



Town of Abington

Board of Selectmen

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Minutes
Select Board
July 10, 2025
Cotter Room
10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Roger Woods, Chairman, Suzanne Djusberg, Kevin Donovan, Paul Bunker, Scott Lambiase, Town Manager

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Items:

1. Approval of June 23, 2025, Minutes – motion by Ms. Djusberg to approve, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.
2. Discussion and Vote to Call Special Town Election to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Selectman Amanda Zompetti pursuant to Town Charter – motion by Mr. Donovan to hold the election on Saturday, November 15, 2025, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Beaver Brook Elementary School, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous. Deadline for submissions to the Town Clerk is September 29th.
3. Consider year end transfers in accordance with MGL chapter 44, section 33B – The list is attached. One department had budget issues. They have met with the department head and staff, finance team and Town Manager. Mechanisms are in place now that will abate any potential issues in the current fiscal year. Motion by Mr. Donovan to approve year end transfers as delineated that are allowed under chapter 44 sec 33B, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

They will have the department heads give the Board updates on the September, November and January agendas. Mr. Donovan would like a report from the Treasurer on how the reconciliations are going. He wants to have the accounts reconciled and be ready to submit the free cash figure for certification. Motion by Mr. Donovan for a report from the Treasurer for the September 8th meeting on how we are doing on the reconciliation process. He also wants to see how the trend is going for any particular department; if it is above where it should be for that quarter, he would like the department head to explain why. He is concerned about overtime and anything else trending beyond norm to get a handle on it. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

4. Consider and Vote on Policy Directive relating to Town Hall Staffing in FY 26 – The Town Manager was instructed back in March to look into how to restructure Town Hall in terms of services we provide. They had meeting with the Financial Director as to where we stand now

with level funding state aid. If the state doesn't come up with additional aid, we will be in a precarious position. Last year we had free cash certified at \$4M; we won't be close to that this year. For FY27 we will be looking at a deficit of \$7.7M. They will present a budget with the monies the town has, then subject to an override on the particular departments and have a special town election a week or two after town meeting by department so the people will have an opportunity to vote by department on how they want to spend their money. The people can decide what services they can afford. He is suggesting a menu proposal. They will look at level service, level funded, and what the final figures are until the governor files her budget in January.

Every registered voter in Abington has the right to vote on this at town meeting. If a special election is called, you have the opportunity to go and vote.

Mr. Donovan - As a follow-up to the Select Board's direction issued on March 10, 2025, the Town Manager was instructed to evaluate and recommend a restructuring of departments under his control at Town Hall. This evaluation was to be completed by the first Select Board meeting in September 2025.

The goal of this restructuring was to identify any positions or work currently funded by the Town's general operating budget for FY2026 that were previously supported by:

- The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds (FY2020, FY2021, or later) and are now being absorbed into the Town of Abington's FY26 general operating budget.

As of July 1, 2025, the FY2026 budget is in effect. Given today's date of July 10, 2025, it is imperative to begin implementing the initial phases of the restructuring process to eliminate this absorption, including any services or positions.

Mr. Donovan therefore makes the motion that it is the policy of the Select Board that:

- The Town Manager is authorized and directed to begin appropriate bargaining and notifications to implement this directive including any cuts to staffing or level of services.
- The Town Manager is authorized and directed to work with Labor Counsel to comply with any and all labor and employment obligations regarding this directive.
- Further, the Town Manager shall report to and identify within 10 days of this order to the Chairman of the Select Board as to the positions identified and plans set forth to effect the same.

Ms. Djusberg seconded the motion, unanimous. Mr. Woods agreed with the menu approach.

5. Appoint Select Board liaison to Affordable Housing Trust and Plymouth County Advisory Board – Motion by Mr. Woods to appoint Mr. Bunker to the two boards as liaison, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous. Mr. Bunker agreed.
6. Request for appointment to Veterans Memorial Trustees – Christopher Belfiore and Ali Atkins. Motion by Mr. Donovan to appoint Mr. Belfiore and Ms. Atkins, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.
7. Update on sale of North and Center Schools – Town Manager gave an update. We didn't receive any bids. We need a better plan. Mr. Woods – there are plans for 16 units. Look to town counsel and have them go to Zoning, Conservation, Water, Sewer, and get those two plans approved and put them out to bid again which would make them more attractive. They have put them out to bid three times with no bids. They would put it out at through an RFP with approvals other than

Planning.

Pam Howe – would it include the Affordable Housing Trust? Mr. Woods – they wouldn't have that restriction; they are now at the 10% component with the state. This would be market rate. The goal would be to get the tax dollars; it is the only way we are going to get growth. Mr. Lambiasi – affordability was a big reason we didn't get any interest. The designs are all one bedroom so it's very desirable for senior living or affordable living. The person who buys it could go back to the ZBA to modify it to add more units, which would require them to go through Ch. 40B.

Ms. Howe – asked if the grounds around the Center School could be cleaned up. Mr. Woods – they don't want anyone up there. The buildings are a huge liability to the town. Ms. Djusberg agreed that it's not a safe area. Ms. Howe just wanted the bushes cut down by the playground.

8. Deputy Police Chief Jeff Postell gave an update on the crossing gates – The lightning strike on Wales Street impacted the MBTA electronics and there was a challenge at all the crossing gates, leaving them down, which caused a significant traffic delay. Police responded, as well as MBTA police and Keolis. They were able to get them working temporarily and an interim plan was implemented, a “stop and protect order” on all the gates, which means the conductor had to get off the train and walk across the commuter crossings with the train. Eventually Keolis was able to get the gates functioning.
9. Introduction of new Firefighter Paramedic Ethan Van Muyden by Fire Chief John Glynn.

They have been named in the Journal of American Medical Association and Journal of Neurological Medicine in a study on their stroke care with the Medical Director in Brockton. They elaborated on the rapid assessment method they used and the ability to make the decisions based on one's age, history, how long the event has been happening, the decision to bypass local hospitals and go directly to Tufts where they have people who specialize there. He sent it to the Department and Justin Silva, their EMS Coordinator. The Abington residents are getting the very best care in the area.

There was a construction accident at 412 Summer Street, the apartment complex. They had to extricate a worker from the fifth floor with the tower truck to a level 1 trauma center in Boston quickly. They used an ultrasound tool they were able to get through a grant as a quick assessment tool to assess internal bleeding.

They asked the Fire Chief in Hingham if he would sign off on a lateral transfer for Ethan Van Muyden, rather than a direct hire, which would speed the process up on the medical aspect and agility test. This hire saves four months of overtime shifts. He is our newest firefighter paramedic from the Hingham Fire Department. Leanne Adams, Town Clerk, swore him in, and his fiancé Arianna pinned him. State Representative Alyson Sullivan-Almeida was unable to attend. Firefighter Muyden thanked his family, friends and the department for their support.

The Select Board will be meeting at 5 p.m. starting September 8th.

Motion by Mr. Donovan to adjourn at 10:33 a.m., seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hurst