



Town of Randolph

Town Hall
41 South Main Street
Randolph, MA 02368

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Monday, August 8, 2016

7:00 PM

Chapin Hall
Town Hall, 2nd Floor

Call to Order - Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance

Councilor Adams called the meeting to order. Pledge of Allegiance led by the Randolph Police Officers in attendance.

- Present:** 8 - Council President Jason R. Adams, Council Member William Alexopoulos, Council Member James F. Burgess Jr., Council President Paul K. Fernandes, Council Vice President Kenrick W. Clifton, Council Member Arthur G. Goldstein, Council Member Andrew Azer, and Council Member Edward Gilbert
- Absent:** 1 - Council Member Paul J. Meoni

Moment of Silent Prayer

Announcement from Council President

Councilor Adams - a little sparse tonight because we just celebrated the ground breaking of the Intergenerational Community Center and some may be running a bit late. Thrilling ceremony.

Motions, Orders, and Resolutions

Minutes from 05/23/16 Meeting

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes 05-23-16](#)

Councilor Goldstein made the motion to accept meeting minutes, seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote 5-0-1 (Azer Abstaining).

Minutes from 06/13/16 Meeting

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes 06-13-16](#)

Councilor Goldstein made the motion to accept meeting minutes, seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote 5-0-1 (Azer Abstaining).

Swearing in of Police Officer Promotions

Christine Morse - promoted to Sergeant

David Avery - promoted to Commander

Police officer promotions presented by Chief Pace. Sworn in by Town Clerk

Brian Howard. Christine Morse promoted to Sergeant and David Avery promoted to Commander.

Public Comments

None

Presentation

Assessors Office Presentation

Presentation by Peter Moran. Started 3/1/16, first task was to contact DOR and ask their representative to meet with him. Met with Steve Sullivan from BLA and went over previous re-evaluation directives in place. Has implemented a cyclical inspection program in the town, 10,331 properties in the next 5 years. Un-inspected in the past, permits being inspected but that is it. Many properties under assessed, no one has been out to visit them in the past 10 years. Need to be accurate to properly value a property. Inspector knock on doors, if no one home a yellow tag is left on their door, they all wear vests and have ID badges. Have had a good response so far.

Income and expense reports have not been returned, DOR not satisfied. Caveat that you can fine the tax payer \$50 for 4 families and up and \$250 on commercial properties. A bit of a revenue stream. It assures that things are renting for and what the expenses are to properly evaluate and access commercial property. Do not know when it will be implemented, need to get a better return.

DOR did not like the land curves - just a computer adjustment which will be completed this year.

Councilor Goldstein - What happens if someone knocks on their door and they don't want to let them in? They will have a discussion with the homeowner at the door. 5% town done, being done by street alphabetically. In the past erroneously we have added basements? Yes that is correct. Patriot Properties in their software program included basements in the living area so for the past 25 years Randolph has had basement as living area. Basement should be finished basement, not a living area. As of December the basements will not show as living area. How do we set tax rate? Easiest analogy is 3 cups of water, the middle is the town budget and you have to fill that cup. If the values are higher and accurate the tax rate can go down. If the tax rate goes down it becomes more compatible with surrounding towns. The values should be accurate and are low at this time. To take the burden of the taxpayer you need to promote businesses but with a lower commercial tax rate.

Councilor Burgess - What philosophy do you give to the people going to the houses to do the inspections? If we list a dwelling as a single family and when you go in there and find that the single family is broken into several different apartments, how do you handle that? From an assessors point of view if you have 10 kitchens in your home I assess it for 10 kitchens, do not change the use. I do report and work with Cheryl (Code Enforcement) when inspector come back with pictures of houses with trash. They are our eyes. We do not change the use unless it's warranted. How do you communicate that? Converse with Ron Lum.

Councilor Clifton - If the homes were under assessed I assume that will be rectified which from a layman point of view would conclude that would be paying more taxes. We assess what we see and many of the homes are under assessed because permits were not pulled and inspections not done. The more value we can find in these parcels will help lower the tax rate and everyone pay their fair share.

Councilor Gilbert - If pull a permit that is an automatic inspection? Yes, the building inspector goes out and then we go out after.

Councilor Clifton - Number of new residents and homeowners, procedure if homeowner feels over assessed? When they receive their December tax bill they have until February 2nd to file an abatement.

Town Manager's Report

1) Town website: recognize the work of Brian Howard and all the department heads in redesigning and recreating the new website. Cleaner design, user friendly, easy concise manner.

Councilor Burgess - Are the individual departments responsible for updating their information? How are we sharing? There would be an admin assigned to each group and would be given access to the page. Are there limitations? Not that we have encountered.

