

TOWN OF WINCHENDON Approved: January 27, 2025
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, January 13, 2025 6:30pm
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 109 Front St., Winchendon, Mass.

Present: Rick Ward, Chair
Audrey LaBrie
Melissa Blanchard
Erika Eitland

William McKinney, Town Manager
Debra Dennis, Executive Assistant

Absent: Andrew Beauvais

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Annual Town Election-Positions
- Resignation Cultural Council-Molly Velasco
- Resignation-Council on Aging-Ann Mary Smith
- Appointment Letter-Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission-Amaya Mercado
- Appointment-Communications Commission-Amanda Phillips
- Draft Meeting Minutes- November 25, 2025 and December 9, 2025

6:30 PM Chair Ward called the meeting to order at 6:30P.M. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Ward 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:

1.1 Annual Town Election Nomination Papers-Chair Ward announced the following-

Annual Town Election May 5, 2025

Nomination papers will be Available Monday, January 13, 2025 at 8:00am.

Nomination papers must be obtained and turned in on or before Monday, March 17, 2025 by 5:00pm.

Available Terms:

- One-3 year term for Moderator
- Two 3 year terms for the Board of Selectmen
- One 3 year term for the School Committee
- One 1 year unexpired term for School Committee
- One 3 year term for the Board of Health

Chair Ward said he took out papers 54 years ago. He publicly let everyone know he will not be running for another term as a Board of Selectmen. He said this is your opportunity to serve on the board. The requirement are you must be a registered voter and a resident of Winchendon.

Selectwoman LaBrie commented my seat is the other one up for reelection this May. I will not be running for the Board of Selectmen. I will be looking at other ways to get involved with the town. If you want to reach out and ask questions contact me.

Selectwoman Blanchard said it's been cold. Be careful out there. My heart goes out to everyone in California that has been affected by the fires.

Selectwoman Eitland commented hopes as people come on Boards and Commissions we work together to make it better.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: There was no public comments and announcements this evening.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS: There was no scheduled public hearings this evening.

4. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

4.1 Resignation Cultural Council-Molly Velasco Chair Ward thanked her for everything she does for the town.

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to accept with regret the resignation of Molly Velasco from the Cultural Council and thanked her for her service. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

4.2 Resignation Council on Aging Committee-Ann Mary Smith

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to accept the resignation of Ann Mary Smith from the Council on Aging and thanked her for her service. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

4.3 Resignation-Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission- Tora Estes

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to accept the resignation of Tora Estes from the Winchendon Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

4.4 Resignation-Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission- Addison Mistler

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to accept the resignation of Addison Mistler from the Winchendon Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

4.5 Appointment-Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission – Amaya Mercado

Amaya Mercado has submitted a letter of interest to join the Winchendon Youth Ad Hoc Advisory Commission.

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to appoint Amaya Mercado to the Winchendon Ad Hoc Advisory Commission with a term expiration of until Youth Commission is established. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

4.6 Appointment Communications Commission-Amanda Phillips

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to appoint Amanda Philips to the Communication Commission with a term expiration of June 30, 2026. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

5. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS: There was no permit/license applications this evening.

6. BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS:

6.1 Appointment of the special 2025 Charter and Bylaw Review Committee-Chair Ward said this is on the agenda as a reminder. The Charter and Bylaw are the most important documents in town. The Charter says we must review the Charter and Bylaws in any year that ends in 0 or 5. It doesn't mean we have to change anything. This Committee has 7 members that are appointed by the Moderator. A report or recommendation is submitted at the Town Meeting within 10 months. The Bylaw changes need Town Meeting Approval. The Charter changes need Town Meeting and Town Election approval. This will be posted tomorrow on Facebook and the Town Website.

6.2 Building Commissioner-Rick Germano-Mr. Germano came forward. He said he is a liaison to contractor and residents. We do inspections/follow up on complaints. Chair Ward concerned about factories falling down. What can you do? Mr. Germano said it costs money to do litigation. My style is to work with the owner to get the building down. Selectwoman LaBrie asked about multi-family inspections. Mr. Germano said maximum is 5 years 3 families or more. The hardest thing is getting owner to respond to the letter and then get the violations if any get fixed. Selectwoman LaBrie asked about rights of tenants. Mr. Germano said that isn't under his purview. Normally during an inspection we are focused on common areas. If there is an issue within an apartment we would go in with the Board of Health. Selectwoman Eitland asked what he thinks can be done to make it more efficient for him. She said she wants to make sure we support everyone. Mr. Germano said there isn't any database to follow through. It's hard for one person to follow through. It's up to the homeowner. Right now working on implementing permitting software. It's important to go paperless. Selectwoman Eitland questioned what the common issues when doing inspections are. Mr. Germano said there isn't one thing that sticks out. The biggest thing is education. We are trying to get a process establish and keep it the same.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**- Selectwoman LaBrie, Chair of the Capital Planning Committee said they are meeting again this Wednesday. We will be meeting Tuesday's going forward. Invited the Town Manager to attend Wednesday's meeting to present the Capital Planning Requests. The Capital Plan goes out for five years.
8. **OLD BUSINESS**: There was no old business this evening.
9. **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**: Town Manager William McKinney said the tax rate is set. The departments are getting budgets. Governor will be presenting her version of the budget next week. Between pension, new debt and health insurance we are a negative one million. Chair Ward asked about February 6th Tri-Board meeting. School Committee-Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

10. TOWN MANAGER FINANCIAL UPDATE:

- Receive state funding for computer funding.
- Filed request for funding last week and we will find out in a few weeks if we get the funding.
- New things old vendor account is reconciled through November.
- Reconciled all receivables.
- FEMA -Chief Smith working on getting the funding reimbursement.

Selectwoman LaBrie usually at this time we are discussing audit. Town Manager said hopefully by end of February. Selectwoman LaBrie asked about a deep dive in one department and how is it determined. Town Manager Mr. McKinney said he thought it was the Audit Committee who determines. Chair Ward explained the audit finding had a lot of negative things. A lot of the things have been completed.

11. MINUTES:

11.1 November 25, 2024 Regular Meeting- Selectwoman LaBrie moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 25, 2024 as presented. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

11.2 December 9, 2024 Regular Meeting- Selectwoman LaBrie moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 9, 2024 as presented. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

11.3 December 23, 2024 Regular Meeting- These minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

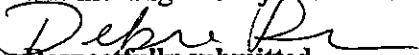
12. COMMUNICATIONS:

13. AGENDA ITEMS: Next meeting is January 27, 2025.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION-There was no scheduled executive sessions this evening.

15. ADJOURNMENT: Selectwoman LaBrie moved to adjourn. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27pm.



Respectfully submitted

Debra Dennis

Executive Assistant

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