

APPROVED: 6-23-25

TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2025 6:30PM
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 109 Front St., Winchendon, Mass.

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

William McKinney, Town Manager
Debra Dennis, Executive Assistant

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant May 19, 2025
- Proposed Water/Sewer/Cemetery Rate Changes
- Junk Dealer/Second Hand Articles Applications-Pattie's Jewelry, Daniel Brewer, and Ed's Scrap Metal

6:30pm 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:

Selectwoman Eitland-May 5th is our date to vote if you support vote yes on both. Regardless how you feel please vote. Commend all Department Heads for the grants they have gotten. Selectwoman Blanchard said come out on May 5th and vote. Your vote matters. Careful driving down from School Street to Central Street while work is being done by the Department of Public Work. Selectwoman LaBrie gave a shout out to Farming is Life for opening up. Selectman Beauvais commented the Annual Town Election is a week from today, Monday, May 5, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Murdock Senior Center. Seats on the ballot to be filled are as follows: two 3-year seats on the Board of Selectmen; two seats on the School Committee - one for 3-years and another for 1-year; a 3-year Board of Health seat; and, a 3-year seat as Town Moderator. The ballot will also include two Proposition 2 1/2 Override Questions. Please come out and vote whether you're for support or against. Chair Ward said we need everyone to come out to vote. It is key to hear what the residents want. There are three information sessions coming up. There is a lot of false information on Social Media. Every penny is accounted for. You need to go on the website and check out the information. This override is driven by high costs. If you want the town to continue in the future you need to support the override.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chair Ward said three minute limit, this is not a debate tonight about the articles.

Rick Lucier asked when it was approved for WL French to come in through New Hampshire. They are supposed to come down 140 by 202. Are we getting demolition material from New Hampshire? No override. You are going to hurt more people then you know.

James Roth representing Bob Grady. Bob Grady-issues dealing with. Wanted Board to know building Front Street across from Cumberland Farms, and have rights to the old Bull Spit building. Walnut Street housing Building Inspector is requiring me to place sprinkler system in building. He has costs me five months on the Walnut Street building and Sid's block. I own the Bull Spit building.

Inanna Arthen mentioned there seem to be a lot of people that don't know how much grant money and how much state money comes into the town. Some of the projects being done are from grants. The amount of work people do bringing in funding is fantastic.

- 3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:** There are no public hearings scheduled for tonight.
- 4. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:** There are no appointments/resignations tonight.
- 5. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:**
 - 5.1 Approval of Junk Dealer/Second Hand Articles Licenses: -The three licensees listed below have supplied the required documents and paid the fee.
 - Pattie's Jewelry Inc.
 - Daniel Brewer
 - Ed's Scrap Metal
- Selectman Beauvais moved to approve the Junk Dealer/Second Hand Article License for Pattie's Jewelry Inc., Daniel Brewer, and Ed's Scrap Metal to expire on May 1, 2026. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.**
- 6. BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS:**
 - 6.1 Update on Formation of "Economic Development Task Force"-The Proposed Economic Development Task Force Summary for the Board was prepared by Vice Chair Beauvais and Selectwoman Eitland. Vice Chair Beauvais read the summary of the proposed Economic Development Task Force. The purpose of the Economic Development Task Force will be established to identify, promote and facilitate opportunities for sustainable economic growth in Winchendon. The primary focus will be on attracting new investment and encouraging responsible land development through proactive business engagement and the development of strategic incentives, while supporting the retention and expansion of existing businesses. Selectwoman Eitland we can look into the Economic Development initiatives, and grants. Vice Chair Beauvais said he wants to go high and locate opportunities and drawing them in. Chair Ward pointed out areas down the road. Collaboration with all appropriate Boards and Committees and send out accurate information. When you deal with collaboration it is going to involve all Boards and Committees in town and we need to make sure we don't overstep. Need to be specific on how many members. Selectwoman LaBrie said this is a starting point. We should have Murdock Voc Tech-students can go to learn the non-traditional learning. There is a big gap. Making building Summer Street a type of campus. The Board decided to place this on the May 12th agenda for further discussion.
- 7. NEW BUSINESS**
 - 7.1 Review and Vote to Finalize the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for May 19, 2025 – Bill McKinney, Town Manager went over the warrant articles. Article 4 will get dollar amount prior to town meeting. He discussed the School Department budget. Selectwoman LaBrie said article 19 is what we can afford. Bill McKinney said we have article 18 which is what the school department approved.

Chair Ward asked Article 22 the motion will say the dollar amount. Fully aware if you spend \$200,000 for this study then in Fall Town meeting debt exclusion override for the remainder which I am hearing 10 million. It looks like we will have to fund about 2 to 2.5 million dollars for our portion of the project since the state covers 79% of the costs.

Selectwoman LaBrie asked about Article 23 and questioned the wording or otherwise provided. Bill McKinney said he would check. Selectwoman LaBrie questioned Article 26 Conveyance of Land at 4 Summer Drive. Bill McKinney said legal has said it wasn't conveyed. Chair Ward asked if Article 28 has a dollar amount. Bill McKinney said it would be about \$62,000.

Selectwoman LaBrie moved to approve the final Annual Town Meeting Warrant for May 19, 2025 as presented. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: All aye.

7.2 Assignment of Town Meeting Warrant Articles to be presented by Board Members on May 19, 2025

ARTICLE	DESCRIPTION	Selectmen
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING		
1	Committee Report	Selectwoman Eitland
2	Payment of Prior Year Bills	Selectwoman Blanchard
3	Funding of Snow and Ice Deficit FY25	Selectwoman Eitland
4	Funding to pay Other Operating Expenses for FY25	Vice Chair Beauvais
5	Water Enterprise Fund Appropriation of Retained Earnings for additional FY25 expenses	Selectwoman Eitland
6	Wastewater Enterprise Fund Appropriation of Retained Earnings for additional FY25 expenses	Selectwoman Eitland
7	Transfer Station Enterprise Fund Appropriation of Retained Earnings for additional FY25 expenses	Selectwoman Eitland
8	Authorize Revolving Funds	Chair Ward
9	Senior Tax Work-Off Program	Selectwoman Blanchard
10	FY26 General Government Budget with 2.9 override	Vice Chair Beauvais
11	FY26 General Government Budget with 1.9 override	Vice Chair Beauvais
12	FY26 General Government Budget without override	Vice Chair Beauvais
13	FY26 Water Dept. Enterprise Budget	Selectwoman LaBrie
14	FY26 Wastewater Enterprise Budget	Selectwoman LaBrie
15	FY26 Transfer Station Enterprise Budget	Selectwoman LaBrie
16	FY26 PEG Media Enterprise Budget	Selectwoman Blanchard
17	FY26 School Budget-2.9 Million Override	Chair Ward
18	FY26 School Budget	School
19	FY26 School Budget- no override	Chair Ward
20	FY26 Monty Tech's Assessment	Chair Ward
21	Community Action Committee Non-Profit Support	Vice Chair Beauvais

22	Capital Improvements-MSBA Feasibility Study	Selectwoman Eitland
23	Capital Improvements-Boiler Replacement at High School	Selectwoman Eitland
24	Capital Improvement – Police Cruiser Replacement	Selectwoman Blanchard
25	Fund Stabilization, OPEB, and Separation Benefits	Selectwoman Blanchard
26	Convey Town Property to Winchendon Redevelopment Authority, 4 Summer Drive	Chair Ward
27	General Bylaw-Town Meeting Notification	Chair Ward
28	General-Hero Act	Selectwoman Blanchard
29	General Bylaw-Regulated Technologies/Advanced Recycling Ban (AKA Incinerator Ban)	Vice Chair Beauvais
30	General Bylaw-Comm 97	Vice Chair Beauvais
31	Zoning Article-Multi Family Wording	Selectwoman Blanchard

8. OLD BUSINESS:

8.1 Continued discussion and Vote on Water/Sewer and Cemetery Rates-In the Dropbox is the information about the rate study and also the information about the proposed Water, Sewer, and Cemetery Rate increases. Brian Croteau said proposed water rates are set at \$9.77. Selectwoman Blanchard commented 9% increase is too much 3% would be better. Brian Croteau commented Ashburnham's water main is why it has to be increased. Water main last year consider Ashburnham fund a portion of it and that isn't going to happen. Bill McKinney said we will have better water usage numbers. Selectwoman LaBrie said in March 2022 we had calculations out to 2028. One of the number jumped out is consumption. Usage is down from what was projected. Selectwoman Blanchard asked why two users have a 6 inch water main. Brian Croteau said it is for fire suppressant.

Selectwoman LaBrie moved the Board approve the following rate increases: Water rate \$9.77 per 100 cubic foot, will be Sewer rate increase from \$12.50 per cubic foot. Selectwoman Eitland seconded. Vote: Eitland aye, Blanchard nay, LaBrie aye, Beauvais aye, Ward aye.

Selectwoman Eitland moved the Board approve effective immediately the Cemetery Rate increases as presented this evening. Selectwoman LaBrie seconded. Vote All aye.

9. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Bill McKinney said \$100,000 less given then the governor's budget. The town changing health insurance providers currently with MIIA using Blue Cross and switching to Harvard Pilgrim. The employees and town will be saving money.

10. TOWN MANAGER'S FINANCIAL REPORT: The Town Manager's Financial Report is presented at the first meeting of every month.

11. MINUTES:

11.1 Draft Regular Meeting March 24, 2025-These were tabled tonight.

11.2 Draft Special Meeting March 27, 2025-These were tabled tonight.

12. COMMUNICATIONS: Chair Ward said the next meeting is tomorrow night Town Meeting Warrant Public Hearing at 7pm at Town Hall Auditorium. We can vote on all the articles.

13. AGENDA ITEMS: There were none this evening.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION: There are no executive sessions scheduled this evening.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

Debra Dennis
Respectfully submitted
Debra Dennis, Executive Assistant