

Town of Wendell
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2024, 6 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting: Selectboard Offices and by Zoom

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

Also Present: Cynthia Bolling, Recording Secretary; Selectboard Clerk Joy Gorzocoski; Treasurer Carolyn Manley; Project Coordinator Phil Delorey; members of the public and press.

I. Roll Call/Call to Order

With all members present, the Policy Working Session part of the meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. The rest of the meeting continued at 7:00 p.m., starting with Announcements.

II. Policy Working Session

- A. Allowing Meeting Room Use by Community Groups
- B. Town Hall Rental
 - i. Keys
 - ii. Checking After Rentals
- C. Long-Term Town Hall Space Usage Policies
 - i. Insurance Response about Good Neighbors
- D. Inspection Policies and Protocol

III. Announcements

Police Chief Minckler is talking with Erving's police department about extending the partnership agreement between Leverett and Wendell to include Erving.

- They will meet in a few weeks to discuss it further with Wendell and other stakeholders.
 - a. Laurie DiDonato will attend, and maybe Paul Doud.
- The Police Advisory Committee will need someone to replace Gillian Budine when she leaves next May.
 - a. Paul volunteered to join Gillian at the next meeting.

IV. Public Comment

Treasurer Carolyn Manley's comment about tax title properties was placed in Section XV (Items Not Anticipated) below.

V. Selectboard Updates and Comments

Open Positions on Boards and Committees

Gillian thought that the Wendell Recycling and Transfer Station (WRATS) would be a good place for her to spread the word about open positions on Town boards and committees.

- She also considered handing out snacks while there.
- An announcement will be included in the Town newsletter, and Gillian and Town Clerk Anna Wetherby will do more recruiting in September, on Old Home Day.

Gillian will schedule a time for the event with Transfer Station Supervisor Asa de Roode and let the Selectboard know when that will be.

VI. Selectboard Meeting and Warrant Schedule Review

The meeting and warrant schedules will alternate for a few more weeks.

VII. Project Coordinator Report. Phil Delorey

Renovation at WRATS

- The open tops are being relocated to behind the office buildings.
 - a. Right now, water is running off to where the new access to the open tops will be located; regrading will solve the runoff issue.
 - b. The project is being funded by budget money that the Town set aside and recycling money provided by Western Massachusetts.

Police Station Setup

Computers and desks are being installed.

Erving-Wendell Bridge Repair

- Carolyn asked about the status of the Gill Engineering invoice for the Erving-Wendell Bridge repair.
 - a. Gill sent in a partial bill, but Phil has asked them to bill for the entire amount.
 - b. Carolyn noted that there is an upcoming deadline for spending American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, which have been set aside to pay for some of the work.

Today Phil will send Carolyn the dollar amount of the original 50/50 sharing agreement that Wendell made with Erving.

Wood Bank

- The site has been mostly cleared; the next step will be to remove the stumps and place gravel.
- A matching grant is available for clearing the site.
 - a. The hours volunteers spent clearing the area can counted toward the match in dollars.
 - b. Phil will fill out and return the volunteer hours form Carolyn sent him.

VIII. Approve Minutes of August 7, 2024

Gillian made a motion to approve the August 7, 2024, Selectboard meeting minutes. Paul seconded.

Discussion

In Section III, Public Comment, change “Chris ueen” to “Chris Queen.”

The motion was amended to include the change as written above.

The amended motion passed unanimously.

IX. Transfer of Class III License for Scott’s Garage. Laurie

Scott’s Garage is being sold, but the final transfer document was not in the meeting folder.

Gillian made a motion to assign Laurie to approve the transfer of the Class III license. Paul seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

X. Appointments. Carolyn and Selectboard Clerk Joy Gorzocoski

Carolyn consulted with Joy before recommending the following changes to the list of people to be appointed to boards and committees for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024.

- Appointees are people who work for the Town in unbenefited positions, whether or not they're paid.

Remove

<u>Name and Title</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Casey Bashaw, Plumbing/Gas Inspector	Do not reappoint; he hasn't submitted turnovers in three years.
Ashley Penna, Multi Board Clerk	Delete Energy, Finance, and Open Space slips; they're redundant.
Barbara Craddock, Health and Homeland Alert Network Primary Contact	No longer on the Board of Health.
Elizabeth Swedberg, Health and Homeland Alert Network Secondary Contact	Retired and only doing septic inspections.
James Slavas, IT Director	Wendell IT contractor Entre Technologies does this job now.
Carolyn U. Manley, Franklin County Technical School Representative	The position is held by Jeffrey Budine, whose term isn't up until 2026.

Add

Sarah Butler, Wood Bank Coordinator	Make the addition if she's on the agenda for tonight.
Sarah Wilson, Town Hall and Kitchen Coordinator	This is a new position.
Kathleen Nolan, Election Official	Town Clerk Anna Wetherby made the request.