2) Devine School RFQ: Back out on the street for a third time. Due date 8/31/16. Can obtain copy on the town website.

3) Community Center Groundbreaking: Recreation office gone, DPW building down, large stones, doing an excellent job. November 2017 opening.

4) Library: Ahead of schedule and under budget. Talking about moving over in mid-September with a potential opening on 9/22.

5) Chief Pace and his office staff moved to the new wing and now doing demo on the original station. Moving ahead nicely. Would like to conduct a tour for council on a meeting night so the council can see the work. Also ahead of schedule and under budget.

6) Fire Station: Done a good job of catching up; working inside of the building, thank Chief Donovan and Brian Howard for working with the neighbors.

7) Congratulate Arthur Sullivan on his retirement from Randolph Police Department last Friday. Fine police officer and gentleman and earning a happy retirement.

Councilor Clifton - Update on the status of Gloversbrook and Pearly Evans that are being paved. FY17 paving has started. Have sidewalk ripped up; going through design elements and it should be completed by the end of next week.

Councilor Gilbert - Columbia Gas, Bossi ave? Will have to get you an update. Change in legislation, promises from Columbia Gas. Maybe have Columbia come out for an update.

Councilor Clifton - I can report that the residents of Bittersweet Lane are still in contact with President from Columbia Gas.

Councilor Alexopolous - Bossi and Morgan, are those streets being repaved? I believe they are.

Old Business

Consideration of Applicants for Position of Town Accountant and Possible Authorization to Enter Into Contract Negotiations for Said Position.

Councilor Burgess - I move Anne McNaughton, seconded by Councilor Fernandes.

Councilor Clifton - Can we hear a brief report from the subcommittee.

Councilor Goldstein - Interviewed both, found that Anne did not have MUNIS experience, we asked some specific questions about bonding and had little experience. Lisa Higgins very experienced with MUNIS. Subcommittee felt Lisa could hit the ground running where Anne had some learning curves and would take some time to be up to speed which means we would have to keep outside consultant for a longer period of time.

Councilor Burgess - I asked Anne a question the other night, she didn't have a quick answer but she did respond later with an email with a very

appropriate answer. Not concerned about the learning curve, more concerned about, don't want to say truthfulness about the second candidate, but her dancing around the question.

Councilor Fernandes - My approach to selection is 1) can do, 2) will do and 3) fit. Ms. McNaughton is quiet but straight forward. MUNIS can be learned, better fit with other people, more than the other.

Councilor Adams - All in favor of entering into contract negotiations with Ms. Anne McNaughton please say aye. Vote 2-4-2 (Adams, Clifton, Gilbert, Goldstein - no/Azer, Alexopolous abstaining).

Councilor Goldstein - Move that we enter into negotiations for a possible contract with Lisa Higgins for Town Accountant. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote 4-2-2 (Burger, Fernandes - no/Azer, Alexopolous abstaining). Motion passes from all the members present and voting. Put team together to negotiate.

New Business

Council Order 2016-023 Create Revolving Account for Operation of 391 South Street

Attachments: [2016-023 Revolving Account for operation of 391 South Street](#)

Presented by Town Attorney Christine Griffin - Town Manager and Christine worked together with the acting town accountant to put this order together. This allows rents and other fees collected for the newly acquired property at 391 South Street to be put into a separate account so that monies can be used for the upkeep of that property.

Councilor Burgess - Point of clarification. Is skies the limit? Every year you vote on it; adjust the limit of the revolving account. Prefer any money raised on this property that it stays with this account and that if we have surplus that is spent on more veterans housing and not brought back to the general fund. If at the end of the fiscal year you do not authorize this revolving fund you can create a new revolving fund.

Councilor Goldstein - Point of clarification. When the town purchased this it did not say veterans housing, it says veterans housing preference. When the town purchased this the CPC has a specific and it says community housing, specifically affordable housing. The deed does not say anything yet because we have not converted the full use. Will come to the council. Spoke to the veterans agent and asked him if any veterans were looking for housing and he said not that he knows off. Councilor Burgess - We have homeless veterans in Randolph that live with other people because no veterans housing. Councilor Clifton - In fairness to the veterans agent, he is

still new.

Councilor Goldstein - Would like to move adoption of 2016-023, seconded by Councilor Gilbert.

Councilor Fernandes - Point of clarification, limit of \$70k is that just good for the year? You can review this at the end of FY'17 to adjust up or down.

Councilor Adams - all in favor of the motion. Vote 8-0-0.

