



TOWN OF KINGSTON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
OPEN SESSION MINUTES  
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 200 & VIA ZOOM  
November 12, 2024

6:00 p.m. – CALL TO ORDER – ROOM 200

Chairman Eric Crone called to order the meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:02 p.m.—selectmen in attendance: Tyler Bouchard, Kimberley Emberg, Donald Alcombright, and Melissa Bateman.

Staff Present: Keith Hickey, Town Administrator and Patricia Tucker, Assistant to Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. This meeting is being recorded by The Local Seen. Anyone intending to make an audio or video recording of this meeting should notify the Chair at this time.
2. Financial Assistance Applications are available on the town's website or by calling the Selectmen's Office.
3. For anyone interested in volunteering, there are several vacancies on various boards and committees. Please check the website for a listing. There is an opening on the Wage and Personnel Board.
4. Kingston Open Space is seeking two new members as well.
5. Please check our website for any additional events or notices [www.kingstonma.gov](http://www.kingstonma.gov)
6. The Special Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 19th at Kingston Intermediate School beginning at 7pm.
7. The Formal dedication of the Memorial on the Town House front lawn occurred yesterday on Veterans Day; it was a great turnout.

OPEN FORUM:

There was nobody in attendance.

APPOINTMENTS:

Public Hearing for Classification of Property for Tax Purposes

Mr. Crone discussed a representative from the Board of Assessor's will review their recommendations and have the Board reaffirm the use of a single tax rate for all properties for the Fiscal Year 2025 tax rate.

Mr. Crone read the public hearing notice:

Pursuant to the provisions of MGL Chapter 40, Section 56, the Board of Selectmen will hold its annual public hearing on the classification of property for tax purposes. The Selectmen shall first determine the percentages of the local tax levy to be borne by each class of real property and personal property for Fiscal Year 2025. During the hearing, the Board of Assessors shall provide all information relevant to making such determination and the fiscal effect of the available alternatives. Based on information provided, the Board of Selectmen shall adopt a residential factor to be used by the Board of Assessors to determine the percentages of the Fiscal Year 2025 local tax levy to be borne by each class of real and personal property. Said hearing will be held on Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town House, Room 200, 26 Evergreen St., Kingston, MA.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Mr. Alcombright and a 5-0-0 vote,  
VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen open the public hearing.

Maureen Clarke, Principal Assessor for the Town, was in attendance to discuss the PowerPoint presentation.

#### Open Space

- There are no parcels currently classified as open space.
- The Board of Assessors voted not to recommend adopting the Open Space Exemption.

#### Residential Exemption

- The Selectmen may adopt a Residential Exemption for owners of occupied residential property.
- The exemption reduces the adopted percentage ranges from 1-35% of the average assessed value of ALL residential properties. The residential exemption does not reduce the residential share of the tax levy, rather, the total tax reduction is offset by an increase in the residential tax rate which shifts the taxes from the owner-occupied properties to the non-owner-occupied properties. The Town will raise the full amount of tax levy despite the higher tax break to eligible homeowners.
- The Board of Assessors voted not to recommend adopting the Residential Exemption

#### Small Commercial Exemption

- The intent of the exemption is to give a tax reduction to small commercial property owners at the expense of the larger commercial and industrial parcels (This does NOT include industrial or personal property)
- To qualify, businesses must have occupied the property as of January 1, 2024, and must have no more than 10 employees. The building must have a value of less than 1 million dollars. Like the residential exemption, the tax levy does not change, and the exemption is borne within the commercial class resulting in an overall increase of the Commercial/Industrial/Personal Property tax rate.
- The Board of Assessors voted not to recommend adopting the small commercial exemption

Motion by Mr. Alcombright, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote,  
VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen close the public hearing.

Motion by Mr. Alcombright, seconded by Ms. Bateman and a 5-0-0 vote,  
VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen vote in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 40, Section 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 2025 tax rates and set the Residential Factor at 1.0 with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0, pending approval of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.

#### ADDITIONAL ITEMS:

##### Appointment of Building Commissioner and Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief

Mr. Crone stated that due to recent resignations, the positions of Building Commissioner and Assistant to the Fire Chief are vacant.

After completing the recruitment process, the Town Administrator is recommending the Board authorize the hiring of David Kulikowski to the position of Building Commissioner.

The Fire Department has completed the recruitment process for the Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief. Chief Douglass is recommending the hiring of Colleen Chase to the position of Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief.

Mr. Hickey spoke a few words about Mr. Kulikowski and his background.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote,  
VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen appoint David Kulikowski to the position of Building Commissioner with an anticipated start date of December 9, 2024, Grade 11, Step 2 of the Wage and Personnel Bylaw, consistent with the terms in the offer letter.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Bouchard and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen appoint Colleen Chase to the position of Administrative Assistant to the Fire Chief, a Grade 5, Step 8 position with the Kingston Town Employee Union, Clerical with an anticipated start date of November 13, 2024, consistent with the terms in the offer letter.

#### Update to Director of Elder Affairs Job Description

Mr. Hickey stated that since the resignation of the Director of Elder Affairs there has been an offline conversation with a Board member, who made a suggestion to modify the role of the Recreation Director to oversee the Council on Aging, citing that other communities have adopted the same mode.

Mr. Hickey considered the suggestion and has spoken to the Recreation Director about this, and it is their opinion that the Recreation Director does not have the time available to properly oversee the Council on Aging in addition to her current duties.

Ms. Emberg stated she has heard about this topic and this conversation should be discussed at a deeper level at some point in the future and does not suggest holding off to fill this position.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Bateman and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen not amend the current job description and request the Town Administrator begin the hiring process for the Director of Elder Affairs.

#### Acceptance of Donation

Mr. Crone stated that the Council on Aging received and requests the Board accept a donation of \$25.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Ms. Emberg and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen accept the donation of \$25 from Robert and Melodie Tassinari to the Council on Aging.

#### Amendment to Declaration of Trust

The Declaration of Trust has already been signed by the Board of Selectmen. This has not been recorded with the Registry of Deeds, so the Affordable Housing Trust is requesting that the Trust be amended to include the Trusts newly appointed member. The Affordable Housing Trust has voted on the amendment at their meeting on Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Alcombright and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the amendment of the Declaration of Trust to include Affordable Housing Trust Member, Nicholas Lajoie

#### Open Session Meeting Minutes

Ms. Emberg requested that the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes be held for further review.

Motion by Ms. Emberg, seconded by Mr. Alcombright and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move the Board of Selectmen approve the open session meeting minutes of September 24, 2024, and October 30, 2024.

#### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Hickey read from his report:

#### Financial Updates

- Documentation for the FY26 Capital Improvement Plan has been distributed to department heads. Requests are due on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. FY26 budget forms will be sent to department heads prior to Thanksgiving.

#### Project Updates

- Valarie Massard and I will be meeting with representatives of Country Club Way property owners Thursday evening, November 14<sup>th</sup> to continue discussions on the process to be followed for the acceptance of Country Club Way.
- I have met with a vendor that offers software for a variety of online permitting to provide customers with a more convenient way of doing business with the Town. A software demonstration was provided to members of the departments that could take advantage of the online permitting option. Permitting that could be offered online include Transfer Station decals, business licenses, alcohol license renewals, building permits, health permits, and beach permits.
- Tree cutting and chipping, the first phase of the wetland restoration project at Blackwater Memorial Forest (former Carlson bogs off Winthrop Street), began this morning. LeClair and Sons is expected to take a couple weeks to complete cutting all trees between the trail and the bog perimeter ditches, as well as all trees growing on the earthen dike that separates the former bog from the natural wetlands upstream. All branches and narrow trunks will be chipped directly into the ditches. Trails at this property are closed throughout this period, and potentially beyond, depending on safety conditions. The attached signs are posted at the entrances to the trails, and the Highway Dept dropped off yellow sawhorse closures for the parking lot access points.

Phase 2 of the project is out to bid, with bids expected by December 2<sup>nd</sup>. All work will need to be completed by March 13<sup>th</sup>, but hopefully sooner. This will consist of pushing the banks in to fill the perimeter ditches (covering any woodchips from phase 1), replacing the two water control structures/culverts with notched-log weirs and recreated stream banks, directing stream flow through the center of the former bog cell, and using logs to cause eddying and riffles, keeping a meander to the stream. There may be some modification of portions of the former cranberry bog mat, creating microtopography where needed.

Phase 3 (if not completed as part of phase 2) consists of removing the pumphouse and shed from the property, and installation of two timber frame lay-down pedestrian bridges where the culverts are now. Ongoing work will consist of manually cutting/girdling pine trees on the former bog mat, promoting wetland shrub-forb habitat.

All permits are in-hand, and the project is funded by the MA Department of Fish & Game's In-Lieu Fee Program, administered with the US Army Corps of Engineers.

#### Personnel Update

- There are no personnel updates this week.

#### Miscellaneous Updates

- The DPW working group met on November 5<sup>th</sup> to begin considering the best option available for the public works, water and sewer tasks. More specific examples of how a Public Works Department would be more beneficial to the community than the current organizational structure. The next meeting will be during the last week of November.
- I would like to thank Town Clerk Paul Gallagher, Assistant Town Clerk Janna Morrissey, Administrative Assistant Andrea Cunningham and all the election staff for their efforts leading up to Election Day. Their efforts allowed Election Day to occur without any issues.
- I would also like to recognize the efforts of Facilities Admin Melissa Russel, Assistant Town Clerk Janna Morrissey, retired Veterans Agents Den Forbes and Pricilla Brackett, Linda Ragosto, and Phil Worner for their efforts at the Veterans Day luncheon. Also, big thanks to State Representative Kathy LaNatra, Stephanie Landry and the Silver Lake High School student volunteers. Lastly, thank you Mark Beaton, who owns the Charlie Horse and Plymouth Bay Catering for cooking and donating the 140 meals served at the Veterans luncheon. Yesterday's Veterans Day festivities were another example of how Kingston rallies together for a cause.

#### SELECTMEN COMMENTS:

Mr. Bouchard wanted to let everyone know that it is mating season for deer so they will be active, and is it bow hunting season so be safe by wearing orange when walking in the woods.

Ms. Emberg mentioned that Mr. Bouchard has been chosen as the OCPC MPO Signatory representing eight communities.

Ms. Emberg also thanked the poll workers and all that came out to vote.

Ms. Emberg mentioned the Town Meeting next Tuesday and hopes all can attend.

Mr. Alcombright is looking for feedback on the Community Reader that he will be posting on Sundays.

Ms. Bateman wanted to say that the date of the Luminary Night is December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Motion by Mr. Bouchard seconded by Mr. Emberg and a 5-0-0 vote,

VOTE: I move to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:44 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Tucker

Assistant to the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen