



Town of Abington
OFFICE OF
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
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Minutes
September 9, 2024
Cotter Room
6:30 p.m.

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

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silence: A moment of silence was held for **Nancy Nestor**, who worked in the School system; **Joan Murphy**, who was a School Department cafeteria worker; **Joan Polito**, who was a School Department cafeteria worker; **Marylou Morgan**, who was the Building Inspector and Zoning Enforcement Officer; **James Franey**, who was a member and Chairman of the Board of Selectmen; and **John Manning**, who was a Water Commissioner.

Announcements:

- ❖ The Town of Abington will have an anniversary ceremony on 9/11 at 8:30 a.m. in front of the memorial beam in front of the Police Station and invited the residents to attend. Jeff Coombs, a resident of Abington, was on American Airlines Flight 11 that hit the World Trade Center at 8:46 a.m.
- ❖ On September 21st there is a Special Town election at Beaver Brook School to fill the vacancy on the Board of Selectmen. Polls are open from 8 AM to 4 PM. Early voting is available in the Town Clerk's office.
- ❖ The Board of Selectmen has designated September as Suicide Prevention month.
- ❖ The Veterans Office has reported there is still money available under the SAVES program for food and utilities. There is currently \$14,000 remaining of the \$50,000 that was allotted, for a veteran or their widow to apply for \$1,400. If you qualify and you meet the income qualifications, please call the Veterans' office.
- ❖ The Police Chief's swearing in will be tomorrow at the Council on Aging at 7 p.m., and the community is invited to attend.

- ❖ Mr. Donovan introduced our new Police Chief, John Bonney, whose contract was approved in August. Chief Bonney officially started today and is very happy to be joining the Abington Police Department and getting familiar with the Town.

- ❖ Promotion of K9 Harlow to Sergeant. Deputy Chief Postell swore Harlow in for his promotion, a bark was received as acceptance of his oath, and he received his Sergeant's badge. Harlow is certified as a comfort and therapy dog, trained as an explosive operative dog (EOD), and has attended SRO as well as crisis intervention training. Representative Alyson Sullivan Almeida presented a citation from the House of Representatives to Harlow as well.

6:35 p.m. Request for a Commercial Garage License for Coleta Auto Repair Inc., 800 Adams Street, Unit D, Ludiane Santos Coleta, Manager. Inspections were completed. They were reminded that the hours requested – Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m.-noon, are what will be approved, and not to exceed the number of spaces indicated on the application – four for repair, four for customers, total of eight spaces. Motion by Mr. Woods to close the hearing, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

6:40 p.m. Request for a Commercial Garage License for Tire Tech Repair LLC, 21 North Quincy Street, Roberte Dessaps, Manager. The Police Department needs to finish their investigation and report on this matter and requested that the Board continue this until September 23rd. Motion by Mr. Woods to continue the hearing to September 23rd, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

6:45 p.m. Request for an All Alcohol Common Victualer and Entertainment License, Grida Bistro & Lounge, 806 Brockton Avenue #2, Ingrid L. Philemond, Manager. The building is still under construction. The hours requested are Monday-Friday 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturday, 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Sunday, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and they will have to adhere to these hours. The Board had no questions. Motion to close the hearing made by Mr. Woods, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous. Motion by Ms. Djusberg to approve pending final inspections, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

6:55 p.m. Request for Livery License, one vehicle, Mohamed Elzehiry, 693 Summer Street. This would basically be to transport people to and from the airport. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

1. Minutes: Motion by Mr. Woods to approve June 24, 2024, July 8, 2024, and August 13, 2024, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.
2. Requests for appointment: Motion by Mr. Woods to approve Andrew Levrault as Alternate Member on the Zoning Board of Appeals and John Norton as Voting Member on the Conservation Commission, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

6:50 p.m. Request for a new All Alcohol Common Victualer and Entertainment License for Alex Good Taste Restaurant Inc., 1501 Bedford Street, Unit #5, Jimmy Armond, Manager, Alexandra Armond, owner. This request is back to the Board due to faulty abutter notification and outstanding inspections. The abutters have been notified. Before the Fire Department signs off on this, they will need the sprinkler report. He has done the crowd manager training. Motion by Mr. Woods to close the hearing, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

