

The Select Board met on Tuesday November 14, 2023 beginning at 7:00pm in the Main Meeting Room of Town Hall. Clerk Barrett was absent, the following members were present:

Allyson Hamilton, Chair
Mark Gallivan, Vice Chair
James O'Neil
Glenn Maffei – left at 7:45pm

Also participating
James Johnson, Town Administrator
Aoife Kelly, Executive Assistant

Appointment

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Hamilton called the meeting to order at 7pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing for Tax Classification for Determination of Residential Factor for tax rate for Fiscal Year 2024 (Vote expected)

On motion of Board member Maffei, seconded by Vice Chair Gallivan, voted to open the Tax Classification Public Hearing. Motion Passed (4-0-0). Jack Fisher, Chair Board of Assessors was present for the public hearing. Jack discussed the purpose of the public hearing and how a property tax rate is determined. Jack explained that the Board of Assessors make the recommendation but the Select Board make the final decision. Jack informed the Board that at the current shift of 1.275 the average single take bill will increase by 5.77%. Jack outlined to the Board that at this time the Board of Assessors is prepared to make a recommendation of a shift from 1.275 to 1.30. The Board thanked Jack for his detailed presentation and all the inform provided prior to the meeting. The Board discussed at length the recommendation and were in somewhat of a consensus with the recommendation of the Board of Assessors. Board of Assessors member Richard Zaccaro explained why he voted against the recommendation, was looking to see a shift of 1.35, and urged the Board to consider some form of tax relief for seniors and those on fixed incomes. Chair Hamilton spoke about correspondence from the Economic Development Commission who recently voted not to move the shift from 1.275.

Public comment was provided by resident Richard Pilla in regards to Walpole's aging population, income profile and trends. Public comment was provided by resident Linda Collette, in regards to the financial hardship of those living on a fixed income and urged the Select Board to do all they can to assist. Public comment was also provided by resident Henry Baker, in regards to people moving out of town due to the raising of the rates over the years.

On motion of Board member Maffei, seconded by Vice Chair Gallivan, voted to close the Public Hearing. Motion Passed (4-0-0). On motion of Board member Maffei, seconded by Vice Chair Gallivan, voted to adopt a shift of 1.30 with a Residential Factor of .9604 for Fiscal Year 2024. Motion Passed (3-1-0) Board member Maffei opposed. ON motion of Vice Chair Gallivan, seconded by Board member Maffei, voted to authorize the Town Administrator to submit the results of this hearing on behalf of the Select Board to the Massachusetts Division of Local Services Gateway System. Motion Passed (4-0-0).

Open Forum

Robert Mulvey – Plimpton St., spoke about trying to reduce the obligations on the public pension system and if we can do better under the State pension.

Grace Lincoln Precinct 2 spoke about a response to her letter in regards to if the Select Board was going to assemble the 8-person pension committee that was favorable voted on at Town Meeting.

Richard Pilla Berkley Drive, spoke about correspondence the Town Administrator sent to RTMs prior to Town Meeting in regards to his comments on moving out of the Norfolk County pension and into the State pension system. Dick Zaccaro – offered to volunteer his services to the committee, if it is formed.

New Business

Vote request of Walpole Chamber of Commerce to hold the annual Santa Parade and Tree Lighting on Saturday, November 25, 2023

On motion of Vice Chair Gallivan, seconded by Board member O’Neil, voted to approve request of Walpole Chamber of Commerce to hold the annual Santa Parade and Tree Lighting on Saturday, November 25, 2023. Motion Passed (3-0-0).

Vote request of Walpole 300th Committee for a One Day Entertainment Permit on December 16, 2023 from 6-9pm at Stone Field for a laser show with pyrotechnics to kick off the Walpole 300th Celebration

Bill Buckley & Katie Turco Abate were present. Bill provided some information on the event and thanked town staff for their help with the planning. On motion of Vice Chair Gallivan, seconded by Board member O’Neil, voted to approve request of Walpole 300th Committee for a One Day Entertainment Permit on December 16, 2023 from 6-9pm at Stone Field for a laser show with pyrotechnics to kick off the Walpole 300th Celebration. Motion Passed (3-0-0).

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion of Vice Chair Gallivan, seconded by Board member O’Neil, voted to approve the consent items as listed on the November 14 agenda

George & Lynn Rowan in memory of Ron Fucile to Town Clerk Gifts	\$50
Dalia Marinilli in memory of Phyllis Piasecki to COA Gifts	\$25
Patricia A. Murphy in memory of Phyllis Piasecki to COA Gifts	\$25
John Baker in memory of Phyllis Piasecki to COA Gifts	\$50
Gloria Denneen in memory of Phyllis Piasecki to COA Gifts	\$50
Motion Passed (3-0-0).	

Town Administrator’s Update

Finance Committee Meetings

We have a few upcoming meeting with the Finance Committee; one is this Thursday with the department heads – Police, Fire and DPW. The second meeting is Tuesday 28th out at the Bird Middle School with the School Committee and Finance Committee.

Thanksgiving

Town Hall will be closed the day after Thanksgiving.

Sports

Best of luck to the cross country, field hockey, high school football team and the fourth grade football team who are going to the super bowl this weekend.

On motion of Vice Chair Gallivan, seconded by Board member O’Neil, voted to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned accordingly at 7:55pm. Motion Passed (3-0-0).