

*Town of Westminster – Select Board Meeting Minutes – Monday, August 28, 2023*

**Members Present:** Salvatore Albert Jr, Heather M. Billings, Melissa A. Banks

**Staff Present:** Stephanie Lahtinen, Tamie Chiarelli

**Others Present:** Jodi Snyder, Jacklyn Nally, Michael Ferris, Nick Langhart, Roni Beal, Kim Samson, Neepa Shah, Sue Millman, Tracy Murphy, Tim Masters, Betsy Hannula, Vic Pelletier, Joe Serio, Amy Fantoni

**CALL TO ORDER**

H. Billings called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM in room 205 of the Town Hall. She announced that the meeting was being recorded and broadcast live by Ashburnham/Westminster Community Media and no other recording devices have been brought to her attention.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

JOINT MEETING WITH PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board of three members (quorum), were present and J. Snyder called the Planning Board to order and J. Snyder made a motion to appoint Amy Fantoni as a new member to the Planning Board. M. Ferris second the motion and the motion was unanimous. H. Billings called a Select Board roll call vote, S. Albert voted to approve A. Fantoni, M. Banks voted to approve and H. Billings voted to approve Amy Fantoni's appointment through April 29, 2024. Planning Board: J. Snyder voted to approve, M. Ferris voted to approve and J. Nally voted to approve. The total vote was unanimous by both boards.

JOINT MEETING WITH LIBRARY TRUSTEES

Kim Samson, Chair of Library Trustees presented an approved set of minutes from the meeting held where they unanimously approved Neepa Shah as the new member of the Library Trustees. The Select Board agreed to use the approved minutes as the unanimous vote to approve N. Shah from the Trustees. H. Billings called for a roll call vote. S. Albert voted to approve, M. Banks voted to approve and H. Billings voted to approve N. Shah as the new member of the Library Trustees through April 29, 2024.

**APPROVALS**

WARRANTS:

M. Banks made a motion to approve the following warrants:

|                  |         |              |         |
|------------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| Accounts Payable | #24-09A | \$243,909.35 | 8/28/23 |
| Payroll          | #24-09B | \$260,519.33 | 8/31/23 |

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

AUGUST 14, 2023 MEETING MINUTES:

M. Banks made a motion to approve the minutes of August 14, 2023. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS:

Cultural Council:

M. Banks made a motion to approve the appointment of Jo Grant and Jonathan Harvey to the Cultural Council, through June 30, 2026. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

CONSERVATION COMMISSION DISCLOSURE - V. PELLETIER:

Victor Pelletier of the Conservation Commission, was present at this meeting and submitted a disclosure form and is filing this with the Board, as he is a current resident of Wyman's Pond and has been recusing himself from all matters relating to the area. He is looking for the Board acceptance of this disclosure so that he may vote on matters relating to the pond itself but not anywhere he would have a financial interest.

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H. Billings asked Vic Pelletier of how, when and why he would recuse himself from issues arising at Wyman's Pond during a Conservation meeting. He stated that he would recuse himself should an issue arise pertaining to his abutters and if anything came up where it would be in any financial interest to him personally. He also stated that sometimes they need to vote on other issues with the pond and may not have a quorum if he had to recuse himself every time.

S. Albert voted to accept the Disclosure form, M. Banks voted to accept, H. Billings voted to accept and the Board's vote was unanimous.

Michael Ferris stated his general dissatisfaction with Conservation Commission leadership, and Mr. Ferris and Board members briefly commented on the Commission appointment process.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION (MGL CH. 30A, s. 21 [3]) TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO PENDING LITIGATION AS AN OPEN MEETING MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE LITIGATING POSITION OF THE PUBLIC BODY)**

H. Billings moved that the Board vote to enter into executive session pursuant to MGL C.30A, S. 21 (3) to discuss strategy with respect to pending litigation, and that the Board adjourn directly from executive session.

S. Albert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

H. Billings read: "I also declare that to continue in open session may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Town." And that we adjourn right after Executive Session.

H. Billings takes roll call vote. S. Albert, H. Billings and M. Banks voted to enter into Executive Session at 5:26 PM

**ADJOURNMENT**

S. Albert made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded.

Meeting and Executive Session adjourned at 6:29 PM

Salvatore Albert, Clerk  
(Prepared by T. Chiarelli)

**EXHIBITS:**

- Town Administrator's Report
- Warrants (2)
- August 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes
- Disclosure form
- Minutes from Library Trustees