



# Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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## Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

### Select Board

Date: 2023-02-21

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

### Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Mark Dockser, Carlo Bacci, Chris Haley, Jackie McCarthy, Karen Herrick

### **Members - Not Present:**

### **Others Present:**

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella, Town Clerk Laura Gemme, Bob Connor, Tim Powers, Angela Binda, Nancy Docktor, Ray Porter, Geoffrey Coram, Lt. Jones, David Zeek

**Minutes Respectfully Submitted By:** Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella

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### **Topics of Discussion:**

*This meeting was held in person and remote via Zoom.*

Dockser called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

#### Public Comment

Bill Brown noted that public meetings are supposed to be posted outside of the building.

Nancy Docktor encouraged the board keep the funding for the Health Department or increase it.

Tim Powers spoke to the board about Tread, noting their classes are too loud and it wakes him up in the morning.

#### Liaison Reports

Bacci noted the CPDC adopted the Housing Production Plan. Recreation couldn't meet due to a quorum issue. More construction issues around town prove there needs to be better communication to businesses and residents when construction and closures will be happening.

Haley noted that VASC met last week and they will be recommending 4 new volunteers to various boards. He asked the applicants how they found out about the opening and the answers were all different varying from the website to word of mouth. It was noted that finding openings on the website could be easier to locate.

Herrick attended a PAIR event which included a presentation by RMHS students on their experiences in Reading. RMLD discussed the expiration of the Palmer Biomass contract the end of March 2023 and they approved rate increases. She also commented on how the fuel stabilization fund should be used to offset the rate increases. ZBA needs another member. She attended the zero-waste caucus policy forum

held in Lexington in which the Massachusetts bottle bill and the break free from plastics bill were discussed.

McCarthy noted CPDC approved a minor site plan review for the next phase of the Birch Meadow project. She attended a legislative breakfast held by the Chamber. She urged people to get the word out about needing more volunteers.

Dockser noted the Council on Aging met and had strong support for ReCalc and the Select Board for the need for a new facility for the seniors. CATO will be holding a screening at the Public Library of the Bill Russell Netflix documentary on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Bacci noted S.W.E.C. will be putting out a short survey to gauge community input on best uses for the land down on Symonds Way and he encourages all residents to take the survey.

#### Town Managers Report

Maltez noted the budget document was in their meeting packet which he will walk them through later this evening. He also noted the Town Meeting warrant is in their packet and includes the article for new trash carts. He has noted they are working to get different sizes for residents who are concerned about the large size although it would be better if it was standardized for the whole town. There is also an article for additional funding for the Birch Meadow Phase 1 because the architect came back with an updated pricing of \$2M over the previous quote. He noted the Chronicle ran an article about the town needing volunteers.

#### Early Voting Options

Town Clerk Laura Gemme noted nothing has changed since the last meeting in which she was in front of the board and explained their options. The board agreed early voting on the Saturday on March 25<sup>th</sup> isn't necessary for this election.

**Haley moved to conduct In Person Early Voting for the April 4<sup>th</sup> Town Election during normal Town Hall hours on March 27<sup>th</sup> through March 30<sup>th</sup> at the Town Clerks office as recommended by the Board of Registrars. The motion was seconded by McCarthy and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

**Haley moved to conduct In Person Early Voting for the April 4<sup>th</sup> Town Election on March 25<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM if approved by the Board of Registrars. The motion was seconded by Herrick and failed with a 0-5 vote.**

#### Reading Open Land Trust Presentation

Bob Connor, Treasurer of the Reading Open Land Trust, gave the board a presentation on who they are and what they do. The presentation can be found in the Select Board packet on the town website.

#### Parking Fees Discussion

Lt. Jones noted the Police Department researched surrounding towns fees and fines for parking violations and would like to increase them based on their findings. The suggested price increases and surrounding towns' fees can be found in the Select Board meeting packet on the town website. There are three groups of parking violations. Group A is being proposed to increase from \$20 to \$25 and those are the basic violations including no parking zones, overtime parking, blocking driveways, etc. Group B violations are being proposed to increase from \$50 to \$100 which includes blocking/not being far enough from fire hydrants or fire lanes. Group C violations are being proposed to increase from \$100 to \$300 which would be for illegal parking in handicap spots.

Bacci suggested/ asked about changing the street signs to reflect these changes and discussed repeat offenders and multiple tickets.

### Hearing - Change of Manager – Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza

Haley read the hearing notice. The new manager Greg Caristinos was also present to introduce himself to the board.

**Haley moved to close the hearing regarding the change of manager application for Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

Dockser noted that this board takes liquor compliance very seriously.

**Haley moved to approve the Change of Manager request for an Annual All Alcohol Restaurant License for Anthony’s Coal Fired Pizza at 48 Walkers Brook Drive. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

### Hearing – FY24 Budget

Haley read the hearing notice.

Maltez went through the newly designed budget document with the board. The entire document can be found on the town website.

**Haley moved to close the hearing regarding the FY24 budget. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

The board had a discussion about the health department and the changes that have been made to staffing and their budget line.

### Climate Advisory Committee Update

David Zeek, Chair of The Climate Advisory Committee, gave the board a presentation on the recent work the committee is involved with. The presentation can be found in the Select Board meeting packet on the town website.

### Close Town Meeting Warrant

Fidel went through the 23 Articles with the board.

**Haley moved to close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant consisting of 23 Articles to take place on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

### Lot 5 Update

Fidel noted the parcel the town purchased on Grove Street had a design done by Weston and Sampson. The designs show 17 parking spots and 2 of them are handicap spots. There are spaces for portable toilets on the lot. The drawings can be found in the Select Board packet on the town website. The town is still in talks with Meadow Brook to get an easement for the walking trail residents have been using to access the town forest. Maltez noted this is not something the town feels they can do in house so they will go out to bid to see how much it would cost.

Haley feels this needs public input. He also feels there are a lot of other public areas/parks that could use portable toilets.

### Strategic Plan For Reading

Dockser noted he has spoken with a member of CPDC to make sure this would not be getting territorial. Maltez looked into what Wakefield is doing. They created a community advisory board with residents alongside the planning board members and staff. Dockser would like to see how the board felt about creating something similar here.

The board discussed the lack of volunteers at the moment, if FINCOM should be involved and what kind of a role this committee would take on and discuss.

#### Future Agendas

The board discussed future agenda items.

#### Minutes

The board edited previous meeting minutes.

**Haley moved to approve the meeting minutes from February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 as amended. The motion was seconded by Bacci and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

**Haley moved to adjourn at 10:03PM; with a second from Herrick the motion passed with a 5-0 vote.**

#### Documents Used:

*2022-02-21 Select Board Packet*