

Town of Wendell
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
May 29, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting by Zoom

Present: Chair Laurie DiDonato, Vice Chair Gillian Budine, Member Paul Doud

Also Present: Glenn Johnson-Mussad, Town Coordinator; Cynthia Bolling, Recording Secretary; member of the press.

I. Roll Call/Call to Order

With all members present, the meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Announcements

There were no announcements.

III. Approve Minutes of May 15, 2024

Laurie DiDonato moved to approve the May 15, 2024, Selectboard meeting minutes. Paul Doud seconded.

Discussion

The minutes were amended to fix a typo on page 3, in the Discussion section of the Old Home Day item, by changing “thee” to “three.”

The amended minutes passed unanimously.

IV. Debt Exclusion. Glenn Johnson-Mussad

After some discussion of Finance Committee (FinCom) emails, it was determined that the FinCom is asking the Selectboard to call for a ballot vote at the June 6 Annual Town Meeting (ATM) that would ask voters to approve an override to the budget of \$150,000.

- The goal is to allow the town to assess an additional \$150,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purposes of funding the Stabilization Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025.

Discussion Details

- There was some discussion about whether the override request required a vote in a town meeting or by ballot.
- The Selectboard concluded that its members were required to put Proposition 2 1/2 questions (which involve property tax limits) on a ballot for a vote.
- During a discussion of the timing involved in setting the budget and the tax rate, the Selectboard reviewed information from the Selectboard Handbook issued by the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA):
 - a. When budgets are set, they should take into account reasonable estimates of property, tax, and other revenues.
 - b. A municipality’s budget can be put in place at the beginning of the fiscal year, even if it contains appropriations that exceed estimated revenue.
 - c. Departments can continue to spend at appropriated levels even when spending cuts will probably be needed later in the fiscal year to bring the budget into balance.
 - d. Alternatively, “revenue may be sought by placing an override or debt exclusion before the voters. Approval of the referendum would bring the budget into balance and allow a tax rate to be set.”

- Glenn noted that he and Treasurer Carolyn Manley had two non-routine items for the ATM warrant that they were still working on: whether the members of the Municipal Light Board should be appointed or elected, and the new revolving fund for the Town Hall and its kitchen.

Next Steps

- Carolyn and Glenn will finalize the articles for the warrant and have it ready for the Selectboard to sign on Friday, May 31, in the afternoon. Constable Dan Keller will post it.
- Before Friday, Glenn will email the latest version of the ATM warrant to the Selectboard.

V. Items Not Anticipated

Small Town Position Exemptions. Glenn

- Carolyn and Glenn are asking the Selectboard to grant them exemptions from the rule that prohibits small-town workers from holding more than one position.
- According to the letters in the meeting's documents folder, Carolyn's positions are as Municipal Light Plant administrative staff and Financial Director.
- Glenn's positions are as Town Coordinator and Financial Director.

Gillian moved that we approve the request of Carolyn Manley to be Financial Director and to hold more than one appointed position with the Town of Wendell, as outlined in her letter dated May 14, 2024. Laurie seconded.

Discussion

Change Carolyn's title from Financial Director to Financial Co-Director.

The amended motion passed unanimously.

Gillian moved that we approve the request of Glenn Johnson-Mussad to be Financial Co-Director and to hold more than one appointed position with the Town of Wendell, as outlined in his letter dated May 23, 2024. Laurie seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Town Office Building Internet. Glenn

Rich from Harrington Electric, a subcontractor for Tech1, has said he's available next week to fix the internet wiring in the Town Office Building for \$750.

- Currently, the Cat6 Ethernet cables don't take a direct route through the building, which is causing internet connectivity issues.
- Glenn noted that Entre Technologies, the Town's IT management company, doesn't do this kind of work and an electrician he consulted didn't want the job because he didn't have the expertise.

Discussion

- Glenn walked through the building with Rich and explained what was needed.

Laurie moved to hire Harrington Electric to repair the internet wiring in the Town Office Building for \$750, with the money to come from the Town Building Repairs account. Paul seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Temporary Coverage for Trash Removal. Glenn

- Transfer Station Supervisor Asa de Roode has volunteered to take over Town Custodian Eric Shufelt's trash removal duties while Eric is out.
- Asa is also exploring taking over the rest of Eric's duties and Glenn has arranged for him to connect with Eric about it.
- Carolyn doesn't think this needs a small-town exclusion because it would be a temporary arrangement.

Discussion

Asa will be paid at the same rate as Eric and from the same account.

VI. Adjournment

Gillian made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Paul seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Documents

Selectboard Meeting Minutes, May 15, 2024

Selectboard Posting and Agenda, May 29, 2024

Internet Rerouting Quote, May 28, 2024

Annual Town Meeting Warrant, v2, May 28, 2024

Co-Director Motions, May 29, 2024

Small Town Exemption Letter C. Manley, May 14, 2024

Small Town Exemption Letter, G. Johnson, May 14, 2024