffin: Yes, this line item is a little bit like snow and ice where some years we have a lot of snow and some years we don't have any at all. We treat this a little bit in a similar way where we make our best estimate of how much funds we'll need for the year, but depending on the year we may need to return to the Town Council and request additional funds depending on the needs.

Council President Alexopoulos: As the Council knows, we cannot increase the budget. We can cut or make decreases. I'm sure your case has been made to the Town Manager and it is duly noted.

Police/Fire Injured on Duty Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Has this been a major expense over the years? Town Manager Howard: Yes, we've gone through a real string of bad luck over the past few years and that is reflected in this request. We have had a number of injuries, from hips to backs to separated shoulders and more. What we have budgeted here will ensure we have properly protected the employees and the Town.

Town Clerk Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: There is a 7.12% increase in a department head's salary. Town Manager Howard: Yes, there are steps and lanes if you will. Between the Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA), and the increase in the position's step, this budget will allow room for those salary adjustments.

Planning Line Item

Councillor Gordon: So, for line item 530000, I appreciate that there was an increase in funds for grant writing. I would like to see much more than that specifically for a grant writer position. I estimate that an appropriate amount here is \$225,000. Councillor Huff-Larmond: There is a 5.5% increase in the department head salary line. Is that the same increase as with the Town Clerk? Town Manager Howard: Yes, every employee falls in different categories with grades, and steps, and then everyone would get COLA. First, it depends on whether the position is contractual, or not contractual, and then what grade or step they may be in.

Police Department Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Does this number include additional police officers? Town Manager Howard: We know that the public is looking for more traffic enforcement. We also have the issue of officers who have been injured on duty. We need to factor in officers who are either on leave, or not

expected to return and compensate by putting more officers on overtime work. We also anticipate lower overtime numbers because we have been fortunate enough to get new police officers on board, a few of which are currently in the academy. Councillor Gordon: I support the additional hiring of officers. I think the plan is to increase the number of officers from 67 to 70. I think a lot of the expenses on the police budget can be cut by additional grant writing. There are many grants available for the police department. I am glad that we all agree police officers can be hired and trained on grant funding and I believe that we should. Town Manager Howard: We do apply for a number of grants mentioned. The grants meant for hiring of new officers generally last three years then the Town has to pick up on the costs. Council President: I want the residents to know that there is a lot of day-to-day work being done on obtaining grants. It may not be out in the open, but behind the scenes, we have been very successful in obtaining grants. Councillor C. Alexopoulos: Based on my experience, many of these grants are field specific. For example, Captains or Lieutenants in the Police Department are often charged with obtaining and maintaining their own grants because it requires a certain level of knowledge to do so.

Fire Department Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I actually don't think I have anything to ask here.

Animal Control and Animal Inspector Line Items

Councillor Huff-Larmond: I wonder what is being done with the wild turkeys, and if additional funding is necessary. Do we still have a part-time position for the animal control officer? Town Manager Howard: We have a full-time animal control officer as of this past year. She has been very passionate about the job.

Randolph Public Schools Line Item

Councillor O'Connell: I would love to see a more detailed budget come from the school department because this is a lot of money and I would like to know how this money is being spent. I would also like to see improvements to the trophy cases in the high school. We should have more pride in showcasing our accomplishments. We also need to look into putting in a handicapped chair lift at the high school's main entrance. There is no reason why anyone who may be handicapped needs to go around the entire building to get to the main entrance.

Councillor Gordon: I also had trouble with the one line item we got regarding the School Department's budget. You can go over to the school's website and obtain a little bit more information there. One topic, which is school technology, would also benefit from additional grant funds. This is just another example of what we could do with a grant writer. My biggest point is how we address money that is being left on the table.

Councillor Huff-Larmond: It is not our job to tell the school system how to spend their money. It is up to the superintendent and the school committee. I would like everyone to be clear about their role versus our role as the Town Council.

Councillor Clerger: We had many students, teachers, and educators raise concerns and we will think of them when approving this budget.

Council President Alexopoulos: The school department is one of the only departments that can change its budget as needed. The only thing we can do is voice our concerns to the school committee and let them know what we hear from residents.

Town Manager Howard: First, the school department does have a grant writer on their side. Secondly, without the context of what the grants are and even whether or not we have even applied to them, we simply don't know that information. I think it's important we don't give the impression that the work is

not being done when it is. Third, it is important to watch the school department's public hearings regarding the budget.

