

Town of Lunenburg
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, 17 Main Street and via Zoom
Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Members Present: Vice Chair Lou Franco, Clerk Caesar Nuzzolo, Member Tom Alonzo, and Member Renee Emkey

Members Absent: Chair Michael-Ray Jeffreys

Also Present: Town Manager Heather Lemieux

Public Comment Participants are listed in the minutes

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Lou Franco called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Chair Franco 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.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Board Comment:

Member Tom Alonzo thanked everyone for coming out and watching The Boys and Girls Club event “Are you smarter than our 6th graders?” this past Friday. Vice Chair Franco, Chair Jeffreys and Clerk Nuzzolo were the winning team this year dethroning the police team. It was well attended and raised over \$24,000. It can be rewatched on YouTube. Vice Chair Franco stated he had a lot of fun and he was glad to be there.

Public Comment:

John Bowen and Jeanmarie Price, 162 Highland Street addressed the Board. Mr. Bowen stated he is running for the Cemetery Commission as a write in candidate and expressed his concern and opinion regarding the power of the Cemetery Commission. Mr. Bowen suggested it should be reformed as a corporation under IRS Code 501C-13 through the use of Mass Gen Law 114. It should also be moved into the Conservation Commission as a Department.

Vice Chair Franco addressed Mr. Bowen and stated this was borderline campaigning and he didn’t think this is the proper forum for it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Manager Heather Lemieux stated that Annual Town Meeting is Saturday May 4, 2024 at 9am at the Middle School High School auditorium. Town Manager Lemieux stated that they are expecting a larger than normal attendance. They put a survey out on social media to try and get a head count so they can plan for personnel to be there.

Town Manager Lemieux stated that the Town Clerk asked her read a notice regarding absentee voting. The 2024 census forms should have been returned to the Town Clerk by now. If you lived in town on January 1st and did not receive a census form please contact the Town Clerk's office. Any active voters who have not returned their census form will be inactive.

Town Manager Lemieux stated that 2024 dog licenses were due on April 1, 2024.

Town Manager Lemieux stated that absentee ballots for the annual town election on May 18, 2024 are now available and you can vote in the Clerk's Office during their regular hours. The last day to apply for an absentee ballot to be mailed is Wednesday, May 15, 2024. The Clerk's Office will be open on Friday, May 17, 2024 from 9am to noon.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER BOARDS

Mark Bursch, Chair of the Water District Commission addressed the Board and stated that he has a few things to review. Mr. Bursch provided the Water District's position regarding Article 25 and it protecting Zone 2 and 3. Their position is that as long as they are following DEP's guidelines, they have no concerns with this article. Mr. Bursch stated that due to the amount of revenue that would be generated for the Town of Lunenburg it is his suggestion that they bring this article forward for serious consideration.

Mr. Bursch discussed the impact on customers regarding the past treatment plan in place and reviewed the exact numbers they have today. Currently under a 30-year plan the Hickory Hills well will cost each water taker \$622 per quarter. They have added the Lancaster Ave well to this and that impact totals out to \$103.79 to treat both wells under SRF funding. A "yes" vote on the 16th will cost water takers, adding the Keating well, \$177.23 per quarter. In the end, it treats all three wells and the average cost for the water taker over 30 years is \$21,000.

Member Renee Emkey stated that this wasn't on the Agenda and the public was not expecting these new numbers. Member Emkey requested that this be discussed at a different time. Mr. Bursch stated the Water District Commission does plan to meet with the Board.

Vice Chair Franco asked Mr. Bursch if he would like this topic on next week's agenda. Mr. Bursch confirmed and stated it's a large issue that impacts the town.

APPOINTMENTS

7:15 PM Tollbooth Fundraiser Request on June 1st from the Fitchburg / Leominster Shriner's Club in Support of Shriner's Hospital Transportation Fund

Vice Chair Franco stated that they have already had a discussion with the Shriners and the only conflict regarding the date has been resolved.

Clerk Nuzzolo moved to approve the Tollbooth Fundraiser Request for June 1st from 9am – 2pm as presented by the Fitchburg / Leominster Shriner's Club in Support of Shriner's Hospital Transportation Fund. Seconded by Member Alonzo Call for the vote: Four-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

Mr. Woods stated that they do have confirmation from the Town Police and the DPW that there are no conflicts with this date. All proceeds will go towards their summer program for kids that are less fortunate.

Member Alonzo asked if is their first tollbooth this year and Mr. Woods confirmed. Member Alonzo stated that the bylaws limit the amount of tollbooth requests to two and that he has no objection.

Member Alonzo moved to approve the Tollbooth Fundraiser Request on May 22, 2024 from the Boys & Girls Club of Lunenburg, as presented. Seconded by Clerk Nuzzolo. Call for the Vote: Four-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

INTERVIEWS/APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

• Ratification of the Town Manager's Appointment of Alternate Plumbing/Gas Inspector, Jeremy Pierce

own Manager Lemieux stated that she is asking the Board to ratify the appointment of alternate plumbing/gas inspector Jeremy Pierce. Town Manager Lemieux stated that Mr. Pierce has over 25 years of experience in the plumbing field and is the owner of Pierce Plumbing and HVAC. Mr. Pierce has worked as the plumbing and gas inspector and/or as the alternate in multiple municipalities for the last 14 years. Mr. Pierce is a master plumber, sheet metal worker and licensed oil burner technician.

Member Alonzo stated it sounds like Mr. Pierce is ultimately qualified.

Clerk Nuzzolo moved to ratify the Town Manager's Appointment of Alternate Plumbing/Gas Inspector, Jeremy Pierce. Seconded by Vice Chair Franco. Call for the Vote: Four-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

• Ratification of the Town Manager's Appointment of Seasonal Lifeguard Cole Keifer

Town Manager Lemieux addressed the Board and stated she is requesting the ratification of the Town Manager's Appointment of Seasonal Lifeguard Cole Keifer. Town Manager Lemieux stated Mr. Keifer is a good employee and she is happy he is returning.

Member Alonzo moved to ratify of the Town Manager's Appointment of Seasonal Lifeguard Cole Keifer. Seconded by Clerk Nuzzolo. Call for the Vote: Four-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

• Elena Christopher, 91 Autumn Road – Council on Aging, Term to expire June 30, 2026

Elena Christopher addressed the Board and stated that she has been a property owner in town for 35 years and a business owner in town for 22 years. She is looking to give back to the community. Ms. Christopher stated she has been a primary caregiver for a parent and has seen all that she has gone through with a fixed income and trying to get additional support so when she was approached by the Council on Aging she decided that was an area she would like to put

some effort into.

Member Emkey thanked her for volunteering. Member Alonzo stated he has known Ms. Christopher for many years and he couldn't be more thrilled that she will be more active in town and he knows that her energy and passion will be a great addition to the Council on Aging.

Debbie Lincoln 46 Hemlock Drive, Chair of the Council on Aging addressed the Board and stated that Ms. Christopher attended the last Council on Aging meeting and she fit right in. Everyone is looking forward to working with her.

Member Alonzo moved to appoint Elena Christopher, 91 Autumn Road to the Council on Aging, term to expire June 30, 2026. Seconded by Clerk Nuzzolo. Call for the Vote: Four-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Ms. Lemieux stated that she doesn't have an official report for tonight but she wanted to talk generally about the upcoming town meeting. Child care will be provided by Honor Society students in the library and a bag lunch will be for sale. There will be officers present to help with parking and traffic.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Review Draft Revenue Turnover Policy

Vice Chair Franco stated that the Town Manager has made some adjustments to the draft policy. Town Manager Lemieux stated that she did receive feedback regarding the time that the treasury collector office is open. They are not open on Fridays. Town Manager Lemieux stated that many departments would have been caused undue burden if the turnover was due daily so they compromised to weekly and to also increase the threshold to \$250.

Member Alonzo stated that he doesn't have any issues with the changes.

Member Tom Alonzo moved to approve the Revenue turnover policy has amended and presented this evening. Seconded by Clerk Nuzzolo. Call for the Vote: Four-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

2. Discussion on Fiscal Year 2024 Budget, Fiscal Year 2025 Budget, Capital Plan, and Annual Town Meeting Warrant articles; Consent Calendar; Votes may be taken

Town Manager Lemieux stated that the Finance Committee met on Thursday and voted to remove Article 4. The prior budget adjustment article was finalized at \$239,573.73 coming out of reserve fund.

3. Status update on Capital Plan Projects from FY24 and prior

Town Manager Lemieux stated that most of the remaining projects have been completed and closed out. Some of the funding sources are going into FY25 Capital Plan. The kitchen remodel at the Senior Center has not been completed. The Chimney repair old article has been put aside for the Town Hall building envelope project under a different Capital Plan. Town Hall is currently at the bid specification phase.

Vice Chair Franco asked if the 6-wheel dump truck was received in March. Town Manager Lemieux stated it has been pushed to June.

4. Discuss PTO request for Experience Award

Vice Chair Franco stated that they briefly discussed the request last meeting and he didn't know if there were any further ideas that anyone would like to offer.

Clerk Nuzzolo stated he thought about it a little more and suggested a "select board member for a day" where there would be some type of award for public service like volunteering or student government. They could give the awards out to maybe 5 students and create plaques and have them come in and speak to the work they did to earn the award. Clerk Nuzzolo stated he doesn't think receiving a tour should be the award as it's a public building. Clerk Nuzzolo suggested having a class-based tour not associated with an award.

Member Alonzo stated he likes the idea and he also like's Town Manager Lemieux's 'Key to the Town' idea.

CURRENT BUSINESS

1. Review Disposal of Surplus Property Policy

Town Manager Lemieux stated they are looking at the second draft. They are require by Mass General Law to have a policy for any surplus items less than \$10,000. Anything higher than that they will need to go through the advertisement procurement process. Town Manager Lemieux stated that this second draft follows what we have been doing with municibid, the public auction site. It has worked well, it's easy to use. It also addresses if there are no bids how the items can be disposed of.

2. Minutes/Warrants/Action Items

Minutes – There were no Minutes tonight.

Warrants – There were no Warrants tonight.

Action Items - Vice Chair Franco stated they need to discuss the timeline for the Town Manager evaluation and Vice Chair Franco stated that he is off the Board in 2 ½ weeks. Town Manager Lemieux stated they usually start talking about the timeline in late March, early April and that her contract states to start the process by mid-April and complete by the election, unless agreed upon otherwise. Member Alonzo stated that he doesn't want to only have 4 members completing the evaluation because they lose Vice Chair Franco so he thinks they need to get the forms out. Vice Chair Franco stated that he agrees and that they need to be aggressive about it. Member Alonzo stated the whole process typically takes a month.

3. Committee Reports

Member Emkey stated the School Committee meetings tomorrow.

Member Alonzo stated that they had a request from the finance committee about the financial impact of the senior tax relief so they need to know how many people are partaking in that relief. They need this information from the tax assessor.

UPCOMING MEETING/EVENTS SCHEDULE

May 4th (Annual Town Meeting), May 7th, May 14th, May 21st

PUBLIC COMMENT

Town Manager - Town Manager Lemieux stated that she does not have any public comment and there were no public comments in person or on zoom

Public– No public comment.

Board - Member Alonzo stated he encourages people to come to town meeting and take advantage of the opportunity.

Vice Chair Franco stated that he agrees and thinks that people on both sides of the issue should come and engage. It's a very important decision to be made, it's a big issue.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Alonzo moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:26pm. Seconded by Clerk Nuzzolo.

Call for the Vote: 4-aye. The motion passed (4-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Leanna Harris
Minute Clerk

These Minutes were reviewed and approved by the Select Board on:
Tuesday June 17, 2025

Chair Nuzzolo made the Motion to Approve the minutes from April 30, 2024. Seconded by Vice-Chair Moore. Call for the vote: Four-aye. One-abstain (McLeod). Motion passed (4-0-1).