Change

Carolyn U. Manley, MLP Board	Change "MLP Board" to "MLP Support Staff."
Elizabeth Swedberg, Board of Health	Change "Board of Health" to "Board of Health Agent."

Discussion

- Appointments to be considered at a future meeting:
 - a. People for the Zoning Board of Appeals, including Phil, who is willing to serve as a member.
 - b. Generate an appointment slip for Phil as project coordinator.
- The board considered alternative ways to fill two positions: plumbing/gas and building inspector.
 - a. Carolyn noted that there's a remaining balance in the budget for the building inspector's position if he were to be replaced by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) or a new hire, but there's nothing in it for plumbing, gas, and electrical inspections.
 - b. Wendell would pay about \$4,600 a year if the Town chose FRCOG for plumbing/gas, electrical, and building inspection services. This includes a discount for bundling all three.

Laurie moved to not appoint Casey Bashaw as Wendell's plumbing and gas inspector. Paul seconded. No discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Next Steps

- Carolyn will notify Casey Bashaw that he will not be appointed as plumbing and gas inspector.
- Gillian will contact the FRCOG about hiring an emergency plumbing/gas inspector.
- Joy will call Garrett Sawyer to see if he's still on the Finance Committee.

XI. Appointments and the Wood Bank

Laurie made a motion to create a wood bank coordinator volunteer position. Paul seconded. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Laurie made a motion to appoint Sarah Butler to the wood bank coordinator position. Paul seconded. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Laurie made a motion to approve the appointments list, including Carolyn Manley's changes as discussed by the board. Gillian seconded. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion

- The Selectboard will work with Sarah to gather the names of interested committee members for the wood bank.
- The committee's biggest project will be to decide who gets the wood.

XII. Town Water at the Country Store. Laurie and Paul

After discussing Wendell Country Store owner Patricia (Patti) Scutari's previous request to hook up the store to the Town's water system, the board concluded that they still did not have enough information to make a decision.

Discussion

- Carolyn and Joy have located the original documents that involve the Town well and will go through them tomorrow to see if they spell out any restrictions regarding who can hook up to Town water.
- Joy will look at Selectboard records from 2005 and 2006 to see if it made any decisions about the use of the Town well.
- According to the Department of Public Utilities, only the hookup of a 12-bedroom residence to Town water would change Wendell's regulation requirements as a public water supplier.
- The Selectboard was agreeable to having a special meeting if they need to decide ahead of the deadline Patti is facing to dig a new well or hook up to Town water.

XIII. Animal Control Officer. Laurie

The Selectboard discussed issues that have come up since the resignation of Wendell's animal control officer.

- Currently, the Leverett Police Department has been doing some animal control work.
- Off-leash dogs are a problem at Fisk Pond.
- The Town no longer has the capacity to hold a dog overnight.
- There's nothing on the website about who to call when issues about dogs arise.

Discussion

- Suggestion: Check with the police to review what they can do, compared to what the former animal control officer did.

XIV. Updating the Town on the New Bylaw Review Timeline

This agenda item may be about a request the No Assault & Batteries citizens' group made at a previous meeting regarding the bylaw it wrote.

- The board noted that the news about the extension of the bylaw has since appeared in the newspaper, in the board's newsletter, and around Town through celebratory events.
- The board will take further action if they receive a new request.

XV. Items Not Anticipated

Tax Title Properties. Carolyn

This item came up during the Public Comment part of the meeting.

- The Massachusetts senate is making changes in how tax title properties are to be disposed of or kept, effective Nov. 1, 2024.
- Wendell should halt further action on properties like 40 Gate Lane until then.

Regional Digital Equity Plan. Gillian

FRCOG would like Wendell to approve the plan that it wrote, which is in the meeting folder.

- The Municipal Light Plant Board as well as MLP Manager Ray DiDonato, who attended meetings along with Gillian, is in favor of approving it.
- If Wendell approves the plan, the Town might be eligible for a grant in the future.

Laurie made a motion to approve the Regional Digital Equity Plan as written. Paul seconded. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Newsletter. Gillian

Gillian invited the board to submit items, which will go out in September.

To be included: The open -position event at the WRATS discussed earlier, hosted by Gillian; bylaw news; a dog law; the wood bank.

Future Agenda Items Gillian

Good Neighbors agreement, schedule evaluations, fee schedules, reporting of ARPA funds, parking regulations.

XVI. Adjournment

Gillian made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 p.m. Paul seconded. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Documents

Insurance Recommendations, July 25, 2024

Selectboard Meeting Minutes, Aug. 7, 2024

Selectboard Posting and Agenda, Aug. 14, 2024

Appointments Merged, Aug. 16, 2024

Appointments Spreadsheet, Aug. 16, 2024

Participant Release Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Agreement, July 25, 2024

Regional Digital Equity Plan Final, July 24, 2024

Sample Insurance Recommendations, July 24, 2024

TOW Memo–Inspection Protocol, Aug. 9, 2024

TOW Memo–Wiring, Plumbing and Gas Policy Update, Aug. 9, 2024