

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
Town Hall Council Chambers
Zoom # 884 4489 8744
December 19, 2022, Monday

Present: Arthur Mathews, President
Michael Molisse, Vice President
John Abbott, Councilor
Lisa Belmarsh, Councilor
Pascale Burga, Councilor
Kenneth DiFazio, Councilor (Zoom)
Fred Happel, Councilor
Christopher Heffernan, Councilor
Maureen Kiely, Councilor
Gary MacDougall, Councilor
Greg Shanahan, Councilor

Absent: Lisa Belmarsh, Councilor

Also Present: Kathleen Deree, Town Clerk
Ted Langill, Chief of Staff
Richard McLeod, Town Solicitor
Brian Connolly, Town Auditor
James Malary, Director of Municipal Finance
James McGrath, Town Engineer
Leilani Dalpe, Grant Program Director

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

President Mathews called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Town Clerk Kathleen Deree called the roll, with one councilor absent. President Mathews reported that Councilor Belmarsh had a prior family commitment. Councilor DiFazio was attending in Zoom, and all action will be roll call vote.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Kiely- announced the 5th annual charity hockey game, Fire vs. Police Departments on January 15, 2023, 7:15 PM at the Connell Rink, to benefit the Halpenny Family, who recently lost their father to a rare cancer.

MINUTES

Budget/Management Committee Meeting Minutes of November 21, 2022

Vice President Molisse motioned to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2022 Budget/Management Committee meeting and was seconded by Councilor Kiely.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	YES	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	YES	President Mathews	YES
Councilor Kiely	YES	Councilor Heffernan	YES

Unanimously voted, 10-0.

Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 21, 2022

Vice President Molisse motioned to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2022 Town Council meeting and was seconded by Councilor Kiely.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	YES	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	YES	President Mathews	YES
Councilor Kiely	YES	Councilor Heffernan	YES

Unanimously voted, 10-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

22 136-National Grid/Verizon Utility Petition- 6 Fogg Road

NGRID/Verizon petition requests the Town of Weymouth authorize NGRID and Verizon New England, Inc permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Fogg Rd. – National Grid to install (1) JO pole 1-50 and relocate (1) JO pole 1 on Fogg Rd. beginning at a point approximately 45’ SW of the centerline of the intersection of Columbian St. and continuing approximately 135’ in a SW direction to alleviate aerial trespass issues.

Vice President Molisse motioned to open the public hearing on measure 22 136 and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Abutters were notified on December 9, 2022

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	YES	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	YES	President Mathews	YES

Councilor Kiely YES Councilor Heffernan YES

Unanimously voted, 10-0.

President Mathews suggested continuing the public hearing to January 17, 2023. National Grid informed the Council that it's in the process of redesigning the plan. Comments from DPW were forwarded to NGRID. He invited public comment. Mr. McGrath reported that this is a part of a large project in Columbian Square, that includes placing wires underground for aesthetics. This plan adds to the number of overhead wires; DPW would like NGRID to investigate whether to move them underground, or go through an easement on Fogg Road.

President Mathews asked if there were any other questions or comments from the public, to which there was there was no response.

Vice President Molisse motioned to continue the public hearing on measure 22 136 to January 17, 2023, and was seconded by Councilor Kiely.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	YES	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	YES	President Mathews	YES
Councilor Kiely	YES	Councilor Heffernan	YES

Unanimously voted, 10-0.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR, TOWN OFFICERS AND TOWN BOARDS

22 140-Reserve Fund Transfer- Insurance Endorsements

On behalf of Mayor Hedlund, James Malary requested that the Town of Weymouth transfer the sum of \$115,497 from the FY23 Reserve Fund to line item Insurance Endorsements for the purpose of paying added insurance endorsements.

Vice President Molisse motioned to refer the measure to the Budget/Management Committee and was seconded by Councilor Kiely.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	YES	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	YES	President Mathews	YES
Councilor Kiely	YES	Councilor Heffernan	YES

Unanimously voted, 10-0.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Budget/Management Committee-Chair Michael Molisse

Vice President Molisse reported that the Budget/Management Committee met on December 19, 2022 to deliberate the following:

22 137-Reserve Fund Transfer- Grant Match

This measure was referred to the committee on December 5, 2022. The committee met on December 19, 2022 and voted to forward to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action. Leilani Dalpe and Jim McGrath provided a brief update to the Council. This is a 25% match that the town is required to provide.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse motioned to approve measure 22 137; that the Town of Weymouth transfer the sum of \$62,875 from the FY23 Reserve Fund to Grant Fund (grant match revenue) for the purpose of matching the \$183,375 Dam and Seawall State Grant for Lane Beach/River Street.