3. Request from Sorelle Bar & Grill for an Entertainment License and a 5K Road Race, Sunday, October 25th. They have worked out the route with the police. It starts at 10 a.m. on October 25th. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve the Entertainment License for inside, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous. Motion by Mr. Woods to approve the road race under the supervision of the Police Chief, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.
4. Status Update: Reconciliation of Accounts. Mr. Donovan has status reports from the Treasurer/Collector that as of June 30th this year there are 80 of 82 accounts that are balanced. He congratulated the Treasurer/Collector and Town Manager for having reconciled the accounts to the close of the fiscal year.
5. MBTA Crossing Gates. Some repairs have been done in the street. There were water leaks that got under the roadway creating problems with underground switch. They replaced all of that, and up until this morning, we haven't had any trouble, but there was a three minute snafu this morning. Michael Rooks, the Chief Railroad Officer has been in contact and following up. He isn't sure if it is related to something similar or unrelated, but as soon as we hear back from him, the Town Manager will let the Board know.
6. Status and possible vote on sale of Center School. The Town Manager has put together a bid document to help select a developer. The advertisement will happen late next week. He will have a site tour and a pre-proposal early October with a deadline of the end of October for a submission and some recommendations hopefully to be brought before the Board. The parameters are to reuse the 1938 building as much as is practicable, creating one-bedroom units making it attractive to seniors as well as down-sizers. At least 25% of the units would be affordable at 80% of the area median income, and we would put in a preference for another 25% at 100% of the AMI. We want to minimize the creation of any additional coverage on

the lot and the developer will only be allowed to use four acres of the existing 13 acres, with the majority of the lot from the back of the property with the woods all the way down to Murphy Field being deed-restricted back to the Town and back to Town control at the time of the closing. The Town Manager hopes to have something to the Board for the November meeting and their decision.

Ron Howe, 149 Walnut Street – questions on the proposals. The Town Manager explained the Town still has the ability to reject any proposal. The goal would be to have someone use as much of the original building and create as little additional footprint as possible. Mr. Howe requested the Board wait until it has a full Board to vote. The Town Manager explained this has already been approved at Town Meeting to do this. It was approved by a previous Board. Motion by Mr. Woods to sell Center School, seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous. Mr. Woods – it is a significant liability to have this building vacant and feels the same way about North School, but we need that location to use as the substitute Highway Department until that new building is built. He wants to go on record as to why he is pushing; he doesn't want something to happen to someone or have a problem for the neighbors.

7. Consider Policy Statement on Return/Damaged Town Property by Former Employees and Town Officials. Mr. Donovan read the policy (attached). It was explained that former Selectman Kevin DiMarzio had not returned a town iPad and office keys, despite repeated attempts from the IT Department and the Town Manager. He has had since May to return these items and has ignored the requests. Selectmen should be treated no differently than any other employee. The Board agreed. He is no longer a town official nor a town resident. Motion to approve the policy made by Mr. Woods, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous. Mr. Donovan is asking the Police Chief to take any and all means necessary to retrieve the town equipment including court action. Neither Mr. Donovan nor Mr. Woods accepted the keys or the iPad.
8. Call Special Town Meeting for November 25, 2024, Abington High School, 6:30 p.m. The warrant is open now and will close on October 18th. Because of South Shore Vocational Technical High School, we have to call a STM to deal with the agreements. The SSVT will be having a special town election in January on the question of whether to approve a new school. The STM will be for the district agreement as to how the apportionment of debt is split up. It won't affect us in setting the tax rate. Motion to approve the STM on November 25th, with the warrant to close on October 18, 2024, seconded by Mr. Bunker, unanimous.

New meeting time is 6 p.m. The Board's meeting schedule: Monday, September 23rd at 6 p.m.; Monday, October 28th, 6 p.m.; November 25th at 5 p.m. at the High School prior to STM, Special Town Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at the High School; Monday, December 9th at 6 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Woods to adjourn at 7:08 p.m., seconded by Ms. Djusberg, unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Hurst

Policy Statement on the Return/Damaged Town Property by former Employees and Town Officials.

It shall be the policy of the Town of Abington that all employees and officials of the town shall return all town property and equipment to the Town immediately upon separation from service or term of office expiring in the case of town elected and appointed officials, but in no event later than the first business day after separation.

If the equipment that is in the possession of said employees and officials is not returned the Town Manager shall make every effort to have the property returned and if there is still a failure to return then any and all legal means shall be implemented so as to protect the property belonging to the people of Abington.

In the event the property is returned, is inspected and in a damaged condition, an invoice for the damage shall forthwith be sent to said employee and or official. Failure to pay the invoice within 30 days shall result in the Town Manager taking any and all legal means to settle the matter in favor of the taxpayers of Abington.