

Approved: January 22, 2024

TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2023

WINCHENDON TOWN CLERK
RCUD JAN 23 2024 PM2:32

Board of Selectmen Present:

Audrey LaBrie, Chair
Rick Ward-via remotely
Danielle LaPointe
Barbara Anderson
Melissa Blanchard

William McKinney, Interim Town Manager
Mary Calandrella, Executive Assistant
Debra Dennis, Administrative Assistant

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- First Right of Refusal 23 Cummings Road
- First Rights of Refusal Documents
- Resignation emails from Brandon Fournier, and Lindsey Laserte
- Letters of interest for Appointments from Renee Tambling, Christine Miller, Thom Schotanus, and Richard Morin Jr.
- Permit Application-Willies Tree Sales
- One-Day Liquor License Application-Bull Spit
- Board of Selectmen Contingency Costs Account breakdown
- Draft Minutes-Revote August 23, 2023, October 25, 2023, October 23, 2023, and September 11, 2023

6:30 PM Chair LaBrie called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. 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. Chair LaBrie said Vice Chair Ward will be joining the meeting via Zoom. All votes will be by roll call.

1. **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no selectmen's comments this evening.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no public comments and announcements this evening.
3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
 - 3.1 – Tax Classification Hearing – 6:30pm-Chair LaBrie read the following into the record:
In accordance with G.L. c.40, §56, the Board of Selectmen will conduct a Public Hearing on the question of adoption of percentages of the total tax levy to be borne by each class of real property (residential, commercial, industrial, open space) and personal property for Fiscal Year 2024. The Hearing will be held in the Town Hall auditorium, 2nd Floor of Town Hall, 109 Front St., Winchendon, MA on **Monday, November 27, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.** All interested parties are invited to attend and be heard. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to open the public hearing for the tax classification. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

Robert Heckman Jr., Tax Assessor came forward and gave an overview of why the tax classification hearing is being presented. This is deciding if the Board wants to go with a straight tax rate for each class of real property and personal property. The Board will decide if they want to continue the single based tax rate. The Board of Assessors recommended that the Select Board adopt a residential shift factor of 1.000 with a corresponding CIP factor of 1.000, thereby maintaining the relative shares of overall tax burden borne by the residential property owners in past years. Chair LaBrie in the past the Board hasn't separated the tax rate. Selectwoman Anderson we don't have enough industry to warrant a shift to a split tax rate. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to close the public hearing, LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye. Selectwoman Anderson moved the Winchendon Select Board votes in accordance with M.G.L. Ch. 40, Sec. 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2024 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1,000, with a corresponding CIP shift of 1,000, pending certification of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Selectwoman Blanchard second. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

3.2 – Change of Manager- American Legion - Sarah Marceau 6:40pm

Chair LaBrie read the following into the record-The Winchendon BOARD OF SELECTMEN, acting as the Local Licensing Authority, will hold a public hearing in the 2nd floor auditorium of Town Hall, 109 Front Street on Monday, November 27, 2023, beginning at 6:40 p.m. on the petition of Trent Solomon, Finance Officer of the American Legion Post #193., 295 School Street, on the application of Change of Manager. Anyone wishing to make comments is encouraged to attend. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to open the public hearing and Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

Trent Solomon came forward and explained the change in Manager. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to close the public hearing. Selectwoman LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye. Anderson moved to approve the change of manager to Sarah Marceau at the American Legion. LaPointe seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

Chair LaBrie said due to the posting requirements we did not meet the posting requirement in the newspaper at this time for the public hearing first right of refusal-North Ashburnham Road-Large Parcel. John Rocker asked how does it put us in. Chair LaBrie said we will be within the 100 days. We have until January 4, 2024. Mr. Rocker asked about the necessity back taxes. Chair LaBrie said we would collect the back taxes from the current owner. Cliff Sure, Longroad Energy (potential purchaser) came forward and gave a presentation of the preliminary areas for solar. Plans, Solar 50 megawatts to the grid, forecasting more \$800,000 to the town a year, and potential additional revenue through operations agreement. Selectwoman Anderson said it would be in the towns best option is to not put solar there. David Santomenna, Mass Audubon said they are ready to purchase the property. He said there would be public access to the property for hunting, fishing, etc. Fred Sellers, Environmental Director for Far Hill Association of homeowners Sunset Lake said in his professional opinion it is not an appropriate place for a solar array.

Richard Russell, resident said the land was Chapter 61 and now it is posted no trespassing. Elaine Murros, hearing date recommend a backup date just in case of bad weather. Christine Asleen, concern company come in and destroy acreage of woodland. MJ Gallant, Ashburnham is also involved what happens if they want to take advantage of the first right of refusal.

Chair LaBrie said she does not know. Bill McKinney said he will find out. Matt Curns, important to add conservation properties. These are small parcels of solar. Christine Hasselin, wanted right of refusal explained. Bill McKinney explained the process. Chair LaBrie possible dates for public hearing are December 12th or 13th. The Board decided December 12th @ 7:00pm with a snow date of December 14th.

Chair LaBrie moved to take a five-minute break at 7:54pm. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Selectwoman LaPointe left the meeting. The meeting reconvened at 7:59pm.

- 4. BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS/DEPARTMENTS-**There was no Boards/Committees/Commissions/Departments discussion this evening.

5. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

5.1 Resignation Cultural Council- Linsey Laserte-**Selectwoman Anderson moved to accept the resignation of Linsey Laserte with regret. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.2 Resignation Board of Health- Brandon Fournier-**Selectwoman Anderson moved to accept the resignation of Brandon Fournier from the Board of Health with regret and thank you for serving. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.3 Resignation Zoning Board of Appeals- Brandon Fournier- **Selectwoman Anderson moved to accept the resignation of Brandon Fournier from the Zoning Board of Appeals with regret and thank you for serving. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.4 Appointment Zoning Board of Appeals - Renee Tambling- 3yr term – 2026-Ms. Tambling said she thinks it is a great way to get involved and make an impact in town. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to appoint Renee Tambling to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a three-year term ending in 2026. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: All aye.**

5.5 Appointment Zoning Board of Appeals – Christine Miller- 2 yr. term – 2025-Ms. Miller said she wants to get more involved in the town. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to appoint Christine Miller to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a two-year term ending in 2025. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: All aye.**

5.6 Appointment Zoning Board of Appeals Alt.-Thomas Schotanus – 3 yr. term 2026- Mr. Schotanus said this committee appeals to me and wants to get more involved. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to appoint Thomas Schotanus as an alternate for the Zoning Board of**

Appeals for a three-year term ending in 2026. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

5.7 Appointment Zoning Board of Appeals Alt. – Richard Morin Jr.- 2 yr. term 2025- Mr. Morin Jr. said he wants to get involved. **Selectwoman Anderson moved to appoint Richard Morin Jr. to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an alternate for a two-year term ending in 2023. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

6. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:

6.1 Christmas Tree Sales – Willie’s Tree Sales – Murdock Farm- Ice-Cream Stand – **Selectwoman Anderson moved to approve the Christmas Tree Sales Permit for Willie’s Trees. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

6.2 One Day Liquor Licenses – Bull Spit Brewery @ CAC –HEAL Bowling Alley -5pm-9pm Friday’s only 12/15/23 – 2/9/24-Selectwoman Anderson said she has an issue since the CAC is a non-profit and Bull Spit is for profit. Bill McKinney said the CAC is trying to get more people in. **Selectman Ward moved to approve the one-day liquor license for Bull Spit Brewery @ the bowling alley from 5pm-9pm. Selectwoman Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson no, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1 BOS Expense Update– Meet & Greet & Candidate luncheon with Staff-Chair LaBrie gave an overview of the expenses.

7.2 Discuss December BOS Schedule-Chair LaBrie said December 11, 2023 prior to Town Meeting at 6:30pm and then 7:00pm for the Town Meeting. The first right of refusal and the 2024 license renewals will be at the December 12, 2023 meeting.

8. OLD BUSINESS-There was no old business discussed this evening.

9. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT: Bill McKinney thanked Brian Croteau, Fire Department and their staff for all the work they did in regards to the boiler issue at the school. He said they would be submitting the Robinson Broadhurst requests this week. Alexander Fabro started as new police officers.

Our bond rating has been upgraded to an AA. Chair LaBrie asked about closing the books. Bill McKinney said we will be submitting it tomorrow.

10. MINUTES:

10.1 Meeting Minutes: 8/23/23 (Re-Vote) 9/11/23, 10/10/23, 10/23/23 & 10/25/23

August 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes **Anderson motion to approve the minutes of August 23, 2023 and LaBrie seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson abstained, LaBrie aye.**

September 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes-Anderson motion to approve the minutes of September 11, 2023 and Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, and LaBrie aye.

October 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes-The October 23, 2023 minutes were tables due to no quorum present at this meeting that attended the October 23, 2023 meeting.

October 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes-Anderson approve minutes of October 25, 2023 and Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson abstained, and LaBrie aye.

11. COMMUNICATIONS: There were no communications this evening.

12. AGENDA ITEMS: There were no agenda items this evening.

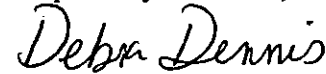
13. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Chair LaBrie read the following:

13.1Executive Session - M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a): Subsection 2: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. –Town Manager Contract Discussion and will reconvene in open session for adjournment. Anderson moved to go into Executive Session and Blanchard seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ward aye, Blanchard aye, Anderson aye, and LaBrie aye.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Dennis, Administrative Assistant