DPW Highway Line Item

Councillor Gordon: This is the destination where we should have more funds. I recognize we cannot vote to change the budget for more funds, and this is concerning to me when I don't have enough time to make comments on the budget, on behalf of the people of Randolph. The people of Randolph have also said they want more parks. I'd like to see more funding available to have more staff available and purchase more equipment. I'd like to see an additional \$100,000 on staffing, \$50,000 for surveying for Chapter 90, and an additional \$50,000 for park maintenance equipment and usage.

Street Lights Line Item

Council President Alexopoulos: Why was there a \$91,000.00 increase for street lights? Town Manager Howard: That is solely based on utility costs. A little bit on wanting to be able to do more replacements of street lights, but mainly because of the utility costs increases. Council President Alexopoulos: Is there a plan to update the older lights with LED lights? Town Manager Howard: When lights are replaced, we put in the LED lights. We have two different color schemes, if you will, so I will find out what the costs would be to make them all LED. For lack of better words, it looks weird with different colored LED lights. Council President Alexopoulos: Last year, DPW did an excellent job in pruning back some of the trees in North Randolph that are infringing on some of the lights. If we could make sure that is done this year, that would be great.

Community Programs Line Item

Councillor Huff-Larmond: So, is this regarding programs stemming out of the Randolph Intergenerational Community Center? Town Manager Howard: Yes. We have been able to maintain staffing this year which is great. Council President Alexopoulos: Are the tennis courts going to receive improvements? Town Manager Howard: Yes, that is being done through ARPA funds, as well as replacing the track. Councillor Huff-Larmond: Is the social worker still in this budget? Town Manager Howard: The social workers are being supported by grant funds so they would not be reflected in this budget. Councillor Huff-Larmond: How will we support those positions when the grant runs out? Town Manager Howard: That is a good question for when we think about crafting the budget for next year and what we are able to afford. Councillor Huff-Larmond: That is one of my concerns when it comes to grants, which is how we maintain services originally obtained through grants. Councillor C. Alexopoulos: When will we be looking at renovations to the field turf? Town Manager Howard: I would need to speak to the school department and have someone go in to evaluate the current state of the turf.

Stetson Hall Line Item:

Councillor Huff-Larmond: Do we know if and when Stetson Hall will be able to open up? Town Manager Howard: The Stetson Hall Trustees are still looking into it. They are trying to find out what the building can withstand and make sure it doesn't affect the wear and tear of the building much further.

This Public Hearing was continued to the next Joint Meeting of the Town Council and Town Council Finance Committee on June 20, 2023, at 6:15 PM.

Old/Unfinished Business:

1. Council Order 2023-032: FY2023 Revolving Fund Increase Spending Authorization

Council Order 2023-032 was presented with an amendment to the proposed "Amended Spending Authorization", which was increased to \$150,000. Motion to approve Council Order 2023-032, with the adjustment of \$150,000 instead of \$90,000 under the column "Amended Spending Authorization" made by Councillor C. Alexopoulos, seconded by Councillor Clerger.

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

Motion Passes.

New Business:

1. Council Order 2023-036: Randolph/Holbrook Intermunicipal Agreement Amendment

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-030. Town Manager Howard provided additional information about the Council Order.

Motion to approve the Council Order 2023-030 as presented made by Councillor Huff-Larmond, seconded by C. Alexopoulos.

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

Motion Passes.

2. Council Order 2023-037: FY24 Randolph Community Preservation Budget and Reserves

Council President Alexopoulos read Council Order 2023-037. Town Manager Howard provided additional information about the Council Order.

Council President Alexopoulos continued this matter to the next regular Town Council Meeting on June 26, 2023, at 6:15 PM for a public hearing.

Executive Session:

The Council President read the following: The Town Council may vote to go into executive session pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 30A, section 21(a)(3) relative to potential litigation strategy concerning the PFAS Multi-District litigation. M.G.L. ch. 30A, section 21(a)(3) permits a public body to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

The Chair so declared.

Council President Alexopoulos requested a vote for the Town Council to enter Executive Session. Motion for the Town Council to enter executive session made by Councillor Gordon, seconded by Councillor Huff-Larmond.

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

Motion passes.

The Council President announced that the Council would enter Executive Session and would not be returning to public session after the Executive Session.

The public portion of the Town Council meeting concluded, and the Council entered an executive session at 10:15 PM.