

Town of Lunenburg
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, 17 Main Street and via Zoom
Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Members Present: Chair Caesar Nuzzolo, Vice-Chair Amanda Moore, Clerk Renee Emkey
Member Brian Lehtinen, and Member Glenn McLeod

Members Absent: none

Also Present: Jennifer Warren-Dyment, Town Manager
Public Comment Participants are listed in the minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Caesar Nuzzolo called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Nuzzolo advised those present that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live over the Lunenburg Public Access Channel, on Facebook Live, and would be uploaded to the Lunenburg Access YouTube Channel following the meeting. He explained that the agenda listed topics that may be discussed, but not all items may be addressed and other items not listed could be brought up as permitted by open meeting law.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Nuzzolo announced that the Town Clerk's office had mailed census forms, which would arrive alongside 2026 dog license applications. Residents were reminded to ensure their dog licenses were current prior to returning new applications, that any outstanding prior-year licenses would be processed first, and that mailed applications must include the proper fee and a self-addressed stamped envelope with two-ounce postage.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment

Ana Lockwood, 91 Main Street, addressed the Select Board regarding the forthcoming discussion on the appointment policy. Ms. Lockwood expressed support for maintaining full transparency in the appointment process and cautioned against moving any portion of candidate screening outside of a public meeting setting. She noted that individuals seeking appointment to public committees should be comfortable engaging with the public, as many committees interact directly with residents. Ms. Lockwood urged the Select Board to keep the process consolidated within a single, transparent public meeting. Chair Nuzzolo clarified that any proposed subcommittee screening process would still occur in an open meeting, and that candidates would still come before the full Select Board for an interview and formal appointment.

Board Comment

No public comment made by Select Board members.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND SCHEDULED MEETINGS

No public hearings or scheduled meetings were held.

V. APPOINTMENTS, RATIFICATIONS, AND RESIGNATIONS

1. Select Board's appointment of Jennifer Sanderson to the APDC as the Historical Commission Representative, Term to expire June 2027

Chair Nuzzolo presented the appointment of Jennifer Sanderson as the Historical Commission Representative to the APDC, with a term to expire June 2027. Chair Nuzzolo noted that the Historical Commission had discussed and voted to designate Ms. Sanderson as their delegate. Clerk Renee Emkey raised a question regarding Ms. Sanderson's term on the Historical Commission, which the website indicated expires June 2026 prior to the end of the APDC term. The Select Board noted this as a matter to be aware of, though not a barrier to the appointment.

Motion by Chair Nuzzolo to appoint Jennifer Sanderson to the APDC as the Historical Commission Representative, with a term to expire June 2027. Seconded by Vice-Chair Amanda Moore. Call for vote: Five-Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

2. Select Board's appointment of Shirley McBride (D) to the Registrar of Voters, Term to expire March 31, 2028.

Chair Nuzzolo explained that Ms. McBride's term had been listed incorrectly on the Town's website, resulting in a missed reappointment the prior year. The appointment was presented as a correction of that administrative oversight.

Motion by Chair Nuzzolo to appoint Shirley McBride to the Registrar of Voters, with a term to expire March 31, 2028. Seconded by Vice-Chair Amanda Moore. Call for vote: Five-Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

3. Town Manager's appointment of Herlin Jaime as Conservation Agent, and approval of Step 5 salary

Town Manager Jennifer Warren-Dyment presented the appointment of Herlin Jaime as Conservation Agent, noting that Ms. Jaime had been serving the Town of Lunenburg in an interim capacity since the spring, while concurrently employed full-time as Conservation Agent for the City of Fitchburg. Town Manager Warren-Dyment stated that Ms. Jaime had demonstrated a high level of professionalism and expertise, and recommended approval of a Step 5 salary based on her education and experience.

Conservation Commissioner Mary Wilson, 138 Whiting Street, spoke in support of the appointment on behalf of herself and Conservation Commission Chair Jenny Pewtherer. Commissioner Wilson described Ms. Jaime as having mastered an efficient Conservation Commission workflow, noting her comprehensive site assessments, complete and timely project reviews, clear communications, and actionable regulatory recommendations. Commissioner Wilson stated that the Conservation Commission was "hugely in favor" of the hire, and characterized the appointment as "a huge win for Lunenburg's Conservation Commission."

Motion by Chair Nuzzolo to ratify the Town Manager's appointment of Herlin Jaime as Conservation Agent and approve a Step 5 salary. Seconded by Vice-Chair Amanda Moore. Call for vote: Five-Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

4. Acknowledgement of the Library Director and Assistant Town Manager's Appointment of Debra Laffond as Part-Time Staff Librarian

Town Manager Warren-Dyment explained that the Library was experiencing temporary vacancies due to health issues among staff, and that Ms. Laffond had agreed to return to assist with staffing coverage in a part-time capacity. No formal vote was required; the appointment was acknowledged by the Select Board.

VI. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Warren-Dyment provided the following updates:

Finance Department Transition: Finance Director and Town Accountant Katie McKenna's service concluded on December 31. Retired Finance Director Karen Brochu has returned as Interim Finance Director and Town Accountant, with her primary focus on reconciling and closing Fiscal Year 2025. Town Manager Warren-Dyment noted that the operational impact of the vacancy cannot be overstated, and that day-to-day finance-related interruptions were affecting all departments. She noted that she had signed an agreement with Complete Staffing Solutions to assist with recruitment for the Finance Director position, citing their recent success with a similar Munis-based recruitment in Nashua, New Hampshire. An independent candidate interview for Finance Director was also scheduled for Thursday.

Payroll and Benefits: Following the retirement of Nancy O'Rourke in late October, a professional temp has been in the role. School staff have been trained and have begun processing school payroll, with Ms. O'Rourke assisting in that training. The Town hoped to extend an offer for the permanent position that week.

Water Billing: Eleven customers had not received water bills during the regular quarterly schedule due to a breakdown in administrative billing procedures during a period of staff transition. Those customers were notified and will receive a catch-up bill reflecting water usage from January 2025 through November 2025. Town Manager Warren-Dyment noted the Select Board would consider a rate adjustment in accordance with the applicable contract, anticipated to be placed on the following week's agenda.

Master Plan: The Master Plan Steering Committee, working with their consultant, completed the first draft of the Master Plan. Town Manager Warren-Dyment noted that she was impressed with the initial product and invited Select Board members to provide feedback.

Nashoba Associated Boards of Health: The community health needs assessment for 2025 has been completed and is available on the Town website. Town Manager Warren-Dyment also reported that Nashoba voted to raise their assessments by 30%, citing structural funding challenges including reduced land use activity revenue, expiring COVID-related grants, and rising health insurance and employment costs. The increase represents approximately \$13,946 above what had been anticipated, bringing the total Nashoba assessment to just over \$90,000.

Open Recruitments: Town Manager Warren-Dyment highlighted the Recreation Director position (19 hours per week) as critically urgent, noting that summer programming ramp-up

begins in early spring and the Town risked being unable to run a recreation program if the position remained unfilled. Other open positions include a Young Adult Staff Librarian, Finance Director, Payroll and Benefits Coordinator, Dietary Aide, and Outreach Coordinator.

Clerk Emkey emphasized the severity of the Finance Department transition for the benefit of the public, noting that even once vacancies are filled, onboarding will take time, and the impact will be felt throughout what is expected to be a challenging budget season. She urged the public to stay engaged, follow meetings closely, and participate in public forums. Vice-Chair Moore added her gratitude to Karen Brochu for returning in an interim capacity, noting the value of her institutional knowledge during the transition.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Alcohol Beverages Control Commission Annual Certification

- **Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form**
- **Renewal Certification 2026 Form**

Chair Nuzzolo presented two forms for the ABCC Annual Certification: the Seasonal Population Increase Estimation Form, reflecting no seasonal increase, and the Renewal Certification 2026 Form. The only licensee who had not yet renewed was Smokestack Roasters. There were no disapproved licensees.

Motion by Chair Nuzzolo to approve the two forms for the ABCC Annual Certification. Seconded by Vice-Chair Moore. Call for vote: Five-Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

2. Vote to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on Tuesday January 6, 2026 and close the Warrant on March 16, 2026

The Chair presented the motion to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on January 6, 2026, and close it on March 16, 2026. Town Manager Warren-Dyment noted that notifications would be sent out the following day.

Motion by Chair Nuzzolo to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant on Tuesday, January 6, 2026, and close the warrant on March 16, 2026. Seconded by Vice-Chair Moore. Call for vote: Five-Aye. The motion passed unanimously (5-0-0).

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion on Special Event Policy

Chair Nuzzolo noted that the Select Board would workshop the Special Event Policy at the following week's meeting. Chair Nuzzolo reported having reached out to Town Counsel Attorney Costa regarding the ability to regulate private property, and that Attorney Costa was locating prior research he had conducted on the matter. Chair Nuzzolo indicated that a bare-bones draft had been prepared as a starting point, with all substantive provisions to be workshopped by the Select Board.

2. Discussion on Appointment Policy

Chair Nuzzolo opened discussion on the Appointment Policy. Member Brian Lehtinen presented several proposed additions and modifications intended to make the process more welcoming and

accessible to prospective volunteers.

Introductory Statement: Member Lehtinen proposed adding a preamble stating that the Town values resident participation in local government and encourages community members of all backgrounds and experience levels to consider volunteer service. The Select Board received this addition favorably.

Interview Tone Language: Member Lehtinen proposed adding language clarifying that "Interviews are intended to be conversational and informational, providing applicants an opportunity to learn more about the role and allowing the Select Board to ensure a good fit." The Select Board agreed to incorporate this language under the interview-related provisions.

Reappointment Language: Member Lehtinen proposed replacing the existing reappointment language with the following: "Reappointment shall not be automatic. However, the Select Board values continuity of service and will consider each incumbent's contributions, engagement, and interest in continuing to serve." The Select Board agreed this conveyed the same principle with a more constructive tone.

Committee Commitment and Summary Section: Member Lehtinen proposed creating a new section requiring each multi-member body appointed by the Select Board to develop and maintain a brief Committee Commitment and Summary Statement. The statement would be required to address, at minimum: mission and purpose, time commitment, scope of authority, skills and experience (including a statement that formal expertise is not required unless mandated by law), and term and continuity. Member Lehtinen noted that the Town's most frequently asked questions in the office concern meeting schedules and time expectations. Town Manager Warren-Dymont confirmed this. Chair Nuzzolo proposed adding "applicable mandatory training" to the skills and interests component, which the Select Board accepted. The section would also require that the statement be reviewed annually and posted on the Town website alongside vacancy postings.

Subcommittee Screening: Member Glenn McLeod raised the previously discussed concept of a subcommittee for initial screening of applicants. Reflecting on the public feedback received both from the public comment earlier in the evening and from a resident email the Select Board reached consensus to not move forward with the subcommittee concept. Chair Nuzzolo noted that no changes would be made to the policy to reflect that idea.

Application Form: Chair Nuzzolo noted that the only remaining modification to discuss was updating the application form to include a field prompting applicants to explain their interest in each specific committee. Town Manager Warren-Dymont indicated that staff would locate the current form from the shared drive. Chair Nuzzolo expressed interest in making both a paper and electronic version available.

Chair Nuzzolo indicated the policy was nearing completion and that it would be placed on the following week's agenda for a final review and potential approval.

3. Review Select Board Bylaw for Potential Recommendations to Bylaw Review Committee
Chair Nuzzolo indicated that this item would likely be removed from the standing agenda going forward, and invited members to continue reviewing licensing-related bylaws independently. Any member wishing to raise a specific provision could request it be added back to the agenda. Chair Nuzzolo noted that the Bylaw Review Committee had been meeting on the first Thursday

of the month, but had not yet scheduled a January meeting due to the holiday, and anticipated meeting later in January.

IX. MINUTES*/WARRANTS/ACTION ITEMS

Minutes

Chair Nuzzolo presented the following sets of minutes for approval: February 20, 2024; March 5, 2024; March 19, 2024; April 23, 2024; August 5, 2025; October 8, 2024; December 16, 2025; and December 30, 2025.

Motion by Chair Nuzzolo to approve all sets of minutes as presented. Seconded by Clerk Emkey. Call for vote: Four-Aye; One-Abstain. The motion passed (4-0-1), with Member McLeod abstaining.

Warrants

An Accounts Payable Warrant in the amount of \$316,660.36 was presented for approval.

Action Items

Clerk Emkey requested that the Warrant Article pertaining to the Town Meeting mailer be placed on an upcoming agenda, in advance of the budget season. Chair Nuzzolo confirmed this was being tracked and would be scheduled.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Clerk Emkey reported that the Stormwater Committee and Finance Committee would both be meeting on Thursday.

Member McLeod reported that the Planning Board would meet on the 12th; the Master Plan Steering Committee draft was out for review; there was a December 17 MPO meeting with nothing of note; the Open Space Committee met December 10 and continued discussion on a draft bylaw for becoming a formal committee, with their next meeting on the 14th; AGCOM had a meeting scheduled toward the end of the month; and he also covered the Library Board of Trustees.

Member Lehtinen reported that the Board of Assessors would meet the following day. He also provided a report on the December 17 School Committee meeting, at which he read the Tri-Board letter addressed to the Tri-Board; noted that School Committee Chair mentioned member George Yapp had indicated his intent to resign due to a job change, though no official letter had been submitted to the Town; reported that the School would be hosting a Harvard doctoral resident from July 2026 through April 2027 at no cost to the district; and noted the discovery of ten paraprofessionals not accounted for in the FY26 budget, with the Superintendent having sent a letter to that effect earlier that day. Member Lehtinen also noted that the School administration recommended the School Committee vote on a school budget prior to receiving the Town Manager's budget number, in order to present a clear ask to the Tri-Board.

XI. UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS SCHEDULE

Chair Nuzzolo noted two Tri-Board meetings scheduled for January, January 12 and January 27, as well as the Select Board meeting on January 13.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

• PUBLIC

No public comment was received.

• TOWN MANAGER

There were no comments from the Town Manager.

• BOARD

No comment by the Select Board.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Lehtinen to adjourn at 7:51 PM. Seconded by Clerk Emkey. Call for Vote: Five-Aye. The motion passed (5-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,
Renee Emkey

These Minutes were reviewed and approved by the Select Board on: Tuesday, August 18, 2026