

Town of Lunenburg
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
School Committee Meeting Minutes
Meeting of the Tri-Board, August 26, 2025
Town Hall, 17 Main Street and Zoom

Note: References to the Tri-Board in the context of this meeting refer to Finance Committee, School Committee and Select Board

Select Board Members Present: Chair Caesar Nuzzolo, Clerk Renee Emkey (via Zoom), Member Brian Lehtinen, Member Glenn McLeod (Absent- Vice Chair Amada Moore)

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Anthony Sculimbrene, Vice Chairperson Laura Brzozoski (left meeting at 8:29 p.m.), Secretary Mandy Gilman (left meeting at 9:02 p.m.), Member George Yapp (Absent- Member Emily Young)

Finance Committee Members Present: Chair Chris Menard, Clerk Tom Gray, Member Tanya Dall, Member Ana Lockwood (Absent- Vice Chair Jean Russell, Member Jay Simeone, and Member Mike Rupp)

Tri-Board Moderator: Tim Murphy, Town Moderator

Also Present: Town Manager Jennifer Warren-Dyment, Superintendent Dr. Jodi Fortuna, Finance Director Ezequiel Ayala, and School Business Manager Christopher McNamara

TRI-BOARD CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Tim Murphy, who served as Moderator. He asked everyone to stand and address the flag for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Murphy provided an overview of the open meeting law requirements, noting that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live over the Lunenburg Public Access channel, Facebook Live, and would be uploaded to the Lunenburg Access YouTube channel after the meeting.

After the Pledge, Mr. Murphy invited each Chair to officially open their respective meetings and introduce their members. School Committee Chair Anthony Sculimbrene called the meeting of the School Committee to order and announced that Member Emily Young would be absent. Caesar Nuzzolo, chair of the Select Board, called their meeting to order at 7:04 PM with Renee Emkey (via Zoom), Glenn McLeod and Brian Lehtinen also present. Chris Menard, Chair of the Finance Committee, called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order with Tom Gray, Ana Lockwood, and Tanya Dall present.

I. NEW BUSINESS

a. Preliminary Budget Presentation Under the Following Categories

Human Services, COA

Debra Goodsell, Adult Activity Center Director, presented the preliminary budget for the Lunenburg Adult Activity Center. She outlined the COA's mission, FY25 statistics, recent

kitchen renovations, program breakdowns, sources of outside funds, budget numbers, organizational chart, FY27 goals, and budget requests.

Ms. Goodsell reported that in FY25, there were 13,931 check-ins at the center, with 1,185 unduplicated individuals and the center averaged 47-51 visitors per day. She highlighted the recent kitchen renovation, which was completed on budget in two months and now includes a commercial-grade setup that passed inspection.

Ms. Goodsell detailed the wide range of programs offered at the Center including regular programming and special holiday events. Transportation services through MART served 42 individuals, while outreach services helped 396 individuals with various needs. The center also delivered 4,748 Meals on Wheels to 41 individuals and served 2,417 on-site meals to 268 individuals.

Ms. Goodsell discussed outside funding sources, including donations through the Select Board, \$10,000 annually from the Eagle House supporters, and a state formula grant of \$46,800 based on the senior population.

For the FY27 budget, Ms. Goodsell proposed staffing changes, including creating a new Program Coordinator position and changing the Outreach Worker role to an Assistant Director position. She estimated a total budgetary increase of \$8,000, which includes these changes.

During the discussion, committee members raised questions about the proposed staffing changes, the process for implementing them, and the potential impact on current staff. Ms. Goodsell clarified that the changes would not take effect until July 1st of the next fiscal year and that the Outreach Position would be absorbed into the new Assistant Director role.

Culture and Recreation, Library

Muir Haman, Director of the Lunenburg Public Library, presented the preliminary budget for the Library. He provided an overview of the library's mission, usage statistics, anticipated budget for FY27, outside funding sources, and state certification requirements.

Mr. Haman reported that in FY25, the library had 68,000 visitors, a 4% increase from the previous year. The library offered 410 programs with 6,700 attendees. Physical item circulation was 77,543, while electronic resource circulation jumped to 34,363 items.

The library's FY27 budget request was \$671,142, which includes salaries, materials, utilities, and other core services. Mr. Haman explained the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) certification requirements, including the municipal appropriation requirement and materials expenditure requirement.

Mr. Haman also addressed potential staffing changes, including the upcoming retirement of the children's librarian and the need for additional support in various areas. He presented a three-year staffing growth plan, which includes adding a specialized programming services librarian and increasing hours for existing positions.

He discussed the library's membership in the Central and Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CWMARS) network, which allows resource sharing among 150+

libraries. The annual assessment for this membership is expected to increase to the full membership fee of \$8,000 in FY27.

The presentation concluded with a discussion of federal funding uncertainties and their potential impact on library services. Mr. Haman noted that some databases previously provided by the state had been discontinued, requiring the library to purchase them directly. Committee members asked questions about the library's trust funds and database usage tracking.

Health Insurance

Town Manager Jennifer Warren-Dyment presented an overview of the town's health insurance costs. She explained that the FY26 health insurance budget is \$3,298,520, which represents 7% of the total budget. This figure does not include school active employees but does cover town active employees and all retirees.

Ms. Warren-Dyment explained that Town Meeting had accepted MGL Chapter 32B, Section 19 in 2008 which requires a written agreement between the Town and the Public Employee Committee (PEC) which requires the Town to have contracts with health insurance carrier(s) in accordance with the Agreement. She also discussed the structure of the Public Employee Committee (PEC) and its role in negotiating health insurance plans. Mary Foyle, Chair of the PEC, stated that it been four years since there had been negotiations and discussed some of the prior areas that have been explored for const containment.

Ms. Warren-Dyment detailed the current health insurance plans being offered, the enrollment figures, and cost history. The town participates in a health insurance trust through the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Agency (MIIA), which includes over 160 cities and towns. She explained that recent years have seen significant increases in premiums, with FY26 seeing a 14.8% increase.

Ms. Warren-Dyment discussed potential alternatives such as exploring alternative providers like the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) and enhancing the current opt-out program and potential changes to make it more attractive.

School Committee Secretary Mandy Gilman announced she needed to leave the meeting due to family obligations during the discussion. With lack of quorum, Chair Sculimbrene moved to adjourn the meeting of the School Committee. Seconded by Clerk Gilman. The motion passed unanimously at 9:02 p.m. Mr. Sculimbrene and Mr. Yapp remained for the remainder of the meeting. citing family obligations).

Ms. Warren-Dyment projected a potential over a million-dollar increase in health insurance costs over the next three fiscal years if current trends continue.

Committee members engaged in a discussion about potential strategies to manage these increasing costs. They discussed revisiting the opt-out program to make it more financially appealing. They also discussed considering changes to plan designs, such as increasing deductibles. Ms. Warren-Dyment emphasized that any significant changes would require careful consideration and negotiation with the PEC and various stakeholders.

Human Services, Health Services

Ms. Warren-Dyment presented the preliminary budget for Health Services (Board of Health). The total human services budget, which includes the Council on Aging and Veterans Services, is under half a million dollars, with the Health Services budget at \$126,000 for FY26.

Ms. Warren-Dyment explained that the Board of Health consists of five elected members responsible for formulating and enforcing local rules and regulations affecting public health. They are supported by a 32-hour per week administrative assistant and receive services from the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health, which serves 15 other local communities. The preliminary budget projections show a relatively level budget with a 6.51% increase or \$8,200. This includes contractual increases for staff and assumes a 10% increase for Nashoba Boards of Health and Nashoba Nursing services.

Ms. Warren-Dyment noted that Nashoba has experienced recent staffing difficulties, which may impact future budgets. She also mentioned a potential staff retirement in the next 0-5 years and upcoming collective bargaining agreement negotiations for FY27.

Human Services, Veterans

Ms. Warren-Dyment presented the Veterans Services budget, explaining that Massachusetts state law requires all municipalities to administer Chapter 115 benefits to qualifying veterans. The Town must appoint a Veteran Service Officer (VSO) to manage this program. Currently, Lunenburg has seven individuals receiving Chapter 115 benefits, ranging from under \$100 to over \$1,000 per month. The town pays out all benefits first and is then reimbursed 75% by the state.

The VSO, Michelle Durkey, serves Lunenburg and three other communities, receiving a stipend of \$11,000 per year. Ms. Warren-Dyment proposed keeping the overall budget flat at \$77,000 for the foreseeable future unless there are changes in the veteran population. Committee members discussed the reimbursement process and explored the possibility of creating a revolving fund for veterans' services to better reflect actual town expenditures.

Culture and Recreation, Band Concerts

Ms. Warren-Dyment briefly presented on the town band concerts which have been level-funded at \$6,000 for several years, with band members paid \$40 per performance. There are currently 35 members in the town band.

Committee members raised questions about the oversight and organization of the town band, including how to join and how sponsorships work. Ms. Warren-Dyment acknowledged that more information was needed and agreed to follow up with the Band Director, Steve Archambault.

Culture and Recreation, Historical Commission

Ms. Warren-Dyment stated that the budget had been reduced from \$3,000 to \$1,000 this fiscal year and she does not intend to change this appropriation.

b. Review and Approve Minutes of July 8, 2025

The committee decided to table the review and approval of the July 8, 2025 minutes. It was agreed that each board or committee would review and approve these minutes at their respective upcoming meetings when they had full attendance.

IMPORTANT DATES & UPCOMING MEETINGS

The upcoming Tri-Board meeting dates were noted as listed in the agenda. No further discussion took place regarding these dates.

ADJOURN

At 9:46 PM, the chairs of each board moved to adjourn their respective meetings.

Motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting. Moved by: Member Lockwood.
Seconded by: Member Dall. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion to adjourn the Select Board meeting. Moved by: Member Lehtinen. Seconded by: Member McLeod. Roll-Call Vote: Clerk Emkey- aye; Chair Nuzzolo- aye; Member McLeod- aye; and Member Lehtinen- aye.

Minute Approval

Select Board Minutes approved at the meeting of October 7, 2025

Select Board Motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 26, 2025. Moved by: Clerk Emkey Seconded by: Member Lehtinen. The motion passed unanimously.