

Town of Lunenburg
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, 17 Main Street and via Zoom
Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Members Present: Caesar Nuzzolo, Michael-Ray Jeffreys, Amanda Moore, Tom Alonzo

Members Absent: Renee Emkey

Also Present: Jennifer Warren-Dyment, Town Manager

Public Comment Participants are listed in the minutes

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Caesar Nuzzolo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Nuzzolo 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.

BOARD COMMENTS

All members present welcomed the new Town Manager to Lunenburg.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Warren-Dyment read a commendation to Interim Chief Thibodeau and Animal Control Officer Kathleen Comeau which recognized them both for handling a challenging dog welfare case in December. The dog was transported to Angel Memorial in Boston by both Chief Thibodeau and ACO Comeau in the middle of the night and both were recognized for going above and beyond. Board members joined in thanking Chief Thibodeau and ACO Comeau for their efforts not only in this particular case, but over the years.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM OTHER BOARDS

None

SCHEDULED MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

- **7:05 PM Tollbooth application Re: Boys and Girls Club for May 10, 2025 – 10AM-2PM (Town Center)**

Chair Nuzzolo corrected that they are no longer called the “Boys and Girls Club” and now they are referred to as “The Club”. Andrew Woods of The Club approached the

Board and stated the reason they do tollbooths is to support their summer scholarships and that last year they awarded \$15,000.

Member Alonzo moved to approve the tollbooth request from the Lunenburg Teen Center for Saturday May 10, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Town Center and approve the rain date of May 17, 2025 at the same time and location. Member Moore seconded the motion. Call for vote: Four- Yes. Motion passed (4-0-0).

- **7:10 PM Interview with Peter Stella for Conservation Commission; term to expire June 2025**

Peter Stella approached the Board and stated he has lived in Town for his whole life and his interest in the Conservation Commission has to do with the preservation of open space. He stated he is familiar with the Wetlands Protection Act and spoke to his experience as an electrician. He stated he has some familiarity with the work of the Conservation Commission. Member Alonzo asked Mr. Stella if his property abuts any Conservation property. He responded that he does not. He spoke to his willingness to learn the role.

Member Alonzo moved to approve Peter Stella to the Conservation Commission with term to expire the last day of June 2025. Member Moore seconded the motion. Call for vote: Four- Yes. Motion passed (4-0-0).

- **7:15 PM Joint Meeting and Discussion with Municipal Building Design Committee and Taylor & Burns**

**A quorum of the Municipal Building Design Committee (MBDC) was not present at the outset of the meeting and the MBDC did not immediately call its meeting to order.*

The design team approached and were introduced. Present were Robert Taylor of Taylor & Burns; Dominic Kelly of Simpson Gumpertz & Heger; Steven Lotter of Taylor & Burns; Marly Lynch of Taylor & Burns; Paul Rosenstrauch of Simpson Gumpertz & Heger; and Bill Scanlon of BLW Engineers.

The team presented a slideshow to the Board which outlined the project. They began by going over the Site Plan. The Plan was of the Lunenburg Village and then the intersection of Massachusetts and Lancaster Avenues. The proposed Town Hall addition is on the west side of the Ritter Memorial Building. There will also be parking south along School Street which will accommodate eighty cars and be covered with photovoltaic panels. Ninety-two parking spaces will be added to the center of Lunenburg. Mr. Taylor stated they did study an alternative location for the new Town Hall which would have been on the east side of the Ritter Building. However there are a number of reasons that this plan does not work due to insufficient site area and that it would be very crowded, walking distance would be doubled, the 1965 Ritter addition would need to be torn down, and the 1909 Ritter building is inaccessible.

Mr. Kelly then went over the new proposed Town Hall floor plan and the various Town Hall and School functions. Ms. Lynch presented on the exterior plans and highlighted the wrap-around porch. Mr. Taylor showed various exterior views and showed the architectural features such as the colonnades and the New England style of the design. He showed the depiction of the courtyard that will be created and the terrace that will be placed in front of the Ritter Building where there were once stairs. Ms. Lynch described the interior of the new Town Hall and the main entry of the Ritter addition that will be accessible. Mr. Taylor discussed the accessibility of the entrance and that the team tried to achieve universal design. A sloped walkway was chosen over a ramp.

Mr. Lotter discussed the current Town Hall's redevelopment to a Meeting House and described the interior plans. There will be different sizes of conference rooms and a large meeting room on the second floor. The front of the building will be re-graded.

MBDC Chair, Mr. Jeffreys, called the meeting of the MBDC to order at 7:47 p.m. Present were Tom Gray, Brian Lehtinen, Greg Roy, and Mr. Jeffreys. They were also joined by Tony Sculimbrene of the Architectural Preservation District Commission.

Mr. Rosenstrauch then spoke to the structural renovations for this project. He discussed the first floor leveling, column protection, accessibility, removal of walls, and attic repairs in the Meeting House. He then spoke to the structural renovations at the Ritter Building which involve wall removal and attic protection. He then discussed the structural elements of the new Town Hall.

Mr. Scanlon spoke to the recommendation of a new fire protection system, the installation of heat pumps, and new electrical service.

Mr. Taylor went over the cost estimate of the project. He stated their estimates typically land in the middle of the bid submissions. He stated trade costs for the Meeting House would be \$2.6M, for the Ritter Memorial Building would be \$2M, Town Hall would be near \$7M, and Site Work would be \$1.7M with total trade costs being a little more than \$13M. On top of trade costs will be contingencies at 12% and 3% for escalation (assuming construction would begin within about a year). This brings the project to about \$15.3M. General contractors, insurance and overhead brings it to about \$17.8M. In addition, the Town will have to hire an Owner Project Manager which adds an additional 15 to 20%, bring the total project cost to somewhere between \$21M and \$22.3M. There would also be the project alternates of the photovoltaic canopy, the basement slab, and 21 EV chargers. However, the code requires that you put in the conduit to support the charger infrastructure, but that you do not need to install the chargers.

Member Alonzo asked about the squeaking on the second floor. The team responded that they would look at the squeaking. Mr. Alonzo spoke to the shape of the new Town Hall addition. Mr. Taylor responded that the building shape for symmetry, inside square footage, and is more interesting. Mr. Alonzo commented on the limited use lifts in both the Meeting House and Ritter and made the suggestion that an elevator should be

considered. Mr. Taylor responded that the lift has a small footprint and does not require a pit. He stated an elevator would cost about \$250,000 in each building. Mr. Alonzo expressed his concerns about installing heat pumps in consideration of the high Unitil rates. Mr. Scanlon stated the team can look into the operating cost estimates of the heat pumps.

Member Moore asked the team to speak more to the PACC space. Mr. Taylor responded that the needs of PACC could be accommodated economically in the basement. Ms. Moore asked if there has been any public safety recommendations made by either Chief. Vice-Chair Jeffreys responded that the team considered, and rejected, making the building an emergency shelter. He went on to say that building safety would be considered further in future stages of the project. He stated he has received a lot of feedback from staff which they have considered and some have been incorporated.

Vice-Chair Jeffreys informed the Board that during this process they learned there is a time capsule in the wall area of the Ritter Building.

Chair Nuzzolo stated he had been following the progress of the Committee and was impressed with the design team and the way they incorporated feedback. He stated he was glad to see all the additional parking. He agreed with the location for the new Town Hall. He spoke to the features of the design that he liked.

Vice-Chair Jeffreys spoke to the need for the Departments to have better record storage procedures. He stated that the Town should not pay a premium for the storage of records. He spoke to the square footage of the various office spaces and the areas for future community and departmental growth. Member Alonzo expressed his thought that more conference rooms would be needed in the Town Hall and for the Superintendent. He did not think people would want to walk across the street in the weather to use a meeting room.

Ms. Warren-Dymment thanked the MBDC and design team and looks forward to the project's progress. Vice-Chair Jeffreys also thanked the MBDC for their work on this task.

The Municipal Building Design Committee adjourned their meeting at 8:45 p.m.

APPOINTMENTS, RATIFICATIONS, AND RESIGNATIONS

Ratification of the Town Manager's Appointment for Videographer for Public Access Cable (Lili Marble): Ms. Warren-Dymment spoke to Ms. Marble's education and experiences and welcomed her to the team. **Member Alonzo moved to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of the videographer for Public Access Cable, Lili Marble. Member Moore seconded the motion. Call for vote: Three- Yes. Motion passed (3-0-0) (Vice Chair Jeffreys had temporarily exited the room).**

Member Alonzo circled back to the discussion on the Municipal Building Design proposal. He stated that he only asked questions relative to the design and structural elements of the project, but wanted to elicit direct feedback from Town and School staff on the project. Vice-Chair Jeffreys stated the MBDC will need to discuss next steps and educate the public. If approved at Town Meeting, he stated a lot more details will come out in the construction document phase. He stated he would work with the Town Manager to come up with the funding estimate. He expressed that a lot of time and money was wasted on the TC Passios design. He stated between now and Town Meeting, no more money should be spent on design and they now need to educate voters.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Ms. Warren-Dyment stated she spent her first day getting a download from Interim Town Manager Carter Terenzini. She provided a project update on the Library Teen Room expansion, the Town Hall roof and chimney restoration project, and the contract award for the Ritter roof and gutter repair. She stated both projects at the DPW had been completed. Ms. Warren-Dyment relayed the current position vacancies and stated the Board has received many volunteer applications which are now being disseminated to the various Boards for their review.

OLD BUSINESS

Action Re: Sell or Hold 55 (*sic) Carr Avenue: **The agenda listed the address as 55 Carr Avenue. The correct property address is 56 Carr Avenue.* Member Alonzo asked to find out if the Town had filed for foreclosure on this property. Vice-Chair Jeffreys expressed he was in favor of holding the property based on the location of the property and would like to see it remain as green space. Mr. Alonzo asked the Town Manager to find out if there was a minimum time period the Town would need to hold the property.

Review Draft of Cannabis Control Commission Host Community Agreement for Bliss Cannabis: Attorney Valerio Romano was present on behalf of Bliss Cannabis. Ms. Warren-Dyment explained that the regulations had changed in regard to how communities could assess impact fees. She stated this new Host Community Agreement largely aligned with the Cannabis Control Commissions' model agreement. She stated Town Counsel had reviewed the Agreement. Vice-Chair Jeffreys spoke to his concerns with the companies' diversity plan. He stated that he does not agree with quotas. Attorney Romano stated the Board can take their time to review the Agreement and they can apply for another extension with the Cannabis Control Commission. Attorney Romano stated the diversity plan is required by the Commission. The Board tabled the matter to February 18, 2025.

Review and Discuss Draft Annual Climate Survey Policy: Members requested the Board be provided with a redline of the policy and tabled this matter to a future meeting.

Discussion on Select Board and Town Manager Goal-Setting Process: The Chair passed over this item.

CURRENT BUSINESS

Review ARPA Press Release: The Chair passed over this item.

Review and Discussion on Budget Task Force Recommendations: The Board discussed the various recommendations of the Budget Task Force (BTF). Members wanted to discuss the recommendation of a financial audit at a future meeting when Member Emkey could be present as she was a member of the BTF. The Board discussed the Community Preservation Act (CPA) recommendation and that passage of the CPA would need to be done at next year's Town Meeting as the Board did not have enough time year. The Board discussed the recommendation of Departments to pursue Green Communities grants before coming forward with capital projects that can be funded under Green Communities. Vice-Chair Jeffreys spoke to the merits of the recommendation of installing solar panels over the capped landfill. Member Alonzo cautioned against breaching the landfill cap, but was not against exploring the recommendation. Mr. Jeffreys stated the MBDC would be talking about the Brooks House. Ms. Warren-Dyment said that she will be looking at the Solid Waste and recycling recommendation of the BTF. The Board then discussed the list of roads that needed to be added to the Chapter 90 list. The Board discussed the recommendation of adding a high deductible plan. The Board asked the Town Manager to look into streamlining the purchase order and payroll systems and consolidation of the chart of accounts. The Board discussed creating a regular schedule for the review of fees. The Board discussed their opposition changing the Charter to no longer require the mailing of Town Meeting warrants. Members discussed the viability of consolidation Town and School functions, including grounds crews. The Board discussed the need to consider the consolidation of the IT functions and Human Resources functions.

Discussion on FY2025 Budget, FY2026 Budget, Capital Plan, and Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Member Alonzo stated there was a Capital Planning Committee (CPC) meeting last Wednesday where Mr. Terenzini proposed some changes to what the CPC had decided in their prioritization. The two major items were repairs at Town Hall and the Ritter Building. He discussed that there should be a plan for the capital program in the case where the MBDC project is approved at Town Meeting and in the case where the project is not approved at Town Meeting. Ms. Warren-Dyment stated she would be reaching out to all Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Departments to ensure not warrant article submissions had been missed.

