



## Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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### Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

#### Select Board

Date: 2023-07-18

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:**

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

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

#### **Others Present:**

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, Executive Assistant Caitlin Nocella, John Lippitt, Victor Santaniello, Autumn Hendrickson, Ivria Fried, Ryan Percival, Patrick Sainato, Stephen Cool

**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.*

Chair McCarthy called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

#### Public Comment

John Lippitt expressed his opinion on the property rates. Residential rates keep going up while commercial does not. He believes the board needs to correct the commercial vs residential rates because it is not fair to homeowners.

#### Presentation on FY25 Tax Rate

Town Assessor Victor Santaniello gave the board his annual presentation on setting the tax rate for FY25. His presentation can be found in the Select Board packet on the Town website.

Haley and Bacci were strongly opposed to continuing to split the tax rate any further out of fear of hurting the small businesses in town.

#### Autumn Hendrickson Book Presentation

Autumn Hendrickson, a Reading resident and 2020 RMHS graduate, gave the board an inside look into a book she is writing on the men and women from Reading and North Reading who served in World War II. She shared her extensive research she has done at the National Archives.

#### Special Committee for Charter Review

Town Counsel Ivria Fried gave the board an overview on the process of creating a Special Committee for the Town's upcoming Charter Review. The presentation can be found in the Select Board packet on the Town website. The board will discuss its designee to the Special Committee at its next meeting.

#### Laision Reports

Bacci noted that the Bylaw Committee reorganized and are discussing potentially two new bylaws; one regarding snow removal and one about dogs in the town forest.

Haley noted the School Committee also reorganized. Sudeshna is leaving her position as the Director of Social Justice and thanked her for all her work here in town. He also wants to discuss relocating that position out of the library.

Dockser noted RECALC met and accepted the new charge the board came up with and created working groups. The commissioners of trust funds also met.

Herrick noted she met with Senator Lewis at office hours at the Pleasant Street Center. She attended the Camp Rice Moody event where they officially handed over the reins to the Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts who will take responsibility for that property now. The MSBA met with regards to the Killam School building and our choice of project manager.

McCarthy noted last week the CPDC approved a Mosque and educational center at the former Rite Aid building. They also reviewed and accepted a preliminary subdivision at 246 Walnut Street; it still needs to be reviewed by Conservation commission. The dog park public forum is next week. The fire department assisted with a birth last week.

#### Town Manager Update

He will be starting the budget process soon and prepping for town meeting in November. He gave the board an update on major construction projects.

#### Construction Demo Tracker

Town Engineer Ryan Percival showed the board the construction tracker the town has come up with to help residents understand when and where major construction will be impacting traffic. They discussed how often it would be updated and who keeps track of it.

#### 91 Green Street Driveway Waiver

Patrick Sainato is asking for a driveway waiver at his property located at 91 Green Street which is a multi-family dwelling. Engineering had to deny the waiver because it does not meet the requirements in the towns' Bylaws, and more specifically the Driveway Regulations. The request is for a 33-foot width of the proposed driveway but the regulations only allow 24 feet unless a waiver is approved. The request was then sent to PTTTF who reviewed the request and determined there was no concerns with traffic or public safety if this request was approved. The owner noted the request for the wider driveway is to allow for another car to park off street because of the multi-unit building will have multiple cars.

**Herrick moved to approve the driveway variance request at 91 Green Street as presented. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with 5-0 vote.**

#### Discuss Dog Park Forum

The forum will be held on July 25 for residents to voice their opinions about a dog park in Reading. Resident Stephen Cool noted the Stanton Foundation provides grants to towns to build dog parks. He noted their grant process is expiring at the end of the December so there is some urgency if we wanted to take advantage of the grant. The forum next week is to gauge residents' thoughts/interests and find a

location. The grant process requires us to have a location for the park before applying. Memorial Park has deed restrictions that prevent a dog park to be possible at that location.

#### Future Agendas

The board discussed future agendas. It was noted Meadow Brook withdrew their Alteration of Premises Application at this time. They may come back to the board in the future with a new request. The board decided to cancel their August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and pick back up again at the end of the month.

**Dockser moved to cancel the boards August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

#### Minutes

The board edited previous meeting minutes.

**Herrick moved to approved the meeting minutes from June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 as amended. The motion was seconded by Dockser and approved with a 5-0 vote.**

**McCarthy moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 PM. The motion was seconded by Herrick and approved with a 5-0 vote.**