Councilor Burga seconded the motion. Councilor Burga noted this will be done in conjunction with the Fort Point Sea Wall. Mr. McGrath responded that the project involves raising the sea wall 2 feet for Lane and Fort Point. This funding will enable plans to be drawn and bid documents prepared to go out to bid. 2023 will be spent performing the prep work; it will go out to bid in 2024 and anticipated to be completed in the summer of 2024. It has the ability for another 2 feet to be added in the future if sea levels rise. Councilor Burga added that she is sure the residents appreciate it. Councilor Kiely pointed out that the beaches are being used more and more each year, and to get funding of this capacity is substantial. Ms. Dalpe agreed and responded that this is the time to strike – there are abundant, unprecedented, public monies available.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	YES	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	YES	President Mathews	YES
Councilor Kiely	YES	Councilor Heffernan	YES

Unanimously voted, 10-0.

22 139-Appointment to the Board of Registrars-Marie Stoeckel

This measure was referred to the committee on December 5, 2022. Chair Molisse reported that the committee met on December 19, 2022 and voted to forward to the full Town Council with a recommendation for unfavorable action on the appointment of Marie Stoeckel of 63 Alroy Road to Board of Registrars for a term to expire on June 30, 2025. This fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Lisa Knoppe-Reed.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse motioned for unfavorable action on measure 22 139; Councilor Kiely seconded the motion.

President Mathews pointed out that the applicant had asked him prior to the meeting to be afforded the chance to speak. He asked Vice President Molisse if he wished to withdraw his motion.

Vice President Molisse responded that the applicant had been allowed to speak when the appointment measure was put before the Council the first time. Having an applicant denied and receiving the same request has not happened before. It was discussed at the committee meeting, and no new information was presented.

President Mathews allowed Ms. Stoeckel some leeway and allowed her to speak. She stated that the last time she was before the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse said he was against the appointment because of a procedural issue.

President Mathews responded that this was her opportunity to state why she should be appointed.

Ms. Stoeckel responded that members of town committees are elected and represent the constituents. Per MGL, they are elected every four years at the Presidential Primary. It is one of many reasons she wants to be confirmed as a Republican registrar. They have the authority, responsibility and right to a number of duties to safeguard their party and party's candidates under election laws. She quoted MGL Chapter 51, §15 which gives the authority to the two major political parties to provide its own members for appointment to oversee the conduct of election. Under that, the Republican Town Committee provides three vetted candidates to the Mayor. The Republican Town Committee did its job and submitted one name who was denied, then she was also denied; which leaves one candidate. She stated the Council must pick one of the candidates.

President Mathews responded that he cannot take legal advice from a constituent and he would defer to the Solicitor as to what they can and cannot do. Ms. Stoeckel responded that the Solicitor is present, and he knows that law. Solicitor McLeod added that he is familiar with it, and has responded to the Republican Town Committee concerning the selection process.

Ms. Stoeckel responded that she believes, as a non-lawyer that the Council will end up choosing one of the three nominees. The other two have more experience with the law, but she is the most diplomatic, and she strongly urged they vote in her favor.

Councilor Burga thanked Ms. Stoeckel for coming forward, but she believes the viewers deserve an explanation. This is unprecedented-this is the first time she recalls an appointment coming forward, be denied by the Council, and then resubmitted. The fact that the measure was submitted without a resume did not factor into her decision. The resume was impressive. She received several comments in favor of the appointment and several unfavorable ones, which she will not air publicly. She thanked Ms. Stoeckel for her service on other town committees, but she will not be supporting this measure. The Town Council was not involved in the vetting process

for the list that was submitted. The Council takes the recommendation at face value. There are many factors for consideration, as in any position.

Councilor Abbott stated that he respects the concerns of the Budget/Management Committee and does not believe the Council exceeds its authority to confirm or deny appointments that come before it. He had discussions with Ms. Stoeckel and is prepared to grant leeway to individual town committees of individual parties. He was prepared to vote favorably on the appointment, but it does not appear to be moving in that direction. He thanked Ms. Stoeckel for coming forward and said he hoped she would continue to stay involved in the town.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	NO	Councilor MacDougall	YES
Councilor Burga	YES	Councilor Shanahan	YES
Councilor DiFazio	YES	Vice President Molisse	YES
Councilor Happel	NO	President Mathews	YES
Councilor Kiely	YES	Councilor Heffernan	YES

Vote carried; the appointment was denied by a vote of 8-2.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Council is Tuesday, January 3, 2023. At 8:00 PM; there being no further business, Vice President Molisse motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Kiely.

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Abbott	Councilor Kiely
Councilor Belmarsh	Councilor MacDougall
Councilor Burga	Councilor Shanahan
Councilor DiFazio	Vice President Molisse
Councilor Happel	President Mathews
Councilor Heffernan	

Unanimously voted 10-0.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Arthur Mathews as President of the Town Council
Voted unanimously on 17 January 2023