

Town of Wendell
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
July 3, 2024, 7 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting: Selectboard Offices and by Zoom

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

Also Present: Glenn Johnson-Mussad, Town Coordinator; Cynthia Bolling, Recording Secretary; Treasurer Carolyn Manley.

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. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

IV. Selectboard Updates and Comments

There were no Selectboard updates or comments.

V. Selectboard Meeting and Warrant Schedule Review

- A warrant meeting is scheduled for the fifth Wednesday in July.
- Laurie DiDonato will be out of town for the Aug. 7, 2024, Selectboard meeting but will probably be able to attend virtually.

VI. Town Coordinator Report Glenn Johnson-Mussad

Top-Priority Items

- Getting the appointments ready.
- Printing the Annual Reports.
 - a. Highland Press still hasn't printed the 2021 and 2022 reports.
 - b. Glenn intends to work with a different printer for the 2023 report.
- Responding to requests from auditors.

New Electrician

- A quote is expected for the parking lot lights.
 - a. It will include the price of a changeover to LED lights.
- The emergency exit lights in the Town Office Building need attention, according to the electrician.
 - a. Glenn will present a quote for the work at the July 17, 2024, meeting.

VII. Approve minutes of June 18, 2024

Gillian Budine moved to approve the June 18, 2024, Selectboard meeting minutes. Paul Doud seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Bylaw Digitization. Gillian

Town Clerk Anna Wetherby has been digitizing the bylaws and is preparing them for posting to the Town's website.

IX. Economic Development Group. Laurie

The Economic Development citizens' group met last week and had a fruitful discussion about the kinds of economic activities residents would like to see in the Town to improve its tax base.

Discussion

A request from the group to use the Selectboard's meeting room in the Town Office Building led to a discussion about the need to develop a policy for the use of Town buildings in general by private citizens.

- The Selectboard decided to hold a monthly policy meeting, starting July 17, 2024, at 6 p.m., to consider and produce Selectboard policies that might be needed.
 - a. In the case of non-municipal groups that might want to use space in municipal buildings, the goal of the policy would be to ensure that such use is confined to groups conducting activities that would benefit the Town in general and that permission is granted in an evenhanded manner.
- A board member will take brief minutes (perhaps the date and time the meeting starts, a list of those present, and a brief description of the policy or policies discussed).

X. Town Hall Space Usage Policies. Glenn

The Good Neighbors Food Pantry, which started out as a group of volunteers, has become a nonprofit and a long-term Town Hall tenant.

- Its occupancy differs from that of Town Hall renters because it has an office there and has been using the building to store its equipment and supplies.
- In his role as the Town's procurement officer, Glenn felt that a formal policy and application process would have to be developed that would allow Good Neighbors as well as any other qualified nonprofit to use the Town Hall, since it is considered to be a municipal asset of considerable value.
- Glenn thought the policy that would be created would have to ask for:
 - a. Applicants to file a memorandum of understanding (MOU) about how they propose to use the space.
 - b. An open, formal application process.
 - c. A fee.
 - d. The Selectboard's written permission to use the space.

Discussion

- Laurie was particularly concerned that an open application process might imply that Good Neighbors is no longer welcome as a Town Hall tenant.
- The board members agreed that Good Neighbors was doing a wonderful job; no one wanted to see them leave.
- In the chat, Gillian posted Town meeting votes regarding the use of municipal space by various groups in Wendell.

- a. The most recent, dated December 19, 2007, contained a Town Meeting article allowing Good Neighbors to store and distribute food at the Town Hall.
- Treasurer Carolyn Manley stopped by the office briefly and noted that, in order to avoid the appearance of favoritism, in her opinion the Town is required to have a policy about how nonprofits use space in a Town building.
- It was suggested that language be added to the Town Hall rental agreement to make it clear that anyone who rents the Town Hall is expected to clean up before they leave.
 - a. To ensure enforcement, Good Neighbors might be asked to document the state of the Town Hall before they open for business on Sunday mornings and report any messes left by a Saturday renter.

Glenn will talk to Town Counsel David Doneski about whether Massachusetts procurement laws require the Selectboard to develop part or all of the policy and application process he outlined.

He will ask Good Neighbors if they have any other documentation regarding their use of the Town Hall.

XI. Old Business Follow-Up

Handicap Parking in Front of the Town Hall

Laurie will check in with Phil about the progress of getting this handicap parking spot.

Town Parking

Gillian has been looking into parking ticket design, but research is needed.

Town Hall Rental Management

Kitchen Coordinator Sarah Wilson, Glenn, and Laurie will meet to discuss workflow now that Sarah will be managing Town Hall rentals.

Digital Equity Plan

The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) has been working on this. It's on the Town website.

Veterans Memorial

The ceremony to open the crate containing the restored memorial to WWII veterans that was restored and donated to Wendell will be rescheduled to the end of next week or two weeks from today.

Plumbing Inspector

Plumbing inspector Casey Bashaw promised to send information about the nearly two years' worth of missing fees, but neither Paul nor Carolyn has heard from him.

Electrical Inspector

The Selectboard agreed to put the new fee schedule for electrical inspection on the agenda for a vote at the next meeting.

Small Town Administrators List

Glenn was asked to follow up with them about what towns charge for water fees.

Grant-Writing Programs

Wendell might benefit greatly from having a grant writer. It was noted that the FRCOG has a grant-writing program, but it wasn't clear how it works.

Sharing Selectboard Documents

Glenn suggested that the Selectboard hold a working session on how to find and share documents.

Centennial Elm Tree

Wendell resident Johnathan von Ranson and Project Coordinator Phil Delorey have agreed that the Centennial Elm will have to be removed.

XII. Items Not Anticipated

Vacation Time for Town Employees. Laurie (This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.)

The Selectboard considered setting up a system so it could be notified when Town workers go on vacation.

Appointments. Glenn

- Annie Diemand-Buccie recommended changes to the list of assistant constables to be incorporated into future Selectboard appointments.
- Glenn read off a list of appointments that required the Selectboard's vote.

Laurie made a motion to appoint the following people:

Jennifer Gross as selectboard representative to the Franklin Regional Planning Board, from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025; Gillian Budine as a representative and Glenn Johnson-Mussad as alternate to the FRCOG Council from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025; Lonny Ricketts as emergency management director and Joe Cuneo as emergency response coordinator, from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025; and Linda Hickman to the Wendell Cultural Council from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. Paul seconded No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Assessors' Contract

Glenn handed around Wendell's contract with the Regional Resource Group for tax assessors' services for the next three years, for signing.

Dry Hydrant Easement

The contract is ready for signing.

XIII. Adjournment

Laurie moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Paul seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Documents

Selectboard Meeting Minutes, June 18, 2024

Selectboard Posting and Agenda, July 3, 2024