

TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023
Town Hall, 109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.

WINCHENDON TOWN CLERK
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Board of Selectmen Present:

Audrey LaBrie, Chair
Rick Ward, Vice-Chair
Danielle LaPointe
Melissa Blanchard

William McKinney, Interim Town Manager
Debra Dennis, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Barbara Anderson

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Special Town Meeting Warrant-November 13, 2023

6:30 P.M. Chair LaBrie called the meeting to order at 6:30P.M. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair LaBrie asked if anyone would be audio or video recording this meeting tonight to which there was no response heard.

1. **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Selectwoman Blanchard thanked the Historical Society and Park & Recreation for all the events and activities that took place over the weekend.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Michele Barbaro spoke about the Special Town Meeting articles that pertained to using free cash. He said he is concerned we haven't certified free cash so we don't know what we have. He asked to delay these articles until the spring. He said we need to be fiscally conservative. Bill McKinney said these articles were put on the warrant at the request of the Finance Committee. These can wait until the spring.

Michael Barbaro stated he was concerned about Article 8 that is to purchase a new ambulance. The process is we pay off the previous ambulance before we purchase a new one. Fire Chief Tom Smith said there is a two year build time which would place this in 2026 for payment. He said they are looking to order the ambulance with zero dollars down. Chair LaBrie asked if we order it now are we locked into today's price. Chief Smith said yes, it would be 2026 before we would have to pay anything.

3. **NEW BUSINESS:**

3.1 Board Voted Recommendations of Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to approve Article 2. She said we need to pay the prior year bills. No second. Chair LaBrie moved to not approve Article 2 at this time. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward abstained, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to not approve Article 3 at this time. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward abstained, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to not approve Article 4 at this time. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward abstained, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to not approve Article 5 at this time. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward abstained, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward said he is abstaining on these articles because we don't know what free cash is yet.

Chair LaBrie moved to have a no vote on Article 6 at this time. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Chair LaBrie moved to have a no vote on Article 7 at this time. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to recommend Article 8 as presented. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Chair LaBrie said we have to commit to this now. It could be a matter of safety.

Chair LaBrie said these budget line items need to be looked at and adequately be funded. Brian Croteau said he requested more last year that wasn't funded. Selectwoman LaPointe moved to recommend Article 9 as presented. Chair LaBrie seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward abstained, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to recommend Article 10. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward abstained, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie nay.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 11. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 12. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 13. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard abstained, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 14. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe to recommend Article 15. Selectman Ward seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 16. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to recommend Article 17 as amended to change September 28, 2023 date to October 24, 2023. Selectman Ward seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 18. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 19. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 20. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward moved to recommend Article 21. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectman Ward said he is concerned with Article 22. This is a non binding referendum to get a feeling of what is wanted. He said the Board shouldn't vote. We should wait and see what the public wants. Chair LaBrie moved to

take no vote at this time on Article 22. Selectman Ward seconded. Roll Call Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

3.2 Assignment of Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

The reading of the Special Town Meeting Warrant articles at the Town meeting are as followed:

Article 1-Finance Committee usually

Article 2-Selectwoman LaPointe

Article 3, 4, and 5-Finance Committee

Article 6-Selectwoman LaPointe

Article 7-Selectwoman LaPointe

Article 8-Selectwoman Blanchard

Article 9-Selectwoman LaPointe

Article 10-Selectwoman Blanchard

Article 11-Selectman Ward

Article 12- Selectman Ward

Article 13-Selectman Ward

Article 14-Selectwoman Anderson

Article 15-Selectwoman Blanchard

Article 16-Selectman Ward

Article 17-Chair LaBrie

Article 18-Chair LaBrie

Article 19-Selectman Ward

Article 20-Selectman Ward

Article 21-Selectwoman LaPointe

Article 22-Selectwoman Blanchard

Selectman Ward said he is concerned that free cash won't come in on time for the Special Town Meeting. If this happens we will either have to postpone the meeting or vote on them later. Chair LaBrie said she spoke with the Town Accountant and she is giving it 110%.

Chair LaBrie said the next meeting will be on October 30th in Executive Session with the Town Manager Search Committee to present the finalists.

4. OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business this evening.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Selectwoman LaPointe moved to adjourn, Selectman Ward seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted


Debra Dennis, Administrative Assistant