

**Town Council Minutes
Town Hall Council Chambers
December 4, 2023**

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

Also Present: Kathleen Deree, Town Clerk
Richard McLeod, Town Solicitor

Recording Secretary: Janet P. Murray

President Mathews called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Town Clerk Kathleen Deree called the roll. Councilor Mathews stated that Councilor DiFazio is joining via Zoom.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Molisse thanked the Weymouth Garden Club for their decoration efforts; they have done a great job.

MINUTES

Budget/Management Committee Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023

Vice President Molisse motioned for approval of the Budget/Management Committee Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023. Motion seconded by Councilor Kiely and passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes	Michael Molisse - Yes	John Abbot - Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes	Pascale Burga - Yes	Fred Happel - Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes	Gary MacDougall – Yes	Greg Shanahan – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes	Kenneth DiFazio - Yes	

Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023

Vice President Molisse motioned for approval of the Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2023. Motion seconded by Councilor Kiely and passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes	Michael Molisse - Yes	John Abbot - Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes	Pascale Burga - Yes	Fred Happel - Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes	Gary MacDougall – Yes	Greg Shanahan – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes	Kenneth DiFazio - Yes	

Budget/Management Committee Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2023

Vice President Molisse motioned for approval of the Budget/Management Committee Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2023. Motion seconded by Councilor Kiely and passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes	Michael Molisse - Yes	John Abbot - Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes	Pascale Burga - Yes	Fred Happel - Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes	Gary MacDougall – Yes	Greg Shanahan – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes	Kenneth DiFazio - Yes	

Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2023

Vice President Molisse motioned for approval of the Town Council Meeting Minutes of November 20, 2023. Motion seconded by Councilor Kiely and passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes	Michael Molisse - Yes	John Abbot - Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes	Pascale Burga - Yes	Fred Happel - Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes	Gary MacDougall – Yes	Greg Shanahan – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes	Kenneth DiFazio - Yes	

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Budget/Management Committee - Chair Michael Molisse

Measure # 23 133 Appointment to the 4th of July Committee – Joshua Murray

Vice President Molisse welcomed Mr. Murray and asked him to explain why he applied for this position.

Mr. Murray stated that he is a life-long resident of Weymouth and has participated in the 4th of July events. He wanted to give back to the town.

Vice President Molisse stated that this measure was referred to the committee on 11/13/2023. The committee met 12/4/2023 and voted favorable action.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse recommended favorable action on **Measure #23 133** to the full Town Council. He hereby submitted, on behalf of Mayor Robert Hedlund, in accordance with section 2-10 of the town charter, the name of Joshua Murray, for appointment to the 4th of July Committee. This is filling a 3 year term due to expire 6/30/2026. Councilor Kiely seconded. Motion passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes	Michael Molisse - Yes	John Abbot - Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes	Pascale Burga - Yes	Fred Happel - Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes	Gary MacDougall – Yes	Greg Shanahan – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes	Kenneth DiFazio - Yes	

Measure # 23 134 Appointment to the Historical Commission – Zachary Gerg

Vice President Molisse welcomed Mr. Gerg and asked him to explain why he applied for this position.

Mr. Gerg stated that he has lived in Weymouth for the past 10 years and he and his family have come to see Weymouth as their own. He would like to help maintain Weymouth’s rich history.

Vice President Molisse stated that this measure was referred to the committee on 11/13/2023. The committee met 12/4/2023 and voted favorable action.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse recommended favorable action on **Measure #23 134** to the full Town Council. He hereby submitted, on behalf of Mayor Robert Hedlund, in accordance with section 2-10 of the town charter, the name of Zachary Gerg, for appointment to the Historical Commission. This is filling a three year term due to expire 6/30/2026. Councilor Kiely seconded. Motion passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes	Michael Molisse - Yes	John Abbot - Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes	Pascale Burga - Yes	Fred Happel - Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes	Gary MacDougall – Yes	Greg Shanahan – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes	Kenneth DiFazio - Yes	

Ordinance Committee – Councilor Gary MacDougall

23 125 - Proposed Change to Town of Weymouth Zoning Ordinance Extending Village Overlay District

Vice Chair MacDougall reported out and stated that this measure was received in the clerk's office on October 3, 2023. The Ordinance Committee initially met for this measure on November 1, 2023, and the public hearing was held on November 13, 2023. The Planning Board met and

held a public hearing on November 14, 2023, and sent their recommendation to the Ordinance Committee on November 16, 2023. The ordinance committee met again on November 27, 2023.

Chair MacDougall read two memos into the record. The first one is the actual measure proposed changes and the second is a letter/memo from the Planning Board. He then read the committee meeting notes that were compiled as of November 27, 2023. He added that the Ordinance Committee met a final time on November 27, 2023, and voted unanimous favorable action 5-0 to approve the zoning change of measure 23 125.

Chair MacDougall stated that he is recommending favorable action on 23 125. He reminded the Council that the zoning change requires a two-thirds vote. Councilor Molisse seconded the motion.

President Mathews stated that before he opens it up to the Council for discussion, that after the Ordinance Committee met and voted favorable action, he received a communication from the Mayor that was sent to all Councilors, requesting that it be read into the record. He then read the letter into the record.

Councilor MacDougall stated that the memo came in well after the public comment period was closed. He noted that it is unfortunate that they were not able to have this information for discussion before the Ordinance committee voted. He referenced Rule 26 which states that once the public hearing is closed, no further communication or public testimony can be accepted. He continued that the Mayor attended some of these meetings and had the opportunity to speak about his concerns. He continued that he still does not think that the concerns outweigh the value that this change is going to do. He stated that he supports this measure.

Councilor Burga asked for clarification that this property was originally part of the Village Center Overlay District (VCOD) and at that time, the town took the position that it would be okay to include this type of building in the VCOD. She questioned if it was the Council's recommendation to pull it out of the VCOD.

Councilor Mathews stated that the decision was made in collaboration with the Planning Department, the Planning Board, and the administration.

Councilor Burga continued that it seems like the Council has changed their position as well as the Mayor's Office and Planning Board. She added that she would like to respect the desires of and consideration for Councilors of their district.

Councilor Kiely stated that she lives on Vine Street, so this project definitely impacts her and her property values. She continued that she has heard and respects Mr. Luongo's concerns as well as the Mayor's opinions. She noted that this is just the beginning of the process and even if this is allowed, there are still steps to be taken. She stated that she respectfully disagrees with those that do not think it should move forward.

The motion to approve the zoning change passed unanimously 11-0. Roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes

Michael Molisse - Yes
Pascale Burga - Yes
Gary MacDougall – Yes
Kenneth DiFazio - Yes

John Abbot - Yes
Fred Happel - Yes
Greg Shanahan – Yes

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:05 p.m., there being no further business, Vice President Molisse motioned to adjourn the meeting, and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Motion passed UNANIMOUSLY on a roll call vote as follows:

Arthur Mathews – Yes
Lisa Belmarsh – Yes
Maureen Kiely – Yes
Christopher Heffernan – Yes

Michael Molisse - Yes
Pascale Burga - Yes
Gary MacDougall – Yes
Kenneth DiFazio - Yes

John Abbot - Yes
Fred Happel - Yes
Greg Shanahan – Yes

Respectfully Submitted by Janet P. Murray as Recording Secretary

Approved by President Arthur Mathews
Voted unanimously on 16 January 2024