



# WAKEFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Monday, October 28, 2019

6:30 P.M.

WCAT Studios, 24 Hemlock Road, Wakefield, MA. 01880

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councilor Edward F. Dombroski, Jr., Chair  
 Councilor Ann McGonigle Santos, Vice-Chair  
 Councilor Mehreen N. Butt  
 Councilor Jonathan P. Chines  
 Councilor Paul R. DiNocco  
 Councilor Peter J. May  
 Councilor Julie Smith-Galvin

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:**

Clerk Sherri A. Dalton  
 Town Administrator Stephen P. Maio  
 Town Counsel Thomas A. Mullen

----- TOPICS OF DISCUSSION -----

**Call to Order**

Councilor Dombroski called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and stated there is a need for Executive Session to discuss Woods Subdivision litigation and DPW Laborers contract because an open meeting may have detrimental effects on the bargaining position of the Town, with the intent of returning to open session. Councilor Santos so motioned. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed on a roll call vote with all six councilors voting in the affirmative.

Councilor Mehreen N. Butt arrived at 6:38 p.m.

The Council returned to open session at 7:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Leading the body in the Pledge of Allegiance was Girl Scout Troop 62842 comprised of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from various Wakefield schools working toward their Inside Government badge along with troop leaders Evelyn Graeff and Jenn MacRobbie.

**Attendance**

Councilor Dombroski noted that all seven (7) Councilors were present as well as Madam Clerk, Town Administrator and Town Counsel.

**Approve of Minutes – October 07, 2019**

Councilor Santos motioned to approve the October 07, 2019 Minutes as presented. Councilor Chines seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor Santos motioned to approve the October 07, 2019 Executive Session Minutes as presented. Councilor Smith-Galvin seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Public Engagement**

David Silvano of 45 Sylvan Avenue addressed the Town Council regarding the removal of trees on town property. Chairman Dombroski thanked Mr. Silvano for his comments.

Julie Scott of 226 Main Street addressed the Town Council regarding the Town Charter referencing the change of Chairman to Chairperson and asked that all boards and committees follow the Charter as stated. Chairman Dombroski thanked Ms. Scott for her comments and responded that he agreed "Chairperson" is the gender-neutral position, with the holder of each position providing his/her gender identity to the title.

Michael Thater of 41 Sylvan Avenue addressed the Town Council with an apology for his actions on October 5-6, 2019 in which he used a chain saw to cut down 15 health, well-established trees that were 20 or more feet in height on Town-owned (watershed) land adjacent to Crystal Lake directly across from his property.

### **Public Hearing**

At 7:23 p.m. Councilor Chines motioned to open the Public Hearing for Tax Classification. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed on a Roll Call vote with all 7 Councilor's voting in the affirmative.

Director of Assessments Victor Santaniello along with Board of Assessor Member Brian Donegan presented the Council with the Tax Classifications recommendations from the Wakefield Board of Assessors. In addition to the presentation Councilor Dombroski asked what the tax rate would be if \$400,000.00 of free cash was used. Mr. Santaniello estimated that the residential rate would be \$12.77 per thousand with an average estimated savings of \$33.35. The commercial rate would be \$24.91 per thousand with an average estimated savings of \$175.97. Councilor Dombroski also asked what the tax rate would be if \$500,000.00 of free cash was used. Mr. Santaniello estimated that the rate would be \$12.75 per thousand with an average estimated savings of \$44.47. The commercial rate would be \$24.88 per thousand with an average estimated savings of \$216.58. Councilor Dombroski sought to use \$400,000 in free cash thereby lowering the tax levy in that same amount, to realize a savings on residential and commercial tax bills. Councilor May so motioned to advance Councilor Dombroski's request for a Tax Levy \$400,000.00 less, yielding an estimated residential tax rate of \$12.77 and an estimated commercial rate of \$24.91. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 4-3-0 with Councilor Dombroski, Councilor Santos, Councilor DiNocco and Councilor May voting in favor. Councilor Chines, Councilor Butt and Councilor Smith-Galvin voting against the motion. Councilor Chines motioned to set the Minimum Residential Factor of .896750. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0. Councilor Santos motioned to not grant a discount for Open Space. Councilor May seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0. Councilor Chines motioned to not grant a residential exemption. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0. Councilor Chines motioned to not grant a commercial exemption. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0. At 8:39 p.m. Councilor DiNocco motioned to close the Public Hearing. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0 on a Roll Call vote with all 7 Councilor's voting in the affirmative.

**Board of Assessors Update**

Director of Assessments Victor Santaniello presented a brief overview of the Board of Assessors which is comprised of three elected members. Tax bills are mailed at the end of December and the office receives and reviews between 50-60 abatement applications yearly. The Board meets in February, March and April to begin adjudicating the applications. The July meeting is to discuss pending appellate tax cases along with a recap of the sales. The September meeting is to talk about various changes made to valuations and the first steps for classification. The Board regularly signs departmental paperwork and statutory exemption applications.

**Regular Town Meeting Warrant**

DPW Director Joseph Conway presented the Walton Lane Roadway Betterment Article. Councilor Santos motioned to approve the article as presented for placement on the Regular Town Meeting Warrant. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

DPW Director Joseph Conway presented the Sewer Enterprise Article which basically is an accounting function providing for appropriation from retained earnings to balance the fiscal 2019 budget. Councilor Santos motioned to approve the article as presented for placement on the Regular Town Meeting Warrant. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

The Town Council discussed proposed Article 6 – Fees. After discussion Councilor Dombroski suggested the issue be tabled and the Fees Article not be included on the Regular Town Meeting Warrant. Councilor Chines so motioned. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor Santos motioned to approve the Regular Town Meeting Warrant of November 18, 2019 subject to deleting Article 6 – Fees. Councilor Smith-Galvin seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Licenses**

Councilor Santos motioned to approve the Common Victualler license application for Mayara’s Restaurant located at 61 New Salem Street. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor Santos motioned to approve the Entertainment license application for Mayara’s Restaurant located at 61 New Salem Street. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor Santos motioned to approve the One Day Liquor License application for the Wakefield Food Pantry for a private event at the Americal Civic Center. Councilor May seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Removal of Trees on Town Property**

On October 17, 2019 Town Counsel Thomas Mullen sent by certified mail return receipt requested a letter to Michael Thater of 41 Sylvan Avenue concerning a matter that took place on October 5-6, 2019 in which Mr. Thater used a chainsaw to cut down 15 healthy, well established trees that were 20 or more feet in height on Town-owned land adjacent to Crystal Lake which is directly across from his

property. Presumably, Mr. Thater acted to improve the view of the lake from his property. He did not have permission from the Town. At the suggestion of Town Counsel, Mr. Thater submitted an offer of restitution and apologized to the Town for his actions. After a lengthy discussion the Town Council requested a more precise cost estimate for the replacement of trees and the cost for a landscaper to install to be presented at the November 13, 2019 Town Council meeting.

**Constituent Issues**

There were no constituent issues at this time.

**Chairman's Comments**

Chairman Dombroski tabled his comments for the Budget process, post Tri-Board meeting until the November 13, 2019 Town Council meeting.

There were over 60 Wakefield residents at the 90+ Birthday Celebration at the Senior Center this past Wednesday. The Senior Center provides a great atmosphere for socialization and offers so many great programs.

The Town's website provides a link on the homepage at the top right corner entitled "Get Town News" which you will then get real-time notification email alerts to anything that you sign up for.

**Appointments**

Councilor DiNocco motioned for Sherri Dalton/Town Administrator's office to advertise for a new commissioner to fill the remainder of a three-year term ending April 30, 2021 with the Human Rights Commission. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Councilor DiNocco motioned for Sherri Dalton/Town Administrator's office to advertise for a new member to fill the remainder of a three-year term ending April 21, 2020 with the Board of Health. Councilor Santos seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Election**

Councilor Santos motioned to authorize Chairman Dombroski to vote for Yvonne M. Spicer as the Metro West Region representative on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization election. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Holiday Stroll**

Councilor May motioned to approve the request as presented by the Wakefield Community Partnership to conduct the Holiday Stroll on December 7, 2019. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Banner Request**

Councilor May motioned to approve the request of the Wakefield Alliance Against Violence to hang a banner on Main Street from December 16, 2019 through December 30, 2019. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

**Gift Acceptance**

Councilor May motioned to accept and expend a gift or gifts to the library in the amount of \$546.59 from various donors with thanks. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.

<b>Warrants</b>	Councilor Chines signed Warrant #9 dated August 27, 2019 through Warrant #13 dated September 24, 2019.
<b>Matters Not Anticipated for Agenda</b>	There were no matters unanticipated.
<b>Announcements &amp; Acknowledgements</b>	<p>Councilor DiNocco – Health Living Expo was held on Saturday at the Galvin. Thank you to the Chamber for hosting and for the participation of the Police Department</p> <p>Councilor Smith-Galvin – WCAT has some Board openings as well as crew opportunities; the Environmental Sustainability Committee is working with the DPW on some grant applications under the municipal vulnerability program which would work on setting greenhouse gas inventory; Black Earth Composting is collaborating with each of the elementary schools so the people can drop off their pumpkins at any of the four elementary schools on November 5, 2019 and they are going to compost all of the pumpkins. Some of the schools are going to do a “throw it in to the truck day”</p> <p>Councilor Butt – asked that the Town order an American Flag to be displayed in the second floor conference room at Town Hall; had a conversation with the Department of Transportation regarding the survey and they were interested in the ideas and asked for more specifics about what we would like to see – thank you to Jenn McDonald and Steve Maio; tomorrow at 7:00 p.m. at the Library Town Clerk and Councilor Butt will be hosting “Wakefield from the Inside Out”; the Melrose Interim Mayor Gail Inferno is ending the interim term and wished her well</p> <p>Councilor Chines – the Chamber is hosting a children’s Halloween costume party at the Sheraton on Wednesday night at 5:30 p.m. and the event is free; asked that the community be mindful of kids on Thursday night as it is Halloween</p> <p>Councilor Dombroski – Domestic Violence Awareness month is coming to an end and Wakefield Alliance Against Violence has done a lot to help educate the public. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence there are resources available here within the town and across the state; thank you to WCAT</p>
<b>Adjournment</b>	At 10:22 p.m. Councilor May motioned to adjourn. Councilor DiNocco seconded. Motion passed 7-0-0.
<b>Next Council Meeting</b>	The next regular Town Council meeting is November 13, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at WCAT Studios, 24 Hemlock Road, Wakefield

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri A. Dalton, Executive Assistant