Correspondence

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Town Council Clerk Debra Ward read letter of resignation from Councilor Azer to Councilor Adams resigning as of 8/23/16.

Councilor Azer made motion to accept, Councilor Gilbert seconded the motion.

Councilor Gilbert - Have relied heavily on Andrew for a lot of insight into finances, will miss him, wish you all the best.

Councilor Burgess - True public servant, best interest of the town at heart, you knew what you were talking about. Important to me, will miss you and thank you for your services to the town.

Councilor Adams - Sitting in this seat, one that Councilor Azer held for two years, gave me so much more respect to what you have done for this community. Thank you.

Councilor Azer - Will have more to say at the next meeting. My schedule has changed, started teaching 6 years ago, started 1 class a year now teaching 10 classes this year on top of my full time job. Something had to give and unfortunately this is what I had to give. Thank you for your support.

Councilor Burgess - Also want to thank your wife and kids. They go through a lot.

Councilor Adams - On the motion. Vote 7-0-1 (Burgess)

Committee Reports

Library

Councilor Gilbert - Meeting tomorrow night, as Mr. Murphy has said, ahead

of schedule and under budget.

School

Councilor Clifton - Discussing charter school ballot initiative on the 11/8 election. School committee is in the process of organizing a number of activities to ensure that the residents are informed on the issues of charter schools. If the vote is to increase the cap there will be more charter schools in the Commonwealth. On 9/6 organizing a meeting with the pro charter folks and the anti charter folks. School Committee and Town Council to be part of the discussion. Town Hall 7pm. Important for us to get a full appreciation of both sides. On 10/15 there will be a community wide meeting at the library, strongly encourage all residents, can impact our community.

Councilor Goldstein - Is it the intent of the School Committee that after the 10/15 meeting to come with either a recommendation for or against? The school committee will be discussing whether there will be a resolution.

Councilor Gilbert - Point of order, I was at department meeting last week and ESC was against the charter schools. I do not think the ESC took a stand.

Councilor Fernandes - As a council we should make a recommendation one side or the other. We should look how soon we can put something on the agenda, not to vote but to accumulate information and be prepared to make a decision. Not waiting for the last minute. Councilor Burgess - There are several resolutions out there. I am sure there are, I have done research, surprised how many cities and towns have already made their choice and how they would vote on it.

Councilor Adams - Believe the school should take leadership on this.

Councilor Clifton - I won't equate leadership as the same as trying to influence the electorate. I think the school committee is taking leadership to ensure that the information is out there by having activities where our citizens can hear both sides of the argument.

Councilor Azer - I have been talking about this for over a year and have talked about the financial ramifications of it. If you have a strong opinion on how this will impact the town you should have voted on it months ago. No time to rally any type of support, hope the school committee gets off the fence and takes a position.

Councilor Clifton - It is my understanding that the entire Commonwealth, we are one of the few that will be having outreach activities to make sure our

residents are informed on the issues.

Councilor Burgess - This affects Randolph so much more than Milton, have a lot of lose. No objection to anyone educating their child, they have one shot, but for us to not be honest with the residents early enough that every time you take a child out of our district and put them in charter school it takes resources, we do not have the resources. We are not the only community doing outreach, we are doing it at the last minute.

Council Comments

Councilor Gilbert - West Street coyotes and residents are skittish; contacted Slavinsky, would like to contact him one more time and invite residents up there for a small meeting. High School field, discussed a few weeks ago, wondering, said I would be more than happy to be part of that.

Councilor Azer - Add to the record, I know I mentioned it before, my kids both go to charter school, I am advocating as a town councilor not as a parent. I am not advocating either way but have mentioned it before when this topic has come up, I do not want people to say oh look at him he has kids in charter school.

Executive Sessions

Executive Session - 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. 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.

Attorney Griffin read the Executive Session notice.

Roll call vote: Adams - yes, Alexopolous - yes, Azer - yes, Burgess - yes, Clifton - yes, Fernandes - yes, Gilbert - yes and Goldstein - yes.

Executive Session - The Town Council may vote to go into executive session pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 30A, section 21(a)(1), which permits an executive session for the following purposes: To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or

complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual.

Attorney Griffin read the Executive Session notice.

Roll call vote: Adams - yes, Alexopolous - yes, Azer - yes, Burgess - yes, Clifton - yes, Fernandes - yes, Gilbert - yes and Goldstein - yes.

Councilor Adams - We will not be returning to regular session.

Adjournment

Future Town Council Meetings

August 22, 2016
September 12, 2016
September 26, 2016
October 17, 2016
November 14, 2016
November 28, 2016
December 5, 2016
December 19, 2016