

Town of Lunenburg
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, 17 Main Street and via ZOOM
Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Members Present: Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys, Vice-Chair Lou Franco, Member Tom Alonzo, and Member Renee Emkey

Members Absent: Clerk Caesar Nuzzolo

Also Present: Heather Lemieux, Town Manager. Public Comment Participants are listed in the minutes.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Jeffreys informed attendees that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live and would be uploaded to YouTube after the meeting. He explained that the agenda listed topics that may be discussed, but not all items may be addressed and other items not listed could be brought up as permitted by Open Meeting Law.

I. COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER BOARDS

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys read a detailed update letter from the Lunenburg Water District into the record. (Attached).

II. APPOINTMENTS

6:45 PM Continuation of License Denial Hearing for Conrad's Drive-In, 835 Massachusetts Ave.

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys recognized David H. Lee, 835 Massachusetts Ave. and 149 Bowling Acres Road, the General Manager for Conrad's Drive-In. Mr. Lee explained that there had been issues with Workers' Compensation, since corrected, and that there are some outstanding tax obligations on both properties. Mr. Lee explained that COVID and bad weather caused hardship, and they are working on refinancing to correct tax issues.

Chair Jeffreys verified that Mr. Lee will have issues resolved within ninety (90) days. Chair Jeffreys stated that he is included to approve a license due to Conrad's 80 year history in Lunenburg.

Member Renee Emkey asked the Chair if he would support granting a license now or when financial plans are complete. The Chair said that he would support a license now.

Member Tom Alonzo asked if, in fact, the application had been received in November. Town Manager Heather Lemieux stated that it had not been received complete due to Workers' Compensation issues. Member Alonzo stated that he would vote to approve a

license as long as there is a deadline included to correct tax issues. Member Lou Franco agreed.

Motion by Member Tom Alonzo to issue the license for Conrad's Drive-In at 835 Mass. Ave. with the contingency that the back taxes have to be resolved or a plan in place no later than May 20. Seconded by Member Lou Franco. Call for the vote: Four-aye. The motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

7:00-8:30 PM Joint Meeting of Select Board, Finance Committee, School Committee, with State Delegation on Budget Priorities and Legislative Priorities

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys recognized Evan Watters, Chair of the Finance Committee and Carol Archambault, Chair of the School Committee. The Chairs of Finance and School Committees called their respective meetings to order, conducting roll call of their memberships.

Chair Jeffreys introduced and welcomed State Senator John Cronin, State Representative Michael Kushmerek, and State Representative Margaret Scarsdale. Each legislator provided an update.

School Committee Chair Carol Archambault recognized School Committee Member Mr. Peter Beardmore who spoke about the State not paying their fair share to communities. Chair Archambault expressed concern about this year's School Department spending and state contributions. School Committee Member Laura Brzozoski echoed these sentiments. Representative Kushmerek talked about stagnation in Chapter 70 monies, and the need to find a solution for rural and suburban school districts. Senator Cronin talked about economic growth, housing needs, and the need for workforce development.

8:30 PM Request from Little League to use old Primary School property for T-Ball games and practices

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys recognized TJ Loughlin, 207 Old Acres Road. (via Zoom), Vice President of Lunenburg Youth Baseball and Softball. They are requesting using the fields for T-ball because of skate park construction which might be disruptive to usual fields. This would be for Spring season only.

Member Tom Alonzo asked about liability and maintenance. Town Manager Heather Lemieux stated that the Baseball League would need to provide insurance and the maintenance would not be anything other than what is being done.

Member Renee Emkey said that the field is bumpy and sloped; Mr. Laughlin said that this is okay.

Member Alonzo confirmed that any changes or needs will be managed by the league at no cost to the Town.

[** Select Board Member Caesar Nuzzolo joined the meeting at this point via Zoom **]

Select Board Member Caesar Nuzzolo asked how long this need would continue. Mr. Loughlin explained that this need would be for the length of time Marshall Park and the skate park were under construction, and that this is not meant to be a permanent arrangement. Member Nuzzolo asked about parking.

Board Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys said that he does not support this request, because changes made would lead to it being an expansion of Marshall Park, and because he is not comfortable with liability and that there would need to be a more solid plan in place. Mr. Loughlin asked how the current arrangement was insured.

Member Tom Alonzo asked what the timeframe was for a decision. Mr. Loughlin said that the league would need to know by early April.

It was agreed to put this on an agenda for early March. Before then work needs to be done to add details, especially about liability, into the agreement.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Board Comment

Member Lou Franco reminded residents about the many activities available at the Lunenburg Adult Activities Center.

Member Franco announced that he will not run for a second term on the Select Board.

Public Comment

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys recognized John Bowen, 162 Highland Street. Mr. Bowen spoke about issues with planning and funding an upcoming cemetery project. Chair Jeffreys clarified that the Board cannot meet with him in Executive Session, and that the Select Board does not remove members of other elected boards.

Peter Beardmore, 282 Pleasant Street, objected to the Select Board's prioritization of school issues in discussion with the town's legislators. Chair Jeffreys stated that there is nothing prohibiting any other board from meeting with the legislators.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Manager Heather Lemieux stated that the Annual Town Meeting Warrant is open until March 18th at 4:00 pm for submission of Articles.

V. INTERVIEWS/APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

Anna Lockwood, 91 Main Street – Historical Commission, term to expire June 30, 2025.

Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys recognized Anna Lockwood. Member Tom Alonzo stated that documentation shows that the Historical Commission may have three to seven members, but traditionally has always had five members, and he is not in favor of expanding the committee. Town Manager Heather Lemieux explained that on April 11, 2023, she had discussed this with the Select Board, and discussion occurred about changing the bylaw to five members, but nothing was done.

Chair Jeffreys noted that the town website has been advertising a vacancy on the Historical Commission for a long time.

Member Renee Emkey stated that she reviewed last April's discussion and she would support an article at this year's Town Meeting defining the board as having five members.

Chair Jeffreys moved to appoint Anna Lockwood and Heather Sroka, to the Historical Commission, term to expire June 30, 2025. Seconded by Vice-Chair Franco. Call for roll call vote: Member Nuzzolo, Aye; Member Emkey, Nay; Member Alonzo, Nay; Vice-Chair Franco, Aye; Chair Jeffreys, Aye. The motion passed (3-2-0).

Kim Duffy, 1479 Mass. Ave. – change from Associate to Full Member of Green Communities Committee, term to expire June 30, 2024

Member Alonzo moved to change Kim Duffy from Associate to Full Member of the Green Communities Committee, term to expire June 30, 2024. Seconded by Member Emkey. Call for roll call vote: Member Nuzzolo, Aye; Member Emkey, Aye; Member Alonzo, Aye; Vice-Chair Franco, Aye; Chair Jeffreys, Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

VI. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Heather Lemieux presented her report.

1. Board and Commission vacancies on the Architectural Preservation District Commission, Cemetery Commission, Council on Aging, Green Communities Committee, Open Space Committee and Personnel Committee.
2. Open positions with the Town include Conservation Administrative Assistant, Facilities Custodian, Heavy Equipment Operator, Land Use Director, and Planning Board Administrative Assistant.
3. Town Manager Lemieux met today with MassDevelopment about handling development of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for disposing of 925 Mass Ave.
4. A number of Bids/RFPs are currently advertised, including Data Collection Services for the Assessing Department, the Flat Hill Culvert Project, Road Materials, and Project Manager Services for Marshall Park.

5. The new Electricity Supply Contract with BP was signed last week for 11.77 cents per kWh for 48 months. It will begin when the current contract (11.868) ends in November 2024.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion on Fiscal Year 2024 Budget, Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, Capital Plan, and Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles

No discussion heard.

2. Discuss Environmental Policies and Select Board Bylaws

No discussion heard.

VIII. CURRENT BUSINESS

1. FY24 3rd Quarter Water Commitment in the amount of \$12,711.75

Chair Jeffreys moved to commit \$12,711.75 for the FY24 3rd Quarter Water Commitment. Seconded by Member Alonzo. Call for roll call vote: Member Nuzzolo, Aye; Member Emkey, Aye; Member Alonzo, Aye; Vice-Chair Franco, Aye; Chair Jeffreys, Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

2. Sign Warrant for Presidential Primaries

Member Alonzo moved to approve and sign the Warrant for the Presidential Primary. Seconded by Member Emkey. Call for roll call vote: Member Nuzzolo, Aye; Member Emkey, Aye; Member Alonzo, Aye; Vice-Chair Franco, Aye; Chair Jeffreys, Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

3. Minutes/Warrants/Action Items

The Board signed Accounts Payable warrants in the amount of \$196,710.50.

4. Committee Reports

Member Emkey reported that the Stormwater Task Force was unable to meet last week. Member Alonzo reported that a Finance Committee meeting that had to be cancelled because of incorrect posting has been rescheduled for tomorrow.

Chair Jeffreys stated that the Select Board met last Saturday to do a site walk.

IX. UPCOMING MEETING/EVENTS SCHEDULE

March 5th, March 12th, March 19th

X. PUBLIC COMMENT***

TOWN MANAGER

No public comment.

PUBLIC

Chair Jeffreys recognized Dave Passios, no address given, via Zoom, who advised the Board that the Finance Committee will also be meeting on Thursday to begin departmental meetings. Secondly, Mr. Passios confirmed that the Historical Commission is created by Bylaw, and not by Charter.

BOARD

Member Emkey thanked Mr. Franco for his time on the Board.

Member Alonzo stated that it is alarming that nine months ago the Board discussed changing the membership of the Historic Commission but nothing was done, and that communication on this issue had been poor.

XI. ADJOURN

Member Alonzo moved to adjourn. Seconded by Vice-Chair Franco. Call for roll call vote: Member Nuzzolo, Aye; Member Emkey, Aye; Member Alonzo, Aye; Vice-Chair Franco, Aye; Chair Jeffreys, Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 P.M.

*** Per Policy, Public Comment is limited to 15 minutes, with no more than 3 minutes per speaker except at the discretion of the Chairperson

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen McKenna Doiron
Minute Clerk

These minutes were reviewed and approved by the Select Board on:
Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Chair Caesar Nuzzolo made the Motion to Approve the minutes of February 20, 2024. Seconded by Clerk Renee Emkey. Call for the Vote: Four-aye. One abstention (Member McLeod). Motion Passed (4-0-1).