MINUTES/WARRANTS/ACTION ITEMS

Regular Session Minutes for November 13, 2024; January 21, 2025; January 27, 2025; January 28, 2025: Mr. Alonzo stated the meeting minutes of January 28th should be corrected to say "39 Cortland Circle". **Member Alonzo moved to approve the minutes of January 21st, January 27th, and January 28th of 2025 and November 13, 2024 as amended. Member Moore seconded the motion. Call for vote: Four- Yes. Motion passed (4-0-0).**

Member Alonzo moved to approve the accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$1,470.768.60. Member Moore recused herself. Vice-Chair Jeffreys seconded the motion. Call for vote: Three- Yes. One-Abstain (Moore) Motion passed (3-0-1).

Chair Nuzzolo stated that he believes the Board action items can be tracked using a shared spreadsheet. He also stated he believed Board needed a long-term ongoing action item of cleaning up their drive. Member Alonzo requested that if a topic is discussed at more than one meeting, that the documents get placed in both meeting folders. Member Alonzo stated he wanted documents relied upon in the meetings should be made more available to the public. Member Moore suggested providing meeting packets directly online. Chair Nuzzolo stated Town Manager Heather Lemieux had done a first pass of creating a Board and Committee handbook. Chair Nuzzolo stated handbooks for various Boards and Committees should be created. He stated that it could be guidelines and references for Boards to utilize.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Finance Committee Appointing Committee:** Member Alonzo reported the Committee has received applications and they have a meeting tentatively scheduled for February 18, 2025.
- **Economic Development Committee:** Member Moore reported the Committee has not met.
- **Master Plan Steering Committee:** Member Moore reported the Board was supposed to meet on the 6th but did not have a quorum. This continues to be an issue for the Committee and she has sent an email to multiple parties to see how to move forward. She stated that the Board has not met in six months. She is concerned with how to move forward.
- **Library Trustees:** Vice-Chair Jeffreys stated the Trustees are concerned about the budget.
- **Superintendent Screening Committee:** Chair Nuzzolo stated the Committee met last night and decided to consolidate the application period for internal and external applicants. The School Committee had a preference to start with internal candidates only. It is a 12 member Board.

UPCOMING MEETING/EVENTS SCHEDULE

Chair Nuzzolo announced the Board is meeting on February 11th and February 18th.

TOWN MANAGER COMMENT

Announced that she is looking forward to getting to know the residents and immerse in the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anthony Sculimbrene of 5 Valley Road stated the discussion of the project for the MBDC was interesting. He stated he stood by his early note that he had shared with the Board. He stated he is not criticizing the project to the point where it will be unsuccessful at Town Meeting. He stated the Town Hall would be the least expensive facility to keep operating and was pleased it would be saved and used as part of the plan. He is concerned about wasted space in the proposal. He expressed his concerns with the security issues.

Glenn Mcleod of 436 Reservoir Road echoed the sentiment of Mr. Sculimbrene. He stated he was glad to hear that PACC was being considered a town department. He wants to hear more about PACC's content creation and see if the studio could be moved elsewhere.

Ana Lockwood of 91 Main Street stated the MBDC presentation was the result of months of work of the group. She stated she agreed with Mr. Beardmore's statement that although it is not a perfect solution it does address the needs of several buildings.

Dave Passios, formerly of Lunenburg, stated he was a member of the TC Passios building design project years ago. He stated the wild card for years has been the School Department. He advised the public to look into the impact of this project on their tax rate.

BOARD COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Jeffreys stated he wanted to respond to several of the public comments. He stated it was always difficult to obtain consensus with so many stakeholders. He stated that in 2014 the Select Board authorized two studies to look at the future of Town Hall. He stated this history is important. He stated when processes like this take time it is hard to keep everyone happy. He corrected the proposed square footage of the buildings. He stated he felt engaging with the School Department has been difficult. He did not agree with the colocation of the ACE program. He stated that the MBDC tried to accommodate multiple needs. He stated the project will only cost more every year it is delayed. Member Alonzo looks forward to the conversation.

Member Alonzo stated he wanted to know what the Board was going to do with the list of questions that was handed to them from a member of the public at a meeting several weeks ago.

ADJOURNMENT

Member Alonzo moved to adjourn. Member Moore seconded the motion. Call for vote: Four- Yes. Motion passed unanimously (4-0-0).

The Board adjourned at 10:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Annie Aubrey,
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

These Minutes were reviewed and approved by the Select Board on:

Tuesday March 11, 2025

Member Emkey made the Motion to Approve the minutes from February 4, 2025.

Seconded by Clerk Moore. Call for the vote: Five-aye